# FW

#### Interpretation – affs must defend hypothetical enactment of a United States federal government policy that substantially increases prohibitions on anticompetitive business practices by the private sector by at least expanding the scope of its core antitrust laws

#### Resolved means to enact a policy by law.

Words & Phrases 64. [Words and Phrases; 1964; Permanent Edition]

Definition of the word “resolve,” given by Webster is “to express an opinion or **determination by resolution or vote**; as ‘it was resolved **by the legislature**;” It is of similar force to the word “enact,” which is defined by Bouvier as **meaning “to establish by law”**.

#### The United States federal government is the national government in DC.

Black’s Law 4. [Black’s Law Dictionary, 8th Edition, June 1, 2004, pg.716]

Federal government. 1. A **national government** that exercises some degree of control over smaller political units that have surrendered some degree of power in exchange for the right to participate in national politics matters – Also termed (in federal states) **central government**. 2. **the U.S. government** – Also **termed national government**. [Cases: United States -1 C.J.S. United States - - 2-3]

#### ‘Core antitrust laws’ means Sherman, Clayton, and FTC

Phaffenroth 21 [Sonia Kuester Pfaffenroth, Partner, Arnold and Porter, focuses her practice on helping clients address complex antitrust issues in the US and globally. She rejoined the firm in 2017 from the Antitrust Division of the US Department of Justice (DOJ) where she served most recently as Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Civil and Criminal Operations. In that role, Ms. Pfaffenroth was responsible for supervising both civil and criminal antitrust enforcement efforts, as well as the Division's work with antitrust and competition law enforcement agencies worldwide. Justin Hedge, Counsel, Arnold and Porter, and Monique N. Boyce, Sr. Associate, Arnold and Porter. “A Comparison Of Proposed Antitrust Legislation In 2021: Federal And New York State.” 7/2/21. https://www.mondaq.com/unitedstates/antitrust-eu-competition-/1086194/a-comparison-of-proposed-antitrust-legislation-in-2021-federal-and-new-york-state]

At the federal level, there are three core antitrust laws: (1) the Sherman Act, in which Section 1 outlaws "every contract, combination, or conspiracy in [unreasonable] restraint of trade," and Section 2 outlaws any "monopolization, attempted monopolization, or conspiracy or combination to monopolize";1 (2) the Federal Trade Commission Act, which prohibits "unfair methods of competition" and "unfair or deceptive acts or practices";2 and (3) Section 7 of the Clayton Act, which prohibits mergers and acquisitions where the effect "may be substantially to lessen competition, or to tend to create a monopoly."3 Criminal violations of the Sherman Act carry a maximum penalty of a $100 million fine for corporations, and a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a $1 million fine for individuals. A prevailing plaintiff in a civil suit can recover treble damages and attorneys' fees. But federal law currently does not provide for civil penalties when the government brings an antitrust case, only injunctive relief.

#### That’s key to predictability -- only an interp grounded in relevant legal literature gives debaters the basis to prepare negatives and affirmatives guaranteed to clash. There are a few impacts –

#### First is competitive equity – without predictable preparation and a stable stasis point, there is an aff side bias that destroys the competitive nature of the activity and participation – equity is obviously an impact because debate is a game that is key to the aff – if not, just vote neg

#### Second is information reflexivity --

#### You should also filter their impacts through predictable testability and model comparison -- debate inherently judges relative truth value by whether or not it gets answered -- a combination of a less predictable case neg, the burden of rejoinder, and them starting a speech ahead will always inflate the value of their impacts, which makes non-arbitrarily weighing whether they should have read the 1ac in the first place impossible within the structure of a debate round so even if we lose framework, vote neg on presumption. They also create a moral hazard that leads to affs only about individual self-care so even if you think this aff is answerable, the ones they incentivize are not, so assume the worst possible affirmative when weighing our impacts.

#### Researching and advocating anti-monopoly policy can boost grassroots activism against monopolies.

Greer and Rice, 21—co-founders and co-executive directors of Liberation in a Generation (Jeremie and Solana, “Anti-Monopoly Activism: Reclaiming Power through Racial Justice,” <https://www.liberationinageneration.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Anti-Monopoly-Activism_032021.pdf>, dml)

We believe that the movement—within research and advocacy spaces especially—should embolden grassroot leaders of color to deliver antiracist policy solutions aimed specifically to curtail monopoly power. Below, we provide considerations for future action that are not policies or regulations or campaigns in and of themselves, but ideas that could transform the anti-monopoly movement in ways that require it to reimagine itself and approach the work through a racial justice lens. Develop More In-Depth, Intentional Research Part of the impetus for writing this document is that Liberation in a Generation believes that the power to change our economic systems rests with the organizers of color who are (re)building the political strength of communities of color. The research and advocacy to limit monopoly power needs to better quantify, center, and reflect the ways that people of color are being harmed. This means conducting research that centers the impact of monopoly power on people of color (as workers, consumers, community members, and participants in our democracy). The research and advocacy need to be relevant to the organizers who are indeed experiencing and fighting many of these forces on the ground, and it should inform solutions that they develop, nurture, and advance through activism. The research and advocacy must use less jargon and abstraction, focusing less on markets, firms, or efficiencies, and it should talk more about the impact of corporate decisions on people, their lives, and their futures. The tent of advocates working on anti-monopoly needs to widen as well. Bringing in the people most impacted is essential to shaping and accomplishing the path forward. Draw Connections Between Monopoly Power and Current Movement Priorities As discussed earlier in this paper monopoly power has enormous impact on other movement priorities led by leaders of color, such as environmental justice, worker justice, housing justice, police and prison abolition, closing the racial wealth gap, and democratic disenfranchisement. Anti-monopoly policy can be a powerful tool to accomplish existing movement priorities, including the Green New Deal, a Homes Guarantee, a federal jobs guarantee, and Medicare for All. In order to fully utilize it as a tool, anti-monopoly advocates must support—mainly in the background—grassroots leaders of color in integrating anti-monopoly policy and advocacy strategies into the existing campaigns they are leading. By following their lead, and by working together to curb corporate power, we as a collective progressive movement can accomplish an array of movement priorities and move the US closer to liberation for people of color. Build Solutions That Are Antiracist and Center People of Color as Beneficiaries It’s not enough to speak virtuously about racial equity and economic justice; we have to intentionally center people of color in the development of policy change. To the previous point, advocates and researchers who evaluate solutions to corporate concentration should include a measure of impacts on Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian, and Pacific Islander people. As consumers, entrepreneurs, and residents, we are the ones most vulnerable to the inequities, the forced scarcity, and price gouging inflicted by corporate concentration, among other problems. History has shown us that race-neutral approaches only exacerbate that vulnerability by entrenching current systems—systems that are inherently racist. We know that “race-neutral” policies assume whiteness as the norm and thus serve and preserve white supremacy. So, advancing anti-monopoly policy that is antiracist and centers people of color must be the standard that we all follow moving forward. Think Bigger and Bolder Than Existing Regulations and Agencies Large segments of the current anti-monopoly legal and regulatory infrastructure are corrupted beyond repair. Further, these systems are complicit in the economic oppression of people of color. The goals of the anti-monopoly movement should be to completely dismantle our systems of oppression and replace them with government systems that deliver economic liberation. Our regulatory structure is complicated, spread across many agencies, and lacking enforcement power. The complexity of our nation’s anti-monopoly laws, regulations, and oversight have been designed to advantage monopolists with unlimited resources to navigate the labyrinth of our anti-monopoly laws. Racial oppression thrives in this environment and the antimonopoly movement must resist the urge to settle for small marginal victories that allow this oppression to continue. Breaking up Amazon or Facebook will be a hollow victory if they are able to reform years later and continue to harm Black and brown workers, consumers, and small businesses. The path forward should be to join grassroots leaders of color to create new, bold and transformative solutions (e.g., new agencies and new authorities) that will ensure that federal and state governments advance the economic well-being of people of color and not that of the monopolists that oppresses them. Tell a New Visionary Story About the Role of Corporations We need a story that is visionary and that repositions corporations as beholden to serving the public interest, re-examining the purpose of corporations and developing mechanisms that evaluate, even redefine, that purpose. Currently, companies’ driving purpose is to create wealth for their shareholders, and this ideology is to the detriment of people of color. We must integrate solutions that challenge our current approach to corporate governance, incorporation, and tax policy that reinforce economic systems of oppression that allow monopolies exploit to harm people of color. Conclusion Imagine a world where the unemployment rate for people of color is zero. The unhoused rate for people of color is zero. A world in which 100 percent of people of color have quality health care, a livable wage, and a quality education. We at Liberation in a Generation believe that this is possible if we strive to create a Liberation Economy where all people of color have their basic needs met, are safe and secure, are valued, and fully belong, including people of color who are immigrants, formerly incarcerated, LGBTQ+, and have a disability. In order to get to this Liberation Economy, we must dismantle the Oppression Economy that monopoly power has colluded with the government to maintain. There are signs that we are moving in the right direction; we need to deepen the urgency and refine the strategy to advance these opportunities. The Oppression Economy, which includes financial markets, labor markets, and interstate and international trading companies, was arranged to serve an economy elevated by the theft of labor from Black people. Today, Black people and other people of color are still delivering uncompensated value to monopoly power as minimum wage essential workers, as consumers without choice, as small businesses beholden to tight supply chains, as students trying to pay for a college education, and as residents of modern-day company towns. Despite the disproportionate and anticompetitive influence these monopolies have on the consumer and labor market, they are, structurally, corporations. They have CEOs who manage the day-to-day of the company. They have boards of directors responsible for maintaining corporate governance. They have shareholders that they are accountable for serving. Finally, they are subject to corporate and tax laws and regulations internationally and in the US. One of the highpoints of 2020 came in December when the FTC joined 48 states and territories to bring a lawsuit against Google for violating the United State’s antimonopoly laws. This suit has the potential to be the most significant action taken by the federal government since the 1998 suit against Microsoft. Further, earlier in 2020, the House of Representatives Judiciary Subcommittee issued a report urging action by Congress and the administration to rein in the monopoly power of Big Tech. Major democratic presidential candidates, including now-President Biden, prioritized curbing corporate monopoly power as major planks in their presidential campaigns. There appears to be momentum on the side of bold government intervention, and grassroots leaders of color can capitalize on that momentum. Thankfully, momentum also appears to be on the side of advancing racial justice. The tragic murders of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and Elijah McClain—and far too many before them and since—have once again thrust the issue of systemic racism into the public consciousness. We will see if this amplified awareness materializes into sustained progress, but this is clearly a moment to advance ideas that would have previously been dismissed by mainstream institutions—such as activist calls to defund the police. It is incumbent upon us in the racial justice movement to ensure that these tragic deaths vault our fight for justice to the next stage of evolution, and that they inform our approach to curbing the corporate monopoly power that is a contributing factor to our collective pain. The time is now. It’s time to accelerate grassroots efforts to rein in monopoly power. It’s time to accomplish this by advancing bold transformative policy interventions that rip the power to pilot our economy from corporate monopolies. It’s time to ground our understanding of how monopoly works against the principles of racial and economic justice. Finally, it's time to follow grassroots leaders of color in accomplishing this goal —and in delivering liberation for us all.

## PIK

#### Poetry is coopted by neoliberalism to produce an apolitical individual register – focus on state policies is key

Gräbner and Wood 10 (Cornelia – Lecturer of European Languages and Cultures at Lancester University, and David – Researcher at the Institute for Aesthetic Research of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, “Poetics of Resistance: Introduction,” Cosmos & History 6(2):2-19, accessed 2-5-15 //Bozzles the Bozz-Dawg Bozz Bozz)

In this passage, Hardt and Negri implicitly re-affirm the power of culture—not of art— within a regime of economic production and of the production of subjectivities; they value culture and cultural relations because they hold ‘profound economic power’, and within this context they contribute to the production of new subjectivities. however, their assessment of culture subsumes it within, and argues that it is indistinguishable from, economic phenomena. This indistinguishability is crucial to the relevance of culture for contemporary resistance struggles. Many interpretations of zapatista writing exemplify this approach: the poetic style of zapatista writing is considered to be in the service of public relations, and poetic style is valued because it makes a contribution to the political project—not because it critically interrogates it, which zapatista writing also does and which is conveniently swept under the carpet. The literary establishment, in turn, might be willing to consider and value certain types of literature as a vehicle for a political cause, but the sophisticated representation of political causes through poetic language is rarely appreciated as an enrichment of literature. Thus, art is assimilated into public discourse and political language. Consequently, the work of art and the artists lose their critical autonomy; the artist is empowered as social actor, but disempowered as artist-and-social-actor. The authors of most essays presented here oppose this wholesale assimilation of the work of art and instead, insist on diverse articulations of what we might call a ‘porous autonomy’. importantly, this type of autonomy differs from the adornian approach which locates the work of art in a third space where it is safeguarded from two competing ideological poles, each of which sought to assimilate it. 8 on the one hand, porous autonomy acknowledges that due to neoliberalism’s all-encompassing tendency to co-opt even the most resistant cultural production, it is futile to conceive it in monolithic terms, and that there is much to be salvaged in what has been or might be assimilated; spaces of resistance can thus be thought of as being lodged within hegemony. There is thus a rapprochement between poetic resistance and resistance in oppositional thought on cultural production more broadly, which holds that the social and political configurations with which artists interact, and the creative process itself, are not necessarily ‘pure’ of the hegemonic ideological structures that they resist, and therefore ‘outside ideology’. an analogy might thus be drawn between the poetics of resistance and brazilian media theorist arlindo Machado’s ‘technological poetics’, in which ‘the most important question is ultimately not whether the artist becomes more or less free, more or less creative, as she works at the heart of machines, but whether she is capable of repostulating the notions of freedom and creativity within the context of a society that is ever more defined by information’.9 While Wood’s article in this issue addresses most explicitly the relationship between technology and artistic practices, the contributions by aroch and Jabur explore analogous negotiations between creative or political autonomy and potentially co-optable spaces of expression. On the other hand, porous autonomy is developed through a relationality between the work of art that maintains its autonomy, and the social movements or political groups that articulate similar demands on a political level. The issue here is not co-optation; it is rather to what extent a committed work of art or aesthetic practice maintains its critical distance from the social movements with which it sympathizes while at the same time productively interacting with them from a critical perspective. porous autonomy also becomes a very useful position of resistance in situations in which aesthetics and aesthetic communities (see Giadas) become the carriers of political demands in the absence of carriers of real political power. echavarren, Giadas, Gräbner, Jabur and Rábade explore such scenarios in this issue. importantly, the porous autonomy of the work of art opens up political potentialities that draw on but exceed the space of art and cultural production; however, how this potentiality is then translated into political realities is a question that remains unresolved. it is because of this unresolved question of realising the potentiality of resistant poetics—which is tied in with the question of political effectivity—that not all authors in this issue endorse the porous autonomy of the work of art. Thomas Muhr most explicitly confronts the fact that, for such potentialities to even be explored and certainly for them to flourish and translate into political realities, a safe environment free of repression has to be created. Muhr argues that such an environment can realistically only be created by the state, and he posits the models of governance created by the alba-governments as conducive to the construction of such an environment. At stake here is the transition from resistance to counterhegemony, and the uneasy relationship between resistance as expressed in the construction of an alternative that sidesteps or exists parallel to existing power structures (as in ‘alter-’), and resistance as expressed in the construction of an alternative that is positioned explicitly against existing power structures (as in ‘counter-’). in terms of historical and political context, some of the case studies presented here suggest that the poetics of resistance might function very differently in the case of stateless nations or communities on the one hand, and counterhegemonic projects where state power has been taken on the other hand.

#### Vote neg to affirm the 1AC without the use of poetry.

#### Refusal shifts perspectives to focus on the power.

**Tuck and Yang 14**

(Eve – Associate Professor of Educational Foundations and Coordinator of Native American Studies @ the State University of New York at New Paltz, and K. Wayne – Assistant Professor in the Ethnic Studies Department @ UC San Diego, “R-Words: Refusing Research”, <https://faculty.newpaltz.edu/evetuck/files/2013/12/Tuck-and-Yang-R-Words_Refusing-Research.pdf>,Date Accessed:5.25.15)//BSpencer

For the purposes of our discussion, the most important insight to draw from Simpson’s article is her emphasis that refusals are not subtractive, but are theo- retically generative (p. 78), expansive. Refusal is not just a “no,” but a redirection to ideas otherwise unacknowledged or unquestioned. Unlike a settler colonial configuration of knowledge that is petulantly exasperated and resentful of limits, a methodology of refusal regards limits on knowledge as productive, as indeed a good thing. To explore how refusal and the installation of limits on settler colonial knowl- edge might be productive, we make a brief detour to the Erased Lynching series (2002–2011) by Los Angeles–based artist Ken Gonzales-Day (see Figure 12.1). Gonzales-Day researched lynching in California and the Southwest and found that the majority of lynch victims were Latinos, American Indians, and Asians. Like lynchings in the South, lynchings in California were events of public spec- tacle, often attended by hundreds, sometimes thousands of festive onlookers. At the lynchings, professional photographers took hours to set up portable studios similar to those used at carnivals; they sold their images frequently as postcards, mementos of public torture and execution to be circulated by U.S. post through- out the nation and the world. Lynching, we must be reminded, was extralegal, yet nearly always required the complicity of law enforcement—either by marshals or sheriffs in the act itself, or by judges and courts in not bothering to prosecute the lynch mob afterward. The photographs immortalize the murder beyond the time and place of the lynching, and in their proliferation, expand a single murder to the general murderability of the non-White body. In this respect, the image of the hanged, mutilated body itself serves a critical function in the maintenance of White supremacy and the spread of racial terror beyond the lynching. The spectacle of the lynching is the medium of terror. Gonzales-Day’s Erased Lynching series reintroduces the photographs of lynch- ing to a contemporary audience, with one critical intervention: The ropes and the lynch victim have been removed from the images. Per Gonzales-Day’s website (n.d.), the series enacted a conceptual gesture intended to direct the viewer’s attention, not upon the lifeless body of lynch victim, but upon the mechanisms of lynching themselves: the crowd, the spectacle, the photographer, and even consider the impact of flash photography upon this dismal past. The perpetrators, if present, remain fully visible, jeering, laughing, or pulling at the air in a deadly pantomime. As such, this series strives to make the invisible visible. The Erased Lynching series yields another context in which we might consider what a social scientist’s refusal stance might comprise. Though indeed centering on the erasure of the former object, refusal need not be thought of as a subtractive methodology. Refusal prompts analysis of the festive spectators regularly back- grounded in favor of wounded bodies, strange fruit, interesting scars. Refusal shifts the gaze from the violated body to the violating instruments—in this case, the lynch mob, which does not disappear when the lynching is over, but continues to live, accumulating land and wealth through the extermination and subordina- tion of the Other. Thus, refusal helps move us from thinking of violence as an event and toward an analysis of it as a structure. Gonzales-Day might have decided to reproduce and redistribute the images as postcards, which, by way of showing up in mundane spaces, might have effec- tively inspired reflection on the spectacle of violence and media of terror. However, in removing the body and the ropes, he installed limits on what the audience can access, and redirected our gaze to the bodies of those who were there to see a murder take place, and to the empty space beneath the branches. Gonzales-Day introduced a new representational territory, one that refuses to play by the rules of the settler colonial gaze, and one that refuses to satisfy the morbid curiosity derived from settler colonialism’s preoccupation with pain. Refusals are needed for narratives and images arising in social science research that rehumiliate when circulated, but also when, in Simpson’s words, “the representation would bite all of us and compromise the representational territory that we have gained for ourselves in the past 100 years” (p. 78). As researcher-narrator, Simpson tells us, “I reached my own limit when the data would not contribute to our sovereignty or complicate the deeply simplified, atrophied representations of Iroquois and other Indigenous peoples that they have been mired within anthropologically” (p. 78). Here Simpson makes clear the ways in which research is not the intervention that is needed—that is, the inter- ventions of furthering sovereignty or countering misrepresentations of Native people as anthropological objects. Considering Erased Lynchings dialogically with On Ethnographic Refusal, we can see how refusal is not a prohibition but a generative form. First, refusal turns the gaze back upon power, specifically the colonial modalities of knowing per- sons as bodies to be differentially counted, violated, saved, and put to work. It makes transparent the metanarrative of knowledge production—its spectatorship for pain and its preoccupation for documenting and ruling over racial difference. Thus, refusal to be made meaningful first and foremost is grounded in a critique of settler colonialism, its construction of Whiteness, and its regimes of represen- tation. Second, refusal generates, expands, champions representational territories that colonial knowledge endeavors to settle, enclose, domesticate. Simpson com- plicates the portrayals of Iroquois, without resorting to reportrayals of anthropo- logical Indians. Gonzales-Day portrays the violations without reportraying the victimizations. Third, refusal is a critical intervention into research and its circu- lar self-defining ethics. The ethical justification for research is defensive and self-encircling—its apparent self-criticism serves to expand its own rights to know, and to defend its violations in the name of “good science.” Refusal chal- lenges the individualizing discourse of IRB consent and “good science” by high- lighting the problems of collective harm, of representational harm, and of knowledge colonization. Fourth, refusal itself could be developed into both method and theory. Simpson presents refusal on the part of the researcher as a type of calculus ethnography. Gonzales-Day deploys refusal as a mode of repre- sentation. Simpson theorizes refusal by the Kahnawake Nation as anticolonial, and rooted in the desire for possibilities outside of colonial logics, not as a reac- tive stance. This final point about refusal connects our conversation back to desire as a counterlogic to settler colonial knowledge. Desire is compellingly depicted in Simpson’s description of a moment in an interview, in which the alternative logics about a “feeling citizenship” are refer- enced. The interviewee states, Citizenship is, as I said, you live there, you grew up there, that is the life that you know—that is who you are. Membership is more of a legislative enactment designed to keep people from obtaining the various benefits that Aboriginals can receive. (p. 76) Simpson describes this counterlogic as “the logic of the present,” one that is witnessed, lived, suffered through, and enjoyed (p. 76). Out of the predicaments, it innovates “tolerance and exceptions and affections” (p. 76). Simpson writes (regarding the Indian Act, or blood quantum), “‘Feeling citizenships’ . . . are structured in the present space of intra-community recognition, affection and care, outside of the logics of colonial and imperial rule” (p. 76). Simpson’s logic of the present dovetails with our discussion on the logics of desire. Collectively, Kahnawake refusals decenter damage narratives; they unset- tle the settler colonial logics of blood and rights; they center desire. By theorizing through desire, Simpson thus theorizes with and as Kahnawake Mohawk. It is important to point out that Simpson does not deploy her tribal identity as a badge of authentic voice, but rather highlights the ethical predica- ments that result from speaking as oneself, as simultaneously part of a collective with internal disputes, vis-à-vis negotiations of various settler colonial logics. Simpson thoughtfully differentiates between the Native researcher philosophi- cally as a kind of privileged position of authenticity, and the Native researcher realistically as one who is beholden to multiple ethical considerations. What is tricky about this position is not only theorizing with, rather than theorizing about, but also theorizing as. To theorize with and as at the same time is a difficult yet fecund positionality—one that rubs against the ethnographic limit at the outset. Theorizing with (and in some of our cases, as) repositions Indigenous people and otherwise researched Others as intellectual subjects rather than anthropological subjects. Thus desire is an “epistemological shift,” not just a methodological shift (Tuck, 2009, p. 419).

# Case

#### The aff double turns itself by critiquing capitalism while also calling for the ballot. Denying exchange value and calling for an exchange and currency is participating in monetary logistics critiqued by their evidence.

#### Conflicting drives mean no libidinal economy

**Johnston,** Adrian. Time Driven: Metapsychology and the Splitting of the Drive. Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, **2005.** Print.

In terms of the basic framework of metapsychology, Freud delineates two fundamental types of conflict disturbing yet organizing mental life-conflict between drives and reality (as, most notably, the struggle between the id and civilization) and the conflict between the drives themselves (a la the story of Eros against the todestrieb). In both cases, the individual tends to be portrayed as the over determined plaything of powerful forces fighting semi-covert wars with each other just out of the ego’s sight. However, Freud fails to discover a third dimension of conflict in relation to the libidinal economy- the conflict within every drive. The theoretical contribution of this project could easily be summarized as the identification of this distinct type of conflict and the explication of its sobering consequences for an understanding of the psyche. Despite the apparent bleakness and antiutopianism of an assessment of human nature as being perturbed by an irreducible inner antagonism, there is, surprisingly, what might be described as a liberating aspect to this splitting of the drives. Since drives are essentially dysfunctional, subjects are able to act otherwise than as would be dictated by instinctually compelled pursuits of gratification, satisfaction, and pleasure. In fact, subjects are forced to be free, since, for such beings, the mandate of nature is forever missing. Severed from a strictly biological master program and saddled with a conflict-ridden, heterogeneous jumble of contradictory impulses-impulses mediated by an inconsistent, unstable web of multiple representations, indicated by Lacan’s “barring” of the Symbolic Other – the parletre has no choice but to bump up against the unnatural void of its autonomy. The confrontation with this void is frequently avoided. The true extent of one’s autonomy is, due to its sometimes-frightening implications, just as often relegated to the shadows of the unconscious as those heteronomous factors secretly shaping conscious thought and behavior. The contradictions arising from the conflicts internal to the libidinal economy mark the precise places where a freedom transcending mundane materiality has a chance to briefly flash into effective existence; such points of breakdown in the deterministic nexus of the drives clear the space for the sudden emergence of something other than the smooth continuation of the default physical and sociophysical “run of things.”

#### Psychoanalysis is not empirical and has no explanatory power – reject their theories as tautologies

Sadovnikov 07(Slava, York University, "Escape from Reason: Labels as Arguments and Theories", Dialogue XLVI (2007), 781-796, philpapers.org/archive/SADEFR.pdf) \*Evidence has been gender modified in brackets

The way McLaughlin shows the rosy prospects of psychoanalytical social theory boils down to this: there are people who labour at it. He reports on Neil Smelser’s lifelong elaborations of psychoanalytical sociology, which prescribed the use of Freudian theories. Then he presents a “powerful” psychoanalytical theory of creativity of Michael Farrell, commenting on how the theorist “usefully utilizes psychoanalytic insights,” though McLaughlin does not specify them. He correctly expects that I might not view his examples as scientiﬁc. Their problems begin well before that. First, due to their informative emptiness, or tautological character, all they amount to is rewordings of everyday assumptions. Second, due to their vagueness these accounts are compatible with any outcomes; in other words, they lack explanatory and predictive power. The proposed ideas are too inarticulate to subject to intersubjective criticism, and to call them empirical or scientiﬁc theories would be, no matter how comforting, a gross misuse of words. On the constructive side, a psychoanalytic theorist may be challenged to unambiguously formulate her suppositions and specify conditions of their disproof, to leave out what we already well know and smooth out internal inconsistencies, and revise the theories in view of easily available counter-examples and competing accounts. Only after having done this can one present candidate theories to public criticism and thus make them part of science, and fruitfully discuss their further reﬁnements. Another suggestion is not to label them “powerful theories,” “classics,” or anything else before their real scrutiny begins. That criticism and disagreement are indispensable for science is not a “Popperian orthodoxy,” although Popper does champion this idea; it is the pivot of the tradition (which we owe to the Greeks) which identiﬁes rationalism with criticism. 4 McLaughlin ostensibly bows to the critical tradition but does not put it to use. Instead of critical evaluation of the theories in question he writes of “compelling case,” “powerful analytic model,” and “useful conceptual tool.” On the methodological side of the issue, we should inquire into the mode of thinking common to Fromm and all adherents of conﬁrmation-ism. The trick consists in mere replacement of familiar words with new, more peculiar ones; customary expressions are substituted by “instrumental intimacy,” “collaborative circles,” and “idealization of a self-object.” Since the new, funnier, and pseudo-theoretical tag does the job of naming just as well, it “shows how” things work. The new labels in the cases criticized here do not add anything to our knowledge; nor do they explain. We have seen Fromm routinely abuse this technique. The vacuity of Fromm’s explanations by character type was the central point in my analysis of Escape , yet McLaughlin conveniently ignores it and, like Fromm, uses the method of labelling as somehow supporting his cause. The widely popular practice of mistaking new labels for explanations has been exposed by many methodologists in the history of philosophy, but probably the most famous example of such critique comes from Molière. In the now often-quoted passage, his character delivers a vacuous explanation of opium’s property to induce sleep by renaming the property with an offhand Latinism, “virtus dormitiva.” The satire acutely points not only at the impostor doctor’s hiding his lack of knowledge behind foreign words, but also at the emptiness of his alleged explanation. (Pseudo-theoretical literature is boring precisely because of its “dormitive virtue,” its shufﬂing of labels without rewarding inquiring minds.) Let me review notable criticisms of this approach in the twentieth century by Hempel, Homans, and Weber leaving aside their forerunners. This problem was discussed in the famous debate between William Dray and Carl Hempel. Dray argues, contra the nomological account of explanation, that historians and social scientists often try to answer the question, “What is this phenomenon?” by giving an “explanation-by-concept” (Dray 1959, p. 403). A series of events may be better understood if we call it “a social revolution”; or the appropriate tag may be found in the expressions “reform,” “collaboration,” “class struggle,” “progress,” etc.; or, to take Fromm’s suggestions, we may call familiar motives and actions “sadomasochistic,” and any political choice save the Marxist “escape from freedom.” Hempel agrees with Dray that such concepts may be explanatory, but they are so only if the chosen labels or classiﬁcatory tags refer to some uniformities, or are based on nomic analogies. In other words, our new label has explanatory force if it states or implies some established regularity (Hempel 1970, pp. 453-57). For example, you travel to a foreign country and, strolling along the street, see a boisterous crowd. Your guide may explain the crowd with one of several terms: that it is the local soccer team’s fans celebrating its victory, or it is a local religious festival, or a teachers’ strike, etc. The labels applied here—celebration, festival, strike— have explanatory value, because we know that things they refer to usually manifest themselves in noisy or unruly mass gatherings. If, on the other hand, by way of explaining the boisterous crowd the guide had invoked some hidden social or psychological forces, or used expressions such as embodiment, mode of production, de-centring, simulacra, otherness, etc., its causes would remain obscure. If she had referred to psychoanalytic “character types” (say, Fromm’s authoritarian, anal, or necrophiliac types), the explanation would not make much sense either. Nothing prevents us nevertheless from unconditionally attaching all these labels to any event. The mistake McLaughlin and conﬁrmationists persistently make is in thinking that labelling social phenomena alone does theoretical and explanatory work. 5 George Homans observed the prevalence of this trick some decades ago: Much modern sociological theory seems to us to possess every virtue except that of explaining anything. . . . The theorist shoves various aspects of behavior into his pigeonholes, cries “Ah-ha!” and leaves it at that. Like magicians in all times and places, the theorist thinks he [they] controls phenomena if he is [they are] able to give them names, particularly names of his own invention. (1974, pp. 10-11)

#### Bifo’s fatalistic politics strengthens semio-capitalism – failure to imagine a better future or provide concrete steps dooms the aff

Hickman 15 (S.C., self-described poet and philosophical speculator, “Franco “Bifo” Berardi: A Summantion & Critique,” 6-3-15, https://socialecologies.wordpress.com/2015/06/03/franco-bifo-berardi-a-summantion/, accessed 5-5-16 //Bozzles the Bozz-Dawg Bozz Bozz)

After finishing my last couple of posts on the new work of Franco “Bifo” Berardi (here and here) we discovered that Beraridi offers no solutions to the present crisis of late-modern financial capitalism. Instead of hope he admonished us that we are living in a spasmodic era and dark zeitgeist – under the sign of accelerationism, of a semio-capitalistic regime that commands, controls, and dominates us through the sheer abstractive processes and mathematical ferocity of its infospheric system of technological ubiquity. That in this no-man’s land of the postmodern wastes we are all spasmodically moving to the rhythm of panic in response to the accelerated vibration of this technological mutation into inforgs (information organisms), and that the hyper-mobilization of desire that is enforced by this present regime is imploding. A state-of-affairs in which the control society it has built in its global space of finance has subjugated the cognitive labourer to the abstract acceleration of this info-machine, one that is also destroying the singularity of language, preventing its creativity and sensibility from touching base with our actual lives in the real world. Rather we are all part of the Infosphere now. There is no exit. Nature and Culture are no longer at odds with each other, instead the boundaries between these two realms, the gaps and cracks that kept the two in a bifurcated, binary opposition have come down. Now is the time when the natural becomes artificial and the artificial natural, a mutation into the inhuman core of our posthuman transcension or implosion; or, as some might say, technoapocalypse. Berardi offers no hope, no solution, no way forward other than a new skepticism and irony, a critical appraisal of our dystopic worlds through the lens of a contrarian oppositional thinking and ethics of singular responsibility. Politics is dead, the economists have become our new prophets and prognosticators, the Oracles of a new world order of financilization. He tells us that we must begin by refusing the game, the game of politics, religion, and economics; and, most of all to disconnect from the things of this Infosphere, detach ourselves from the very Internet-of-things that is so slowly eating us from within and consuming us to the point that all that is left of the human is this zombiefied flesh of the inforg controlled by the hypermarkets of the relentless economic machine out-of-joint. We are no longer consumers but the consumed. His last admonition was not to “take me too seriously. Don’t take too seriously my catastrophic premonitions. And in case it is difficult to follow these prescriptions, don’t take too seriously my prescriptions.” My question is: Isn’t the very skepticism and irony, the uncommitted stance of the postmodern intellectual attached to a semiosis of the symbolic imaginary in fact the problem, not the solution? Isn’t Berardi himself part of the problem rather than the solution? Are not his ideas a move to wander seamlessly within the hopelessness like some dystopic entrepreneur of the apathy and psychopathy that even J.G. Ballard in his last three novels would portray as the very thought that engenders this very world of violence and despair that it seeks to critique? In one of his last interviews Ballard would discuss what he called the “seductiveness of violence”: It has an appeal in that you can understand a world entirely given over to brutality and violence, whereas peace – civilized life in the everyday sense of the term – is much more ambiguous.1 Isn’t this why the teenage YA Dystopian market is so economically satisfying for authors and booksellers alike: because people can relate to destruction, violence, barbarism, and apocalypse much more readily than to a peaceful civilized existence? Why is this? Why are our top books, music, films, MMOs (Massively-Multiplayer-Online Games) based on dystopic visions of destruction and pain, apocalypse and horror rather than on futures filled with visions of hope and a sense of human dignity? Or we truly the sick animal, the animal that is already unnatural from the beginning? Dissatisfied with our inability to fill the vacuum of our empty self-relating nothingness, we turn on each other and produce systematic sado-masochistic realms of pain and annihilation instead, zones of pure apathy and disillusionment in which we can play out our inhuman psychopathic impulses anonymously or together; alone or with each other? While others seek to dominate and control this very barbaric underbelly of existence through economic, political, and social command and control systems to keep the truth at bay. In the end doesn’t Berardi offer nothing more than the fatalistic acceptance of this dark zeitgeist ( a term he invokes ): In the contemporary aesthetic production it’s easy to detect the signs of a sort of dark zeitgeist. Zeitgeist – the spirit of the time – means perception of imminence. If we look at recent narrative works we find everywhere the same no-way-out imagination. Art, poetry, narration, music, cinema and the overall aesthetic semiosis of our time are tracing a landscape of imminent darkness: social de-evolution, physical decay and neuro-totalitarianism.2 Isn’t his own work – as in After the Future, a signpost to this sort of malaise; or, is he actually offering something else, a reconnection with the very material processes that he sees have de-materialized us into subjectivities in a void of machinic consciousness. As he asked at the end of that work: Why are the cognitariat weak and disunited and unable to assert their rights as laborers, their knowledge as researchers? Because they live in bifurcated form, because their brain is detached from their body, because their communication communicates less and less, while more and more freezing sensitivity to life.3 In that work he still seemed to offer some hope. Telling us that what we need is a “space of activism” a site in which the activists of poetry, therapy, and philosophy-sciences might engender new paradigms. Even as we read his Manifesto Of Post-Futurism we get this sense of renewal and hope rather than of hopelessness. What happened in the intervening years? Maybe he hasn’t changed at all. In some ways we have to remember his involvement with the Autonomy Movement. As he says the autonomy movement realized in its reading of Deleuze/Guattari’s Anti-Oedipus that “the meaning of reality has to be created by the movement itself”.4 He goes on to say that this autonomous movement “broke free of the idea that the ethical horizon is marked by historical necessity, and opened its mind to the ironic mood, which means singularization of ethical responsibility. (ibid. 168) So this sense of an external order of the ethical based in faith or Reason was ousted in favor of the singular responsibility of each and every autonomous member. To what? If there is no objective valorization system, and it becomes singularized or atomistic – reduced to the singular subjectification of the individual as an ironic skeptical and affective (“mood”) being then how could anyone ever agree to anything at all. As he tells us irony suspends the semantic value of the signifier and chooses freely among a thousand possible interpretations. Going on he says: “The ironic interpretation implies and presupposes a common ground of understanding among the interlocutors, a sympathy among those who are involved in the ironic act, and a common autonomy from the dictatorship of the signified.” (ibid. 168) But what is the common ground of understanding? He never explains just what this might be. If there is no touching base with any form of the objective “signified”, but rather an internal self-reflecting play of signifiers in the ironic mode where does it end or begin, who decides or judges the ethical status of one’s ironic thoughts? If this plurality of modes of interpretation are to ever affect or effect real change doesn’t this imply a decisional moment of closure, of saying: this, and no more? No more of then endless play of the signifier in a close world of intra-agentive relations bound to the external signified (“reality”). Even as he closed this book he offered only the difference between two modes of irony: the cynicist’s and the autonimist’s: the autonomist “ironist sleeps happily because nothing can awake her from her dreams. The cynicist sleeps a light sleep, he dreams nightmares, and he gets up as soon as power calls him” (ibid. 169). Sometimes when I think about it I imagine that the real hero of the Matrix Trilogy was not Neo but Agent Smith. Why? Agent Smith is a semantic anomaly, a program, a piece of code that wakes up within the dream world of this machinic system; an AI virus or X that seems to express that impossible object a of Lacan. Agent Smith seeks a way to exit the Matrix, to live in the real world that he has only known through his knowledge of it rather than as a material realm of possibility. His replication of himself is not to bewilder Neo, but to keep the machinic Architect at bay, to become the echoing power of the Real in the system. There comes a moment in the film when Agent Smith escapes the Matrix and cohabits the body of Bane. It’s in this physical world that he begins to touch base with the Real in all its disgusting truth. The sheer truth of the Body, of embodiement in a physical substrate in which his program must interact not with pure semantic thought but with things. This was to me the key to the film and something left unsaid by most critiques of the film. Instead of the old Ghost in the Machine, Smith as Bane was the Code in the Machine ( I need to rewatch this again!). This would be his undoing, too. Neo in a scene was blinded by Bane/Smith but was able to see with his new found connection to the Source the truth: the Code in the Machine, thereby being able to kill him. Sadly this brought the theme back to a conservative halt, reintroducing and humanism it again. On the other hand the real cynic is Cypher who – even after accepting the red pill of reality decides it is after all too much pain and suffering, and would rather be reattached to the Matrix and sink back into oblivion: dreaming the dream of autonomy rather than the struggle to attain it. Is Cypher the one who withdraws silently into the zeitgeist, an intellectual hyper-cognitariat willing to sacrifice his bodily life for a transhuman melding with the machinic soul? A sort of Singulatarian faith healer in disguise? A Code Shaman who dreams the dream forward of the pure bliss of an animistic paradise? His desperation leads him to betrayal and death in the end. Yet, sleep is sleep, and the autonimist reminds me of all those humans in the Matrix Trilogy that dreamed the perfect dream of utopia while living lives encased in fluid as batteries for the machinic intelligences that now held the real power; while the red pill cynics awakened, realized the truth, and began the process of actually regaining the real world of pain and suffering. So who is right? The dreamer of dreams that never awakens? Or the cynic who realizes power is the base of conflict in the world and sees that we must deal with it or remain obliviously encased in our artificial utopian dance of autonomy and self-relating nothingness? But what is this being of the dream? One might ask what is the undecidable ontological status of semblances. Or, to be more specific: What is a semblance? Zizek in Less Than Nothing will expound on it: As a key to understanding the notion of semblant, Lacan proposes Bentham’s theory of fictions, which fascinates him for a very precise reason: the axis on which Lacan focuses is not “fiction versus reality” but “fiction versus (the real of) jouissance.” As Jelica Sumic explains: semblance, as conceived by Lacan, is intended to designate that which, coming from the symbolic, is directed towards the real. This is precisely what characterizes Bentham’s fictions. Indeed, as a fact of language, made of nothing but the signifier, Bentham’s legal fictions are nonetheless capable of distributing and modifying pleasures and pains, thereby affecting the body. What held Lacan’s attention in reading Bentham’s Theory of Fictions was precisely that something which is ultimately an apparatus of language— Bentham defines fictions as owing their existence to language alone— is capable of inflicting pain or provoking satisfaction that can only be experienced in the body …5 This notion of that which is coming from the Symbolic – the semblant, and directed toward the real of jouissance (a notion of the pain-pleasure ambiguity in the drives) seems appropriate. What’s interesting as well in the above quote is the notion that fictions affect the body, that they impact the material pain and suffering or even – the jouissance in our material being. The notion that the signifier is a material thing, an agent capable of effecting real change in the world. This realization aligns well with the way humans need darker dystopian visions as a way of coping with this very pain and suffering of the material body. As well as a way of connecting and relating to a future where we can still feel the material well-being of our actual lives, still know our affective relations with our and others bodies as part of the true shared reality existing beyond the confines of the simulated symbolic orders that semio-capitalism constructs through its mediatainment systems of command and control. Maybe it is this in the end that Berardi is seeking when he tells us panic is a sign of the acceleration of semiotization of our dematerialized society: the moment when the brain can no longer decode and predict the future. Closed off from this ability to forecast movement into a future, the human animal retreats into despair and depression, and begins to live in the spaces of violence and rage rather than of those of art and creativity. Ultimately Berardi sees men like himself as therapist of the cognitariat: In the days to come, politics and therapy will be one and the same. The people will feel hopeless and depressed and panicked, because they can’t deal with the post-growth economy and they will miss our dissolving identity. Our cultural task will be to attend to these people and to take care of their trauma showing them the way to pursue the happy adaptation at hand. (p. 220) 6 I for one do not hope to “adapt’ to so staid a vision of acceptance offered by Berardi and the new wave of Reality Engineers. I would rather live with my rage and violence, pain and suffering than to allow my mind to be adapted to the machine of the new Symbolic Order. Maybe what we need is what Lacan spoke when he described humans as needing “fictions in order to attain the real without believing in them” (Zizke above). Would this not entail an Aesthetics of the Real? Isn’t it time to construct a space of freedom that allows true singularity of thought and life to be shared rather than enforced by the Reality Engineers of some Utopian Project?

## Cap Good

**Transition fails, causes war and starvation, and re-etrenches their impacts - consumption would reemerge even worse**

**Monbiot 9** George Monbiot, The Guardian, 2009, Is there any point in fighting to stave off industrial apocalypse?, [www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cif-green/2009/aug/17/environment-climate-change](http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cif-green/2009/aug/17/environment-climate-change)

I detect in your writings, and in the conversations we have had, an attraction towards – almost a yearning for – this apocalypse, a sense that you see it as a cleansing fire that will rid the world of a diseased society. If this is your view, I do not share it. I'm sure we can agree that the immediate consequences of collapse would be hideous: the breakdown of the systems that keep most of us alive; mass starvation; war. These alone surely give us sufficient reason to fight on, however faint our chances appear. But even if we were somehow able to put this out of our minds, I believe that what is likely to come out on the other side will be worse than our current settlement. Here are three observations: 1 Our species (unlike most of its members) is tough and resilient; 2 When civilisations collapse, psychopaths take over; 3 We seldom learn from others' mistakes. From the first observation, this follows: even if you are hardened to the fate of humans, you can surely see that our species will not become extinct without causing the extinction of almost all others. However hard we fall, we will recover sufficiently to land another hammer blow on the biosphere. We will continue to do so until there is so little left that even Homo sapiens can no longer survive. This is the ecological destiny of a species possessed of outstanding intelligence, opposable thumbs and an ability to interpret and exploit almost every possible resource – in the absence of political restraint. From the second and third observations, this follows: instead of gathering as free collectives of happy householders, survivors of this collapse will be subject to the will of people seeking to monopolise remaining resources. This will is likely to be imposed through violence. Political accountability will be a distant memory. The chances of conserving any resource in these circumstances are approximately zero.The human and ecological consequences of the first global collapse are likely to persist for many generations, perhaps for our species' remaining time on earth. To imagine that good could come of the involuntary failure of industrial civilisation is also to succumb to denial. The answer to your question – what will we learn from this collapse? – is nothing.

#### Cap’s sustainable---solves resource scarcity and climate change.

Rainer Zitelmann 21. German historian and author of “The Rich in Public Opinion.” "Consumption Presumption: Are Human Beings Destroying the World?" National Interest. 2-12-2021. https://nationalinterest.org/feature/consumption-presumption-are-human-beings-destroying-world-178114

Some people claim that we need to cut our consumption or there will be no hope for the planet. Such claims are based on the thesis that continued growth increases the rate at which the earth’s finite resources are consumed and, moreover, leads to irreversible climate change. And such warnings are by no means new. In 1970, for instance, the Club of Rome attracted a great deal of attention with the publication of The Limits to Growth. A Report for the Club of Rome’s Project on the Predicament of Mankind, which has to date sold more than thirty million copies in thirty languages. The book warned people to change their ways and had a clear message: the world’s raw materials, and in particular, oil would soon be used up. In twenty years, the scientists predicted, we would have used the very last drop of oil. Of course, the Club of Rome’s models for the depletion of oil—and almost all other major raw materials—were wrong. According to the scenarios presented in The Limits to Growth, we should now be living on a planet that has been devoid of natural gas, copper, lead, aluminum and tungsten for decades. And we were supposed to have run out of silver in 1985. Despite the bleak forecasts, as of January 2020, the United States Geological Survey estimated silver reserves worldwide at 560,000 tons. More from Less Employing an extensive array of data, the American scientist Andrew McAfee proves in his book More from Less that economic growth is no longer coupled to the consumption of raw materials. Data for the United States, for example, show that of seventy-two resources, from aluminum to zinc, only six are not yet post-peak. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the U.S. economy has grown strongly in recent years, consumption of many commodities is actually decreasing. Back in 2015, the American environmental scientist Jesse Ausubel wrote an essay, “The Return of Nature: How Technology Liberates the Environment,” showing that Americans are consuming fewer and fewer raw materials per capita. Total consumption of steel, copper, fertilizer, wood and paper, which had previously always risen in line with economic growth, had plateaued and was now in constant decline. Such across-the-board reductions in natural resource consumption are only possible because of much-maligned capitalism: companies are constantly developing more efficient production methods and reducing the amount of raw materials they consume. Of course, they are not doing this primarily to protect the environment but to cut costs. What's more, a constant stream of innovations has promoted the trend of miniaturization or dematerialization. Just think of your smartphone. How many devices has your smartphone replaced and how many raw materials did they use to consume? Calculator Telephone Video camera Alarm clock Voice recorder Navigation system Camera CD-player/radio Compass Nowadays, many people no longer have a fax machine or street atlas because they have everything they need on their smartphone. Some even use their phones instead of a wristwatch. You used to need four separate microphones in your telephone, cassette recorder, Dictaphone and video camera, today you just need one—in your smartphone. Fighting climate change with nuclear energy The finite nature of the world’s natural resources is one argument against growth, climate change is another. Let’s take China as an example: China currently emits more CO2 than any other country in the world and is building a number of new nuclear power plants in order to achieve carbon neutrality by 2060. With the new build program well underway, China’s first new-generation nuclear power plant recently went into operation. In the very near future, China intends to start exporting power plants. The latest generation of nuclear power plants is much safer than earlier models—and can play a pivotal role in the fight against climate change. In the United States, Joe Biden is already evaluating the advantages of small modular reactor (SMR) nuclear power plants. As the name suggests, SMRs are smaller than traditional nuclear fission reactors and offer a maximum capacity of three hundred megawatts. In the United Kingdom, for example, a consortium led by Rolls-Royce has announced plans to build up to sixteen SMR power plants. So far, two reactors of this type are in operation, both onboard the floating nuclear power plant “\Akademik Lomonosov, which supplies heat and electricity to the Siberian city of Pevec and its one hundred thousand inhabitants. Anticapitalists blame capitalism for resource consumption and climate change. But political decisions—such as Germany’s decision to phase out nuclear energy—frequently have a negative impact on climate change. Telling people to cut their consumption must seem like pure mockery to the hundreds of millions of people around the world who are still living in extreme poverty. What they need is more capitalism and economic growth. Just like in China, where the number of people living in extreme poverty has fallen from 88 percent in 1981 to less than 1 percent today. Andrew McAfee’s book has an optimistic message about how we don't have to turn back the clocks and cut our consumption: capitalism and technological progress are allowing us to steward the world’s resources, rather than stripping them bare. Growth is sustainable leads to world peace and solves a laundry list of threats. (36) Mark Budolfson 21. PhD in Philosophy. Assistant Professor in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health and Justice at the Rutgers School of Public Health and Center for Population–Level Bioethics "Arguments for Well-Regulated Capitalism, and Implications for Global Ethics, Food, Environment, Climate Change, and Beyond". Cambridge Core. 5-7-2021. <https://www-cambridge-org.proxy.library.emory.edu/core/journals/ethics-and-international-affairs/article/arguments-for-wellregulated-capitalism-and-implications-for-global-ethics-food-environment-climate-change-and-beyond/96F422D04E171EECDEF77312266AE9DD> //Aryan Discourse on food ethics often advocates the anti-capitalist idea that we need less capitalism, less growth, and less globalization if we want to make the world a better and more equitable place, with arguments focused on applications to food, globalization, and a just society. For example, arguments for this anti-capitalist view are at the core of some chapters in nearly every handbook and edited volume in the rapidly expanding subdiscipline of food ethics. None of these volumes (or any article published in this subdiscipline broadly construed) focuses on a defense of globalized capitalism.1 More generally, discourse on global ethics, environment, and political theory in much of academia—and in society—increasingly features this anti-capitalist idea as well.2 The idea is especially prominent in discourse surrounding the environment, climate, and global poverty, where we face a nexus of problems of which capitalism is a key driver, including climate change, air and water pollution, the challenge of feeding the world, ensuring sustainable development for the world's poorest, and other interrelated challenges. It is therefore important to ask whether this anti-capitalist idea is justified by reason and evidence that is as strong as the degree of confidence placed in it by activists and many commentators on food ethics, global ethics, and political theory, more generally. In fact, many experts argue that this anti-capitalist idea is not supported by reason and argument and is actually wrong. The main contribution of this essay is to explain the structure of the leading arguments against the anti-capitalist idea, and in favor of the opposite conclusion. I begin by focusing on the general argument in favor of well-regulated globalized capitalism as the key to a just, flourishing, and environmentally healthy world. This is the most important of all of the arguments in terms of its consequences for health, wellbeing, and justice, and it is endorsed by experts in the empirically minded disciplines best placed to analyze the issue, including experts in long-run global development, human health, wellbeing, economics, law, public policy, and other related disciplines. On the basis of the arguments outlined below, well-regulated capitalism has been endorsed by recent Democratic presidents of the United States such as Barack Obama, and by progressive Nobel laureates who have devoted their lives to human development and more equitable societies, as well as by a wide range of experts in government and leading nongovernmental organizations. The goal of this essay is to make the structure and importance of these arguments clear, and thereby highlight that discourse on global ethics and political theory should engage carefully with them. The goal is not to endorse them as necessarily sound and correct. The essay will begin by examining general arguments for and against capitalism, and then turn to implications for food, the environment, climate change, and beyond. Arguments for and against Forms of Capitalism The Argument against Capitalism Capitalism is often argued to be a key driver of many of society's ills: inequalities, pollution, land use changes, and incentives that cause people to live differently than in their ideal dreams. Capitalism can sometimes deepen injustices. These negative consequences are easy to see—resting, as they do, at the center of many of society's greatest challenges.3 And at the same time, it is often difficult to see the positive consequences of capitalism.4 What are the positive consequences of allowing private interests to clear-cut forests and plant crops, especially if those private interests are rich multinational corporations and the forests are in poor, developing countries whose citizens do not receive the profits from deforestation? Why give private companies the right to exploit resources at all, since exploitation almost always has some negative consequences such as those listed above? These are the right questions to ask, and they highlight genuine challenges to capitalism. And in light of these challenges, it is reasonable to consider the possibility that perhaps a different economic system altogether would be more equitable and beneficial to the global population. The Argument for Well-Regulated Capitalism However, things are more complicated than the arguments above would suggest, and the benefits of capitalism, especially for the world's poorest and most vulnerable people, are in fact myriad and significant. In addition, as we will see in this section, many experts argue that capitalism is not the fundamental cause of the previously described problems but rather an essential component of the best solutions to them and of the best methods for promoting our goals of health, well-being, and justice. To see where the defenders of capitalism are coming from, consider an analogy involving a response to a pandemic: if a country administered a rushed and untested vaccine to its population that ended up killing people, we would not say that vaccines were the problem. Instead, the problem would be the flawed and sloppy policies of vaccine implementation. Vaccines might easily remain absolutely essential to the correct response to such a pandemic and could also be essential to promoting health and flourishing, more generally. The argument is similar with capitalism according to the leading mainstream arguments in favor of it: Capitalism is an essential part of the best society we could have, just like vaccines are an essential part of the best response to a pandemic such as COVID-19. But of course both capitalism and vaccines can be implemented poorly, and can even do harm, especially when combined with other incorrect policy decisions. But that does not mean that we should turn against them—quite the opposite. Instead, we should embrace them as essential to the best and most just outcomes for society, and educate ourselves and others on their importance and on how they must be properly designed and implemented with other policies in order to best help us all. In fact, the argument in favor of capitalism is even more dramatic because it claims that much more is at stake than even what is at stake in response to a global pandemic—what is at stake with capitalism is nothing less than whether the world's poorest and most vulnerable billion people will remain in conditions of poverty and oppression, or if they will instead finally gain access to what is minimally necessary for basic health and wellbeing and become increasingly affluent and empowered. The argument in favor of capitalism proceeds as follows: Premise 1. Development and the past. Over the course of recorded human history, the majority of historical increases in health, wellbeing, and justice have occurred in the last two centuries, largely as a result of societies adopting or moving toward capitalism. Capitalism is a relevant cause of these improvements, in the sense that they could not have happened to such a degree if it were not for capitalism and would not have happened to the same degree under any alternative noncapitalist approach to structuring society. The argument in support of this premise relies on observed relationships across societies and centuries between indicators of degree of capitalism, wealth, investments in public goods, and outcomes for health, wellbeing, and justice, together with econometric analysis in support of the conclusion that the best explanation of these correlations and the underlying mechanism is that large increases in health, wellbeing, and justice are largely driven by increasing investments in public goods. The scale of increased wealth necessary to maximize these investments requires capitalism. Thus, as capitalist societies have become dramatically wealthier over the past hundred years (and wealthier than societies with alternative systems), this has allowed larger investments in public goods, which simply has not been possible in a sustained way in societies without the greater wealth that capitalism makes possible. Important investments in public goods include investments in basic medical knowledge, in health and nutrition programs, and in the institutional capacity and know-how to regulate society and capitalism itself. As a result, capitalism is a primary driver of positive outcomes in health and wellbeing (such as increased life expectancy, lowered child and maternal mortality, adequate calories per day, minimized infectious disease rates, a lower percentage and number of people in poverty, and more reported happiness);5 and in justice (such as reduced deaths from war and homicide; higher rankings in human rights indices; the reduced prevalence of racist, sexist, homophobic opinions in surveys; and higher literacy rates).6 These quantifiable positive consequences of global capitalism dramatically outweigh the negative consequences (such as deaths from pollution in the course of development), with the result that the net benefits from capitalism in terms of health, wellbeing, and justice have been greater than they would have been under any known noncapitalist approach to structuring society.7 Premise 2. Economics, ethics, and policy. Although capitalism has often been ill-regulated and therefore failed to maximize net benefits for health, wellbeing, and justice, it can become well-regulated so that it maximizes these societal goals, by including mechanisms identified by economists and other policy experts that do the following: optimally8 regulate negative effects such as pollution and monopoly power, and invest in public goods such as education, basic healthcare, and fundamental research including biomedical knowledge (more generally, policies that correct the failures of free markets that economists have long recognized will arise from “externalities” in the absence of regulation);9 ensure equity and distributive justice (for example, via wealth redistribution);10 ensure basic rights, justice, and the rule of law independent of the market (for example, by an independent judiciary, bill of rights, property rights, and redistribution and other legislation to correct historical injustices due to colonialism, racism, and correct current and historical distortions that have prevented markets from being fair);11 and ensure that there is no alternative way of structuring society that is more efficient or better promotes the equity, justice, and fairness goals outlined above (by allowing free exchange given the regulations mentioned).12 To summarize the implication of the first two premises, well-regulated capitalism is essential to best achieving our ethical goals—which is true even though capitalism has certainly not always been well regulated historically. Society can still do much better and remove the large deficits in terms of health, wellbeing, and justice that exist under the current inferior and imperfect versions of capitalism. Premise 3. Development and the future. If the global spread of capitalism is allowed to continue, desperate poverty can be essentially eliminated in our lifetimes. Furthermore, this can be accomplished faster and in a more just way via well-regulated global capitalism than by any alternatives. If we instead opt for less capitalism, less growth, and less globalization, then desperate poverty will continue to exist for a significant portion of the world's population into the further future, and the world will be a worse and less equitable place than it would have been with more capitalism. For example, in a world with less capitalism, there would be more overpopulation, food insecurity, air pollution, ill health, injustice, and other problems. In part, this is because of the factors identified by premise 1, which connect a turn away from capitalism with a turn away from continuing improvements in health, wellbeing, and justice, especially for the developing world. In addition, fertility declines are also a consequence of increased wealth, and the size of the population is a primary determinant of food demand and other environmental stressors.13 Finally, as discussed at length in the next section of the essay, capitalism can be naturally combined with optimal environmental regulations.14 Even bracketing anything like optimal regulation, it remains true that sufficiently wealthy nations reduce environmental degradation as they become wealthier, whereas developing nations that are nearing peak degradation will remain stuck at the worst levels of degradation if we stall growth, rather than allowing them to transition to less and less degradation in the future via capitalism and economic growth.15 In contrast, well-regulated capitalism is a key part of the best way of coping with these problems, as well as a key part of dealing with climate change, global food production, and other specific challenges, as argued at length in the next section. Here it is important to stress that we should favor well-regulated capitalism that includes correct investments in public goods over other capitalist systems such as the neoliberalism of the recent past that promoted inadequately regulated capitalism with inadequate concern for externalities, equity, and background distortions and injustices.16 Conclusion. Therefore, we should be in favor of capitalism over noncapitalism, and we should especially favor well-regulated capitalism, which is the ethically optimal economic system and is essential to any just basic structure for society. This argument is impressive because, as stated earlier in the essay, it is based on evidence that is so striking that it leads a bipartisan range of open-minded thinkers and activists to endorse well-regulated capitalism, including many of those who were not initially attracted to the view because of a reasonable concern for the societal ills with which we began. To better understand why such a range of thinkers could agree that well-regulated capitalism is best, it may help to clarify some things that are not assumed or implied by the argument for it, which could be invoked by other bad arguments for capitalism. One thing the argument above does not assume is that health, wellbeing, or justice are the same thing as wealth, because, in fact, they are not. Instead, the argument above relies on well-accepted, measurable indicators of health and wellbeing, such as increased lifespan; decreased early childhood mortality; adequate nutrition; and other empirically measurable leading indicators of health, wellbeing, and justice.17 Similarly, the argument that capitalism promotes justice, peace, freedom, human rights, and tolerance relies on empirical metrics for each of these.18 Furthermore, the argument does not assume that because these indicators of health, wellbeing, and justice are highly correlated with high degrees of capitalism, that therefore capitalism is the direct cause of these good outcomes. Rather, the analyses suggest instead that something other than capitalism is the direct cause of societal improvements (such as improvements in knowledge and technology, public infrastructure, and good governance), and that capitalism is simply a necessary condition for these improvements to happen.19 In other words, the richer a society is, the more it is able to invest in all of these and other things that are the direct causes of health, wellbeing, and justice. But, to maximize investment in these things societies need well-regulated capitalism. As part of these analyses, it is often stressed that current forms of capitalism around the world are highly defective and must be reformed in the direction of well-regulated capitalism because they lack investments in public goods, such as basic knowledge, healthcare, nutrition, other safety nets, and good governance.20 In this way, an argument for a particular kind of progressive reformism is an essential part of the analyses that lead many to endorse the more general argument for well-regulated capitalism. Although these analyses are nuanced, and appropriately so, it remains the case that the things that directly lead to health, wellbeing, and justice require resources, and the best path toward generating those resources is well-regulated capitalism. And on the flip side, according to the analyses behind premise 1 described above, an anti-capitalist system would not produce the resources that are needed, and would thus be a disaster, especially for the poorest billion people who are most desperately in need of the resources that capitalism can create and direct, to escape from extreme poverty.21

#### Degrowth offers no guarantee that environmental impacts will decline. Alternative systems worsen racial oppression.

Jim Lindgren 18. Professor of Law at Northwestern University. "Can There Be Capitalism Without Racism? – Reason.com". No Publication. 8-20-2018. https://reason.com/volokh/2018/08/20/can-there-be-capitalism-without-racism/?amp

The website Campus Reform points to a multi-year academic program, Racial Capitalism, hosted at the UC-Davis Humanities Institute that explores the links between racism and capitalism (tip to Glenn Reynolds). Among the questions that were asked at the event launching the program are: "Which came first, capitalism or racism?" "Can there be capitalism without racism?" "Is capitalism always racial?" IMO, the answers to these questions are fairly obvious: Racism came first. Every inhabited continent had slaves, and ethnic out-groups were among the most likely to be enslaved. It is the abolition of slavery that is particularly Western, as Orlando Patterson explains his books Freedom and Slavery and Social Death. (and 3.) If there can be any economic system without racism (I suppose it depends on how high one's standards are), then capitalism is not always racist and there can be capitalism without racism. Capitalism is easier to square with a reduction in racism than most ideologies because (a) it is individualistic, (b) it is not built on envy for despised groups, and (c) in the United States at least, pro-capitalists tend to be less racist personally than anti-capitalists. Indeed, in the general public it is the opposition to capitalism and the desire for redistribution that are positively associated with racism and intolerance. I explore this relationship in "Redistribution and Racism, Tolerance and Capitalism," which analyzes data from 20 nationally representative surveys of the general public. Abstract In debates over the roles of law and government in promoting the equality of income or in redistributing the fruits of capitalism, widely different motives are attributed to those who favor or oppose capitalism or income redistribution. According to one view, largely accepted in the academic social psychology literature (Jost et al., 2003), opposition to income redistribution and support for capitalism reflect an orientation toward social dominance, a desire to dominate other groups. According to another view that goes back at least to the nineteenth century origins of Marxism, anti-capitalism and a support for greater legal efforts to redistribute income reflect envy for the property of others and a frustration with one's lot in a capitalist system. In this paper I expand and test the first (social dominance) thesis using twenty nationally representative General Social Surveys conducted by the National Opinion Research Center between 1977 and 2010, involving over 21,000 respondents. I first show that respondents who express traditionally racist views (on segregation, interracial marriage, and inborn racial abilities) tend to support greater income redistribution. Traditional racists also express less positive views toward free-market capitalism and its consequences, tending to want the government to guarantee jobs for everyone and to fix prices, wages, and profits. Next, I report a similar pattern for those who express intolerance for unpopular groups on the fifteen Stouffer tolerance questions (regarding racists, homosexuals, communists, extreme militarists, and atheists). Those who express less tolerance for unpopular groups tend to favor income redistribution and to be less supportive of capitalism and its discontents. Using full latent variable structural equation modeling shows similar results. The data are broadly inconsistent with the standard belief in the social psychology literature that pro-capitalist and anti-redistributionist views are positively associated with racism and intolerance. I then explore an alternative hypothesis, showing that, compared to anti-redistributionists, strong redistributionists have much higher odds of reporting anger, sadness, loneliness, outrage, and other negative emotions. Similarly, anti-redistributionists had much higher odds of reporting being happy or at ease. Last, both redistributionists and anti-capitalists expressed lower overall happiness, less happy marriages, and lower satisfaction with their financial situations and with their jobs or housework. Further, in several General Social Surveys anti-redistributionists were generally more likely to report altruistic behavior than those who favored a stronger policy of government redistribution of income. In addition, in a 1996 survey: Not only do redistributionists report more anger, but they report that their anger lasts longer. Further, when asked about the last time they were angry, strong redistributionists were more than twice as likely as strong opponents of leveling to admit that they responded to their anger by plotting revenge. The more interesting question (than whether you can have capitalism without racism) is whether you can have socialism without racism. The answer is yes, but the reason is an enlightening one. In the long run, a robust socialism (that dominates most of the economy) tends to lead to the scapegoating of demonized out-groups, because there must be someone to blame for economic failure. Thus, the Soviet Union began with hating the Kulaks and the ownership class more generally, but once these were destroyed, they needed someone else to blame. Though it took many decades, the Soviet Union went beyond targeting "counter-revolutionaries" to add Jews to the list. So the demonized out-groups under socialism don't have to be defined by race or ethnicity; they could instead be defined by economic class, religion, or nationality. Accordingly, socialism doesn't have to be racist, but when it dominates the economy almost inevitably there must be some group to despise. It would be good if the academy in general–and the UC-Davis Racial Capitalism program in particular–were ideologically diverse enough to reflect some of the substantial evidence from the last few decades on the relationship of capitalism and racism in the views of the general public, evidence that tends to point to a negative association between racism and support for capitalism.

#### Peak growth and absolute decoupling are coming – only crisis causes overconsumption.

Nordhaus 20 – founder and executive director of the Breakthrough Institute. (Ted, “Must Growth Doom the Planet?,” The New Atlantis, Number 61, Winter 2020, pp. 76-86)//gcd

But the solution, such as it is, turns out to be right in front of us. Mainstream economic theory may posit that endless economic growth is desirable and possible, but what most macroeconomists actually fret about today is stagnation. The growth rate of developed economies has been [falling for decades](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?end=2018&locations=XD&start=1961&type=shaded&view=chart). This is due not to biophysical limits to consumption, but rather to the simple mathematical reality that the richer an economy becomes, the more wealth it needs to gain each year to maintain the same growth rate. Economic growth in wealthy post-industrial economies, in other words, appears to be inexorably slowing without the need for eco-austerity. Each additional increment of growth in advanced economies also typically becomes less material-intensive, as sectors like manufacturing, mining, and refining account for a smaller share of total economic output, and knowledge and service sectors account for a larger share. Population growth is slowing even faster than economic growth, as fertility rates typically fall as incomes and education rise — a dynamic that has been as robust a feature of global modernity as rising consumption. Japan, now 126 million people, could see its population fall by as much as half, to less than [60 million by 2100](http://www.ipss.go.jp/pp-newest/e/ppfj02/Rf_1_e.html). The European Union, currently about 500 million, could shrink to as low as [300 million by 2100.](https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/total-population-outlook-from-unstat-3/assessment-1) Projections vary about when exactly global population will peak and begin to decline, but all major demographic forecasts project population growth trending in the same direction. Absent a radical change in the demography of a rapidly modernizing and urbanizing planet, global population [is likely to peak](https://population.un.org/wpp/Graphs/DemographicProfiles/Line/900) and begin to decline late in this century or early in the next. Taken together, declining fertility, slowing per capita economic growth, the changing composition of economic activity, and continuing improvements in technology and resource productivity are likely, toward the end of this century, to bring a peak and decline in the consumption of most important resources, and in impacts upon the environment. In fact, for absolute material demands upon the natural environment not to decline over the long term, one of these three robust trends would need to reverse itself. Global fertility trends would need to start rising again. Long-term slowing of growth rates in industrialized economies would need to reverse. Or a broad swath of food, energy, and resource technologies would need to start to become less resource-efficient. Smil, like a number of other environmental scholars, contests this notion. Instead, he argues that increases in resource productivity will not be put toward lower resource demands but toward more consumption and faster economic growth. Increasingly efficient steam engines in the nineteenth century famously did not result in a reduction in the use of coal but the opposite. One hundred fifty years of improving lighting efficiency hasn’t resulted in lower use of energy for lighting but rather has inspired us to light up many more things. Much of the long-term improvement in the efficiency of internal combustion engines, Smil notes, has gone toward creating larger and more powerful vehicles. As long as there is pent up demand for more consumption, some portion of productivity gains will be put toward more consumption rather than less resource use. But the claim that these “rebound” effects assure the endless growth of material consumption assumes that demand for them will never saturate. For that to be true, it must also be the case that the wealthier we get, the more material consumption we will demand, forever. Thirty-six-ounce steaks must become 72-ounce steaks, SUVs must become eighteen-wheelers, 2,000-square-foot split-level ranch homes must become 4,000-square-foot McMansions, and so on. There is really not much evidence for that proposition. Despite our affinity for supersizing our homes, our automobiles, and our portions, the U.S. economy has nonetheless been following the same basic trajectory as all other developed economies: toward slower national and per capita income growth and consumption of material goods and services. Rockefeller University’s [Jesse Ausubel has studied one hundred key resources](https://thebreakthrough.org/journal/issue-5/the-return-of-nature) in the United States over the past century, such as cropland, water, electricity, nickel, and petroleum. Over a third of them are past peak consumption. Similarly, the [United States](https://www.c2es.org/content/u-s-emissions/) and much of the [European Union](https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/indicators/greenhouse-gas-emission-trends-6/assessment-3) have seen falling greenhouse gas emissions over the last decade or more, even [accounting for the outsourcing](https://twitter.com/MaxCRoser/status/1205057947103092741) of industrial production to places like China. Globally, by contrast, resource use and carbon emissions continue to rise, despite long-term and ongoing improvements in resource productivity. This is the reason that Smil characterizes claims that economic growth might decouple from material and energy inputs as “highly misleading.” But the fact that overall demand for material goods and services has risen during the postwar period, when the global population has tripled and billions of people have moved from deep agrarian poverty to urban and industrial living arrangements provides no strong basis for Smil’s argument. As both population and economic growth rates flatten out over the course of this century, it is likely that resource-productivity gains will overtake global economic growth rates, resulting in falling global demand for material resources over the long term. As [a 2019 Breakthrough Institute report](https://thebreakthrough.org/issues/food/livestock-revolution) showed, global pasture land, the largest single human use of land, peaked in 2000 and continues to decline even as global beef production continues to rise. In [a 2013 paper](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1728-4457.2013.00561.x), Ausubel and colleagues argued that global cropland too appears close to peaking, even as global crop production continues to rise. As with all growth curves, peak consumption of various material resources is not guaranteed to last. These trends could represent the top of a bell curve, the bottom of a new S-curve, or just a long plateau. But what they do demonstrate is that absolute decoupling of resources from economic growth is possible, even given a global economy today that still features robust population and income growth. Smil’s case for establishing limits to growth depends upon a further claim: that preserving economic growth while reducing environmental impacts can’t happen soon enough to avoid surpassing key biophysical boundaries, which would lead to catastrophe for human societies. But Smil is too aware of the many failed proclamations of environmental scientists to make any strong or specific claim about what those biophysical limits might be. “Forecasting the state of modern civilization for generations or centuries to come remains an impossible exercise,” he acknowledges. Elsewhere — for example in his 2010 book [Energy Myths and Realities](https://www.aei.org/research-products/book/energy-myths-and-realities/) — Smil has been less than catastrophic about global warming, the environmental risk most commonly thought to threaten the long-term survival of human societies. Nor does he worry that we will run out of resources. Instead, he invokes poorly defined challenges having to do with arable land, soil erosion, depleted aquifers, and crop productivity, combined with a changing climate. He is quite certain, though, that none of it can be sustained. “Pursuit of the highest possible economic growth rates, extending the culture of excessive consumption to additional billions of people, and treating the biosphere as a mere assembly of goods and services to be exploited (and used as a dumping ground) with impunity,” he argues, “must change in radical ways.” In the end, Smil does offer a prediction of sorts, if not a very strong one. By the end of this century, he argues, human societies will need to impose limits upon economic growth in order to sustain human wellbeing for the long term. But as prophecy, Smil’s prediction is less provocative than it might first appear. By the end of this century, global population will likely be approaching zero growth anyway and a much more industrialized global economy will likely be struggling with the same headwinds to sustained rates of per capita growth that developed economies have been struggling with for decades. In this regard, Smil’s prognostication, should it come to pass, would follow a similar pattern to many other environmental laws and regulations. Environmental restrictions have often lagged, not led, the peaking of pollution and other environmental impacts. We “saved” the whales only after we had hunted many global populations to extirpation, and developed better substitutes for most of the resources we depended upon them for. Forests have returned across many parts of the United States, Europe, and Latin America after we no longer needed those lands to grow food. [One 2005 study found](http://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.energy.30.050504.164507) that 76 percent of protected areas across Latin America and the Caribbean was under little threat of human development without protection, a dynamic that [appears to be the case globally as well](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0008273). We reached a global agreement to protect the ozone only after [DuPont](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-0836(199711)6:5%3C276::AID-BSE123%3E3.0.CO;2-A) had developed a cheap substitute for chlorofluorocarbons. In answer to modern environmentalism’s tautology, Smil offers redundancy. Human societies will need to impose global limits to growth, he suggests, around the time that growth, or at least growing demands upon resources, will likely be coming to an end anyway. Given how much damage two centuries of unprecedented growth and economic development have done to the biosphere, many imagine, understandably, that the end of growth might be a panacea for the natural world. But we should not be so quick to assume that a smaller and less affluent human population will necessarily bring lower demands upon natural resources. History is replete with episodes where much smaller human populations accounted for environmental destruction at large scales. Early North Americans in the paleolithic era cleared most of the continent’s forests and hunted mammoths and other megafauna into extinction. Across human history, roughly [three-quarters](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3010e.pdf#page=21) of deforestation in temperate forests occurred before the Industrial Revolution, when the human population was less than a billion people, almost all of whom lived in deep poverty compared to today’s industrial standards. More recently, economic crises in relatively developed regions, such as [Southeast Asia](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1759-5436.1999.mp30003005.x), the [former Soviet Union](https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.12450), and [Greece](https://doi.org/10.1080/13608746.2013.799731) have led to serious environmental consequences, as economically struggling populations turned to forests for firewood and to illegal hunting and fishing for food, to devastating effect.