# Northwestern---Round 2 vs. Baylor TW

## 1NC

### T---1NC

#### The ‘core’ antitrust laws are Sherman, Clayton, and FTC

Michael A. Rataj 21, PC, Law Degree from the Detroit College of Law, “Consequences for Breaking Antitrust Laws”, 5/12/2021, https://www.michaelrataj.com/blog/2021/05/consequences-for-breaking-antitrust-laws/

The core antitrust laws are…

The three core antitrust laws are the Sherman Act, the Federal Trade Commission Act and the Clayton Act. The Sherman Act primarily prohibits unreasonable restraint of trade and monopolization. Those who are in violation of the Sherman Act may face hefty fines, up to $100 million, and up to 10 years behind bars.

The FTC Act prohibits unfair practices or acts and unfair approaches to harming competition. Only the FTC can file cases under this act. The Clayton Act is a catch-all that covers every practice not covered by the Sherman and FTC Acts. Then consequences for violations of both of these acts are usually civil in nature.

#### ‘Expanding the scope’ must increase the area covered by antitrust law

Cesar A. Noble 17, Judge on the Connecticut Superior Court, Hartford Judicial District, 777 Residential, LLC v. Metro. Dist. Comm'n, 2017 Conn. Super. LEXIS 4178, \*4-5 (Conn. Super. Ct. August 1, 2017), 8/1/2017, Lexis

The defendant relies upon §7-249 as authority for the supplemental assessment. The statute provides that "[b]enefits to buildings or structures constructed or expanded after the initial assessment may be assessed as if the new or expanded buildings or structures had existed at the time of the initial assessment." The parties dispute whether the conversion of the property constitutes a construction or expansion of buildings or structures granting authority to the defendant to levy a supplemental assessment. The plaintiff argues that because the conversion did not constitute an expansion, that is, an increase in the volume or physical area of a building the defendant had no authority under §7-249 for the supplemental assessment. 5 In the view of the plaintiff it is significant that the conversion did not increase the physical footprint or interior square footage of the property in any way including by a vertical [\*5] enlargement. Absent such an increase, asserts the plaintiff, there can be no construction or expansion of any building or structure. The defendant assert that the construction of the 285 new residential units constitute new structures within the plain meaning of §7-249. The court agrees with the defendant.

[FOOTNOTE]

5 The plaintiff relies upon the definition of the word "expand" found in Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (10th ed. 2002) of "to open up; to increase the extent, number, volume, or scope of."

### Frame Subtraction---1NC

#### Using the term ‘trade’ in the Salem evidence to describe exploitative economic interactions is a contradictory and self-defeating move that guarantees accelerating poverty and environmental destruction

Johnson 9 – Dave Johnson, Fellow at Campaign for America’s Future, Senior Fellow at Renew California, “Misuse Of The Words Protectionism And Trade Is Making Us Poorer”, Huffington Post, 9-3, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/dave-johnson/misuse-of-the-words-prote\_b\_251163.html

Language has tremendous power. People like George Lakoff and Drew Westin, who study the use of language in political discussion, say that our choice of words has the power to actually affect the “wiring” or neuron circuits that our brains use to think.

The corporate marketers and political persuaders have certainly learned the power of language to influence us. It has even gotten to the point where “neuromarketing“ uses MRI and EEG to study how our brains react to certain stimuli so they can be used to market and persuade.

In politics, I think that we have even reached a point where we give words more power and importance even than the ideas the words represent. In the Bush years we learned that the persuaders believed they could “create their own reality.“

“That’s not the way the world really works anymore,” he [Bush administration official] continued. “We’re an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you’re studying that reality — judiciously, as you will — we’ll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that’s how things will sort out. We’re history’s actors...and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do.”

The influencers have become adept at scaring up the public into stampedes that can have sudden and dramatic effects on politicians. So lawmakers have gotten into the habit of basing their decisions on what they think (fear) the public believes (according to what Drudge and Fox are claiming they believe) rather than what is the best policy. And in fact, it is often the case that the public was behind the right policy all along. (Like with a health care public option — the manipulators had the politicians convinced it was “centrist” to oppose that.) Consequently, words are used as weapons by professionals who wish to distract us from things that are in front of our own faces.

I was conscious of this the other day in the post, “How Should We Talk About Industrial And Manufacturing Policy?” in which I wrote:

“The phrase “industrial policy” sounds so Walter Mondale, 1970s, smokestacks and brick factory old-fashioned. I suspect the subject turns people off, eyes glaze over, hands reach under the table for iPhones and Blackberries...”

Making things in America is crucially important to our future economy. But today, as we join the discussion of how to restore America’s economy, the manipulators have been busy, so it matters as much that we use the right words as that we explore the right ideas and policies.

The Words “Protectionism” and “Trade”

Two words that have significant power today are “protectionism” and “trade.” In current usage anything that can be labeled as “trade” in any way shape or form is in all cases considered by most to be a good thing. And anything that can be labeled as “protectionism” in any way shape or form is in all cased a bad thing. Simple as that. If you want to engage in some practice that people might oppose you try to label it as “trade” to shut down discussion. It you want to block a policy that people might favor you try to label it as “protectionism” to shut down discussion.

I am thinking about this because of the post, American Protectionism Is A Myth, by Leo Gerard and Scott Paul. They wrote about the “shrill warnings against protectionist measures have been issued by editorial pages and foreign officials.”

But what is this “protectionism?” They write:

“This is the untold story of protectionism: the barriers that other governments erect to block American goods and the mercantilist measures they utilize to gain market share in the U.S. These practices range from China’s currency misalignment and massive industrial subsidies to non-tariff barriers in Korea and Japan. All these impediments have been well documented by U.S. trade officials, but the mere act of identifying these practices is now viewed as protectionism, even though taking action to eliminate them would expand world trade, reduce global imbalances and preserve the free market.”

Yes, just talking about what other countries are doing to protect and promote their own manufacturing can be labeled as being “protectionist.” This is because once these practices are pointed out the natural next thought is that America should be just as smart about encouraging our own domestic manufacturing.

The op-ed, Falling Behind On Green Tech, by John Doerr and Jeff Immelt in yesterday’s Washington Post, reflects this fear of being branded with the word “protectionism.” They write:

“. . . Do we want to win the race to lead the next great global industry, clean energy? That is the choice before us.

We are clearly not in the lead today. That position is held by China, which understands the importance of controlling its energy future. China’s commitment to developing clean energy technologies and markets is breathtaking.

[. . .] How can we catch up? Not through protectionism or massive government intervention but through the power of good old home-grown innovation.”

This statement is an example of how people react to the fear of the negative associations that the manipulators have placed on the word “protectionism.” (They also show a bit of fear of being branded with the word “government.”) They try to escape from any such notion by using the “good” words, “home-grown innovation.” But of course you can’t have “home grown” without protecting your home, which involves government. And you aren’t going to have innovation without the protection and enabling that government brings through schools to educate the innovators and courts to protect their intellectual property. But never mind, that’s another post.

So it is “protectionist” to say that other countries have smart planning policies that are increasing their wealth because it naturally makes people realize that we ought to do the same.

For example, if I tell you that China requires that 70 percent of the content of wind turbines used in China be manufactured in China, where does that take your thinking about our own country’s efforts to stimulate green manufacturing jobs? It is inevitable that your thinking turns to, “Then why don’t we do that?” And there you inevitably are: protectionism.

Or if I tell you that GE won’t buy wind turbines from American companies, even at the same prices, it is inevitable that your thinking turns to, “Why don’t we do something about that?” And there you inevitably are: protectionism.

You see, being smart and supporting our own country’s manufacturing is labeled “protectionist,” which is bad. China is smart to do this but we are “protectionist” if we suggest we should, too.

It can even be called “protectionist” just to point out that a country’s wealth comes from making things. Because making things here inevitably brings the thinking back to having the government protect our jobs. If we say we should make things here we are undercutting the profits to be made by using exploited labor there.

“Trade” is another word that the manipulators have managed to take control of. “Free trade” is now hardwired as the ultimate good. “Free trade” is trade involving no interference from government. (“Government” is another word that has “bad” attachments.) So I guess “free trade” means no police protection from thieves at the ports, no courts to enforce the purchase agreements, no protection of the ships that carry the traded goods or rules for the sea lanes they follow, no roads for trucks to carry the goods from the ports... (I can’t figure this anti-government stuff out, really. But that’s another post.)

The reason I bring this up is because misuse of the word “trade” is something I keep coming back to. When a company closes a factory here and opens it in a country where workers are exploited with low wages, or the environment is not protected, making the same thing, using the same machines, and the same raw materials, and selling it in the same stores, how is that “trade?” That isn’t trade, that is closing a factory here and moving it there so you can take advantage of exploited workers or dump toxins into the environment.

But by attaching the word “trade” to a scam like this, they get away with it, because “trade” is considered to be good. You can’t be against “trade,” so you can’t be against using exploited workers to make the same stuff you were already making here. And you certainly can’t call for protecting our jobs from being undercut by the use of workers who are exploited and have no recourse. That would be “protectionism.” And that is bad.

The result of this obstruction-by-words is that debt increases as we make less with which to trade, our jobs are sent elsewhere, workers elsewhere are exploited, our government is weakened and we get poorer and poorer.

So as we try to work out new policies that will get our country past the current economic crisis and move toward a new economic paradigm where we all share the benefits of the country we have built, powerful words are in our way.

#### Moving outside the language of neoliberalism is vital to producing a sustainable challenge

Herman 10 – Agatha Herman, Doctor of Philosophy in Human Geography from the University of Exeter, “Ethics, Journeys and Wine: Investigating the Discourses of Fairtrade and Black Economic Empowerment through Wine Networks from South Africa to the UK”, January, https://ore.exeter.ac.uk/repository/bitstream/handle/10036/104988/HermanA.doc?sequence=1

The gap between producer and consumer realities and understandings has long been known and discussed in academic and campaigner literatures, suggesting that it is time to start explicitly considering how to move on from this seemingly circular debate. Cook and Crang (1996: 149) were considering similar questions thirteen years ago and contend that

…it may be more productive to pursue those tactics of intervention that conceive of themselves as working with the surface fetishisms of commodities rather than as reaching behind surface veils to reveal the “real” material cultures hidden behind them.

They advocate ‘getting with the fetish’ as opposed to the deepening and thickening of knowledges that constitute my first suggestion in this arena. This idea is appealing – of hijacking, rupturing and reconstituting the meanings attached, making the fetish visible, roughening its mirror-like surface. Cook and Crang (1996) suggest that this be achieved through thinking through commodity surfaces’ productivities, but how could the FTF or FLO-International use this? The idea, taken from Marcus (1995), of ‘counterposing surfaces from different moments and places in a commodity’s biography, not claiming any as more real, but disrupting their separation from each other’ (Cook and Crang 1996: 147) seems the most appropriate for an organisation to utilise although it does seem somewhat circular in that this counter-position sets up another surface to be ‘roughened’ ad nauseam. To find a truly workable solution do we need to move outside the language of neoliberalism to find new ways of conceptualising alternatives? Is the very use of the word ‘trade’ within Fairtrade, with its historically developed connotations, holding back the debates?

### CP---1NC

#### Unchallenged Big Tech enables the erosion of democratic norms and rise of autocratic tendencies through numerous vectors.

---summary: filter bubbles, echo chambers, a low entry bar, aggregate knowledge about people, the lack of fact-checking, information cascades, and the automatic recommendation algorithm.

Guy Schleffer & Benjamin Miller 21, PhD, Political Science, University of Haifa; Professor, International Relations, University of Haifa. Director, National Security Center, University of Haifa, "The Political Effects of Social Media Platforms on Different Regime Types," Texas National Security Review, Summer 2021, <https://tnsr.org/2021/07/the-political-effects-of-social-media-platforms-on-different-regime-types/>. language edited.

Today, for the first time since 2001, there are more autocracies than democracies in the world. The number of electoral and liberal democracies dropped from 55 percent of all countries at its peak in 2010 to only 48 percent in 2019.1 This decline in the number of liberal democracies is [shredding] ~~crippling~~ the U.S-led liberal world order, weakening America’s post-Cold War hegemony, and shifting power to authoritarian regimes such as China and Russia, leading Fareed Zakaria to claim that “American hegemony died.”2 It seems that illiberal democracies and authoritarian regimes are on the rise all across the globe. Even in the United States, President Donald Trump favored a new kind of hegemony — an illiberal one.3

This phenomenon can be explained by many factors, such as the rise of xenophobic populist movements in reaction to immigration, cultural change, the decline in job and economic security after the 2008 financial crisis, the opposition to globalization, and the loss of sovereignty.4 For authoritarian regimes, the growth of national populist movements in Europe and America is proof that “the liberal idea has outlived its purpose,” as the public has turned against immigration, open borders, and multiculturalism.5 Recent elections worldwide reflect a deep groundswell of anti-establishment sentiment that can easily be mobilized by extremist political parties and candidates.6

In this essay, we highlight the role of U.S. social media platforms in the decline of liberal democracies and the rise of illiberal democracies and autocratic regimes across the world. Previous studies have examined different aspects of the impact of social media platforms on states and regimes but have usually done this in a siloed way — for example, narrowly focusing on the correlation between social media and the rise of populism, or on the influence of social media in Latin America and in the U.S. 2016 elections.7 Sarah Kreps posed a broader research question regarding the different effects of social media platforms in democracies and non-democracies.8 This essay contributes to this body of research by taking an even wider view. We describe the multifaceted impact of American social media platforms in different countries and seek to generalize and categorize this impact by offering an innovative explanation for it. These generalizations and categorizations help to explain why different countries experience the impact of social media in different ways and with varying degrees of intensity. They can also help policymakers to predict what may occur in similar countries where the impact is not yet clear and help them to take preliminary steps to avoid the same phenomenon.

We begin by reviewing social media platforms, their knowledge power (the power they gained by accumulating vast amounts of data about people and turning it into knowledge), and their potential as a liberating mechanism, before examining what went wrong in the last decade. This is followed by a discussion of the variable impacts of social media on the political systems in different states. We explore why the effect varies between different democratic states — for example, in Brazil compared to the United States — as well as between different authoritarian states — i.e., why it has bolstered Russia’s regime while fueling a revolution in Egypt. We suggest that social media’s impact depends mainly on three political actors: domestic opposition, external forces, and the governing regime. By examining how these three actors use social media while considering variations in state capacity and political regime type, a causal model emerges in which there are four different effects of social media: weakening, intensifying, radicalizing, and destabilizing.

We further examine these disparate effects by examining four case studies, each representing a different combination of state capacity (weak vs. strong) and regime type (democratic vs. authoritarian). We argue that, contrary to the optimistic promise of social media platforms at the beginning of the millennium, it seems that they are having a weakening effect on strong democratic regimes, an intensifying effect on strong authoritarian regimes, a radicalizing effect on weak democratic regimes, and a destabilizing effect on weak authoritarian ones. We conclude by presenting the implications of our analysis for the future of the international system.

The Promise of Social Media

Of the seven most popular social media platforms, Facebook owns four: Facebook, Messenger, WhatsApp, and Instagram. Together with YouTube, which is owned by Google, these are the five leading social media platforms not based in China. The most successful social media platform in “grabbing, holding, and processing human attention” is WeChat,9 a China-based application that “encompasses almost every aspect of human life.”10 It is a “one-stop-shop” model that led Facebook to try to consolidate its sub-companies (Facebook, Messenger, WhatsApp, and Instagram) into one giant application.11

Optimists have seen social media platforms as an expression of the liberalizing ethos of the internet: tools for empowering citizens, enabling economic opportunities, increasing freedom of expression, spreading liberal ideas, and providing an alternative communication platform for dissidents.12 This positive view was espoused by some of the founders of U.S. social media platforms and can be traced back to John Perry Barlow’s “Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace,”13 which was popular at the time when these companies were established in Silicon Valley. Although these corporations started out politically neutral, some have moved in recent years toward publicly challenging governments.14 For example, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg has talked about replacing the “old” social infrastructure of the state, “which opposes the flow of knowledge, trade and immigration,”15 with a new global community.16 Zuckerberg also stated: “In many ways, Facebook is more like a government than a traditional company.”17 Google’s Jared Cohen and Eric Schmidt wrote about the game-changing implications of the internet for politics. They predicted that governments “will be caught off-guard when large numbers of their citizens, armed with virtually nothing but cell phones, take part in mini-rebellions that challenge their authority.”18

Social media platforms have the power to strengthen democracies by echoing public opinion. Clay Shirky argues that social media can help to increase freedom and change people’s political views by exposing them to other opinions echoed by friends, family members, and colleagues.19 At the beginning of the millennium, social media platforms were credited with shifting power from authoritarian regimes to ordinary people seeking freedom and social justice.20 Peter Singer and Emerson Brooking wrote in 2018 that social media platforms “illuminated the shadowy crimes through which dictators had long clung to power and offered up a powerful new means of grassroots mobilization.”21 Manuel Castells describes social media as “a mobilizing force” that can “topple an entrenched regime if everybody would come together.”22 These platforms can compensate for the disadvantages of undisciplined groups by reducing coordination costs while increasing shared awareness.23 Indeed, social media platforms played a role in the 2009 civil revolt in Moldova, dubbed “the first Facebook revolution”; the 2009 unrest in Iran, called “the first Twitter revolution”; the 2011 Russian “almost-revolution”; and the first wave of Arab social unrest in 2011, when “the Facebook-armed youth of Tunisia and Egypt” demonstrated “the liberating power of social media.”24 However, according to Singer and Brooking, these internet-enabled democratic movements “represented a high-water mark” that was followed by “a countering wave of authoritarianism using social media itself, woven into a pushback of repression, censorship and even violence.”25

The use of social media has no single preordained outcome. These platforms cannot “bring the world closer together,” as Facebook’s mission states,26 and help connect only democracy-loving people. As Zeynep Tufekci notes, they are also “connecting white supremacists, who can now assemble far more effectively or radical Buddhist monks in Myanmar, who now have much more potent tools for spreading incitement to ethnic cleansing.”27 Social media can be used to support incumbent politicians within a country or to help external authoritarian powers to disseminate propaganda and disrupt the democratic transfer of power through elections in other countries.28 It is also used by populists who pose a fundamental challenge to neoliberal ideology, spreading untruth and stirring outrage that affects voters’ judgment and fuels partisanship.29 The different actors using social media platforms, whether for good purposes or bad, are exploiting the unprecedented concentration of knowledge power that these platforms have amassed over the past few years.

The Knowledge Power of Social Media

In recent years, social media platforms have gained “knowledge power” derived from the vast amounts of data that they have collected and marshaled.30 According to Susan Strange, such power includes “what is believed or known and the channels by which these beliefs, ideas and knowledge are communicated, or confined.” This kind of power lies as much in the capacity to deny knowledge as in the power to convey it.31

The knowledge power of social media platforms may take many forms. Facebook, for example, knows more about a person than the government does.32 In 2002, Google discovered it could use the collateral data that it collects to profile users based on their characteristics and interests and then match advertisements to individual users.33 Over the years, Google and Facebook have sold more ads by reducing user privacy and gaining more access to a person’s data.34 In the competition for what Shoshana Zuboff called “surveillance capitalism” revenue,35 the advantage goes to firms that can acquire vast and varied data streams. Therefore, social media platforms are expanding both the scope of surveillance (migrating from the virtual world into the real world of automobile dashboard) and the depth of the surveillance (accumulating data on individuals’ personalities, moods, and emotions).

In addition to using knowledge power to profile and micro-target their users to sell more ads, Facebook also uses its algorithms to anticipate human behavior and create “prediction products” that make people easier to manipulate.36 This power was allegedly harnessed to reshape popular perceptions of the 2016 U.S. presidential election and the United Kingdom’s referendum on membership of the European Union.37

Another aspect of social media’s knowledge power is reflected in its significant role in today’s media industry. The perceived trustworthiness of the news media in democratic states has given these states advantages over non-democratic ones. Lucie Greene calls Facebook, Twitter, and Google “the Fifth Estate” because they have replaced the traditional news outlets as the main places where people go to get their news.38 They now have the power to shape public life, including what content is produced, where audiences go, and what news and information citizens see.39

In 2012, Facebook declared that its mission is to expand and strengthen relationships between people and to help expose people to a greater number of diverse perspectives.40 Instead, only a few years later, the opposite has happened. Facebook has became one of the sources for divisions among people.41 This can be attributed to two main factors: the “filter bubble phenomenon” and the rise of fake news.

Facebook’s algorithms tend to reinforce a “filter bubble” that shields people from dissenting information and only delivers content that confirms their views.42 Social media platforms are part of the digital “attention economy,” which focuses on the interplay between money and attention. The more people are engaged with the content on social media and are exposed to commercial ads, the more it generates income for these platforms. In order to keep people engaged, Facebook tends to expose them to the most popular posts and to confrontational and inflammatory news items that tend to make people more extreme in their views.43 Facebook encourages society to self-segregate into like-minded communities, which increases the distance between groups with opposing views, causing more polarization.44 YouTube’s recommendation algorithm typically recommends videos that echo the political bias of its viewers and what they choose to view, and feeds them videos containing viewpoints that are more extreme than the ones they currently hold.45

Fake news has gained prevalence in recent years due to the rising role of social media platforms as news outlets, where content can be produced and relayed among users with no significant third-party filtering, fact-checking, or editorial judgment. Hunt Allcott and Matthew Gentzkow define fake news as “news articles that are intentionally and verifiably false, and could mislead readers.”46 This type of news is widespread because it is cheaper to produce than precise reporting and because consumers enjoy partisan news. A fake story shared by millions becomes “real” because people believe that if it’s going viral, it must be true. The most inflammatory materials will travel the farthest and fastest. False stories on Twitter, for example, spread significantly faster and more broadly than true ones, and wider distribution of false stories also makes them more profitable for social media platforms.47

Fake news finds fertile ground in a divided electorate that has clear in-groups and out-groups, where people are ready to accept any statement as long it is consistent with what they already believe.48 Extreme examples of fake news spread by social media platforms can be found in Myanmar and Sri Lanka, where the dissemination of hate speech contributed to the ethnic cleansing of Rohingya Muslims and anti-Muslim riots, respectively.49

In the last several years, political actors have begun to use the knowledge power of social media to their advantage. A 2016 Rand study discusses the “firehose of falsehood” — a high-intensity stream of lies, partial truths, and complete fictions that impacted several democratic elections, including in Ukraine, Italy, France, Germany, and the United States.50 The “firehosing” that took place in America, for example, included attempts to influence public opinion and promote political protests.51 According to some scholars, authoritarian and illiberal states started using social media platforms to spread fake information to exercise their “sharp power.”52 This sharp power can stifle productive discussion in democracies, deepen domestic polarization, exacerbate ethnic tensions, rekindle nationalism, weaken public confidence in both journalism and elections, and diminish the overall influence of the Western-led international system.53 Authoritarian and illiberal regimes also use social media knowledge power, together with artificial intelligence, as a monitoring tool, allowing them to collect and analyze vast amounts of data on entire populations. Such regimes also undercut the credibility of valid information sources by using “bot-fueled campaigns of trolling and distraction, or piecemeal leaks of hacked materials, meant to swamp the attention of traditional media.”54 Once citizens learn to assume that the regime’s fake information is true, they alter their behavior without the regime having to resort to physical repression.55

But it is not only authoritarian and illiberal states that use fake news to deepen domestic polarization, radicalize people’s politics, and rekindle nationalism. This also occurs in democracies. Some democratic countries are experiencing a rise in populist leaders, fueling a drift toward national-populism, illiberalism, and even autocracy. According to Adrian Shahbaz and Allie Funk, populists and far-right extremists exploit social media platforms to “build large audiences around similar interests, lace their political messaging with false or inflammatory content, and coordinate its dissemination across multiple platforms.”56 Paolo Gerbaudo argues that social media is attractive to populists because it provides an outlet for countering the perceived pro-establishment bias of mainstream news media. The filter bubble helps individuals who are politically disgruntled to congregate online and mobilize militant support for anti-establishment candidates.57 The unregulated social media platforms are thus converted into instruments for political distortion and societal control.58

In conclusion, social media can play a positive or a negative role: It can be a liberalizing tool, used to spread information and knowledge, but it can also be a tool of suppression, used to disseminate distorted information and fake news. Grassroots movements and freedom fighters can make use of social media platforms, but so can authoritarian regimes.

The Variable Impact of Social Media Platforms

Although social media platforms are used throughout the world, they seem to have a different impact on the political system in democratic regimes as opposed to authoritarian regimes. What accounts for this difference? Why do they spark revolutions in some states while supporting the rise of populist candidates in others? Why do they disrupt democratic elections in one country, but support the regime’s anti-democratic measures in another? In order to understand the varying effects of social media, it’s important to distinguish clearly between liberal and illiberal regimes. In addition, it is necessary to consider whether those regimes are strong or weak.

Regime Types and Capacity

We used the “freedom score” calculated by Freedom House and the Regimes of the World typology based on V-Dem data to distinguish between democratic and illiberal or authoritarian states.59 Countries are classified as democratic if they de facto hold free and fair multiparty elections and also guarantee freedom of speech and expression.60 A liberal democracy is also characterized by having effective legislative and judicial oversight of the executive and protecting individual and minority liberties and the rule of law.61 In contrast, an authoritarian regime is characterized by a government that permits people only a limited degree of political freedom. In such regimes, the government controls the political process and determines individual freedoms without any constitutional accountability.62

The “freedom score” is based on two main parameters — political rights and civil liberties — and it can show trends in a state’s score over the last several years. Democratic states (“free” in Freedom House’s terminology) are those with a freedom score of at least 70, while authoritarian states (“not free”) are those with scores of 35 or less. Since there are some anomalies around the transition points (70 and 35) for the case studies in this article, we chose democratic states with scores over 74 — Brazil (75), the United States (86), and the United Kingdom (94) — and authoritarian states with scores under 25 — Russia (20), China (10), Egypt (21), and Iran (17). The only exception is Mexico, whose freedom score of 62 represents a deteriorating democratic state. The Regimes of the World typology confirms the above classification of the United States and the United Kingdom as liberal democracies; Brazil and Mexico as electoral democracies; Russia, Iran, and Egypt as electoral autocracies; and China as a closed autocracy.

While the distinction between democratic and authoritarian regimes can help to explain the variable impact of social media on the political system, a more powerful explanation emerges when we add state capacity to the equation. State capacity refers to the institutions and resources available to states for governing the polity. In this article, we distinguish between strong or capable states and weak or malfunctioning ones. In contrast to weak states, strong states possess well-functioning institutions and sufficient resources to carry out policies and major functions. Especially important is a state’s justice system and its monopoly over the means of violence (i.e., its coercive capacity). Thus, a strong state can supply security in its sovereign territory. Such a sense of security sustained over time can facilitate business and commerce.63 Weak states, on the other hand, lack the effective political institutions and resources to implement their policies, protect their populations from violent conflict, and deliver political goods.64

No single index can distinguish strong states from weak ones. State strength or capacity can be measured, among other things, by a state’s capacity to provide services to the whole population, the extent to which infrastructure and communication networks cover the state territory, and the level of the state’s control over its sovereign territory. It can also be measured through gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, GDP growth, and trade indicators because states with higher economic development enjoy larger pools of resources from which to extract taxes.

For this paper, we used three different indicators to determine whether a state is weak or strong: the Fund for Peace’s Fragile States Index,65 which takes into account political stability indicators such as the security apparatus, group grievances, uneven economic development, state legitimacy, and external interventions (which reflects the state’s coercive capacity);66 the World Bank data on Gross National Income, because, in an economically developed state, taxes constitute a significant portion of the annual income; and total military expenditures (as calculated by the International Institute for Strategic Studies), which indicate to what extent a given state is capable of mobilizing manpower for military service. Any one of these indices is not enough on its own to determine whether a state is strong or weak. China, for example, would not be considered a strong state according to the Fragile State Index or GDP per capita, but if one considers Gross National Income and total military expenditures, it is. Similarly, Brazil is not a typical weak state by the Fragile State Index, but when examining its military expenditure, which is much lower than that of strong states, it cannot be considered a strong state.

A Causal Explanation of Social Media’s Impact

In our analysis of the variations in the effects of social media platforms on states, we consider only American social media platforms that wield knowledge power, usually acquired through data collection and processing. We do not consider other social media platforms, such as the Russian platform VK or China’s WeChat, because they are more culture-dependent and less common outside their home countries. U.S. social media platforms are used in different ways by three main types of political actors: domestic opposition (dissidents or populist candidates), external forces (other countries or multinational corporations), and the governing regime. These actors use social media for political purposes in an effort to influence a state’s political system. But the outcome is beyond their reach because it is determined by the combined effect of the state’s capacity and the state’s regime. This essay will analyze these actors, together with the differences in state capacity and regime, to deduce a causal model that indicates four potential effects of social media platforms on states: destabilization, radicalization, intensification, and weakening.

Destabilization takes place in weak authoritarian regimes when social media platforms facilitate the coordination and mobilization of dissidents and grassroots movements (which represent domestic opposition) in resisting the government’s tyranny. The governing regime in these cases usually lacks the coercive capacity to maintain internal order and stop well-coordinated resistance. This destabilization effect can ultimately lead to regime change or, in extreme cases, a failed state scenario. A recent example of this destabilizing effect, which resulted in regime change, is the 2011 revolution in Egypt that culminated in President Hosni Mubarak’s ouster.

The use of social media platforms as a disseminator of fake news and disinformation during an election process leads to a radicalizing effect when it occurs in weak democratic countries. Social media can be used by populist and anti-establishment candidates (domestic opposition) and may diminish democratic institutions and processes. Some of these practices continue even after these candidates are elected to office. Social media platforms may also be malignly exploited by external forces — Russia, for example — to disturb elections in democratic countries. The use of social media platforms is considered an integral part of the democratic election process because the platforms are vehicles for exercising free speech. This limits the governing regime’s capacity to restrict and counter the malign use of these social media platforms. This radicalization effect could steer a state that lacks sufficient checks and balances and a strong democratic tradition toward becoming an illiberal or authoritarian regime. Recent examples of this radicalizing effect are the rise of Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil, Andrés Manuel López Obrador in Mexico, Viktor Orbán in Hungary, and Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines.

The intensifying effect takes place in strong authoritarian countries when social media platforms become a surveillance tool of the governing regime, which uses them to intensify the government’s coercive capacity, suppress civil rights, and counter the domestic opposition. These platforms also enhance the state’s sharp power with regard to liberal-democratic states. Social media platforms do not usually have a substantial liberalizing effect in strong authoritarian countries because the regimes control the internet in their territory. Recent examples of the intensifying effect include laws in China and Russia that give the states the power to surveil their citizens’ activities on social media, and Russia’s intervention in democratic elections in several liberal-democratic states by using these platforms as disseminators of fake news and disinformation.67

The use of social media platforms by domestic populist forces or external malign forces can weaken domestic authority in strong democratic regimes, support the rise of populism, and diminish democratic institutions and ideas, such as multilateralism and globalization. Democratic norms in strong liberal regimes constrain these states from countering the malign use of social media, despite having the capacity to do so. In this scenario, the domestic political system becomes polarized, but the state’s established system of checks and balances and strong democratic tradition preserve its liberal character. Recent examples include the 2016 U.S. presidential elections and the U.K. Brexit referendum. Table 1 summarizes the four types of political effects that U.S. social media platforms have on states.

[Chart omitted]

In the following sections, we present four primary case studies to illustrate this model and describe the effects that social media platforms have on different states. The case selection is based on variations in the type of regime and the state’s capacity. The detailed case studies described in each classification are only the prominent ones in which the literature and the availability of empirical material regarding social media effects are more prevalent than others. The effect of social media on states is a relatively new research topic and the publications in this area are mainly concentrated on the limited case studies that we chose to present in this article. The case studies are the leading instances that represent the political effects of social media platforms on states: destabilizing, radicalizing, intensifying, and weakening.

For the destabilizing effect, we look at Egypt, a prominent country in the Arab world with a stable leader for three decades who was nevertheless quickly overthrown after less than three weeks of protests. To demonstrate the radicalizing effect, we chose Brazil, a leading economy in Latin America, a region that underwent a rapid democratization process in the last 20 years of the 20th century but that, in the last several years, has reverted to illiberalism and even to authoritarianism. For the intensifying effect, we considered the malign use of social media in the most powerful authoritarian states, Russia and China. For the weakening effect, we chose the external intervention in the 2016 U.S. presidential elections, which is considered to be a leading case of authoritarian intervention because of America’s status as the most powerful liberal democracy in the world. In each of these sections, we discuss additional examples, but it should be noted that not all countries in the same classification are necessarily affected by social media to the same extent as the anchor case.

The Destabilizing Effect in Weak Authoritarian Regimes

Social media platforms can help to create and mobilize domestic opposition to the governing regime by making it easier for opposition members to connect, organize, and circumvent the regime’s restrictions. Organized resistance to the government’s tyranny may lead to regime change in weak authoritarian regimes, but some governments put in place surveillance systems that monitor social media platforms, helping to counter dissidents early in their organization stage and reducing the risk of regime change.

In just over a year, a wave of unrest that first began in Tunisia in December 2010 swept through the Arab region, leading to the overthrow of four Arab heads of state.68 Power seemed to be shifting from authoritarian regimes to citizens. Social media platforms were credited with helping to cause this shift. Philip Howard and Muzammil Hussain explain that digital media (including social media platforms) helped to shape events and outcomes by spreading protest messages, connecting frustrated citizens, and helping them to realize that they shared grievances and could act together to do something about their situation.69 The protestors succeeded in building and mobilizing a spontaneous domestic opposition. Other researchers contend that the “Internet may be the only avenue left for citizens in authoritarian regimes to influence government, fight corruption, or defend their rights.”70 Laura Stein outlines six different ways in which the internet and social media platforms may help social movements: by providing information, assisting people in mobilizing and taking an action, promoting interaction and dialogue, helping to connect different networks of people, serving as an outlet for creative expression, and promoting fundraising and resource generation.71

The use of social media platforms is part of each stage of any uprising in the internet era. In the preparation phase, activists use social media platforms to find each other, build solidarity around shared grievances, and identify collective political goals. In the ignition phase, which involves some inciting incident, social media helps to publicize that incident and enrage the public. Take, for example, the pictures of Khaled Mohamed Saeed, who was beaten to death by police in Egypt, or Mohamed Bouazizi, who set himself on fire in Tunisia.72 In the street protests phase, the call for protests and the protest locations are coordinated online, while in the international buy-in phase, pictures, tweets, and videos from the uprising gain international interest and support. Usually, this pressures the rulers of the state to enter the climax phase, in which the state either cracks down and protesters are forced to go home (as in the case of Iran), rulers concede and meet public demands (as in Egypt and Tunisia), or the groups reach a protracted stalemate (as in Syria). The denouement largely depends on the state’s coercive power.73

Egypt serves as a good case study for the destabilizing effect of social media platforms. Hosni Mubarak ruled Egypt from 1981 until 2011, resigning only 18 days after the beginning of the Egyptian uprising, which started in January 2011. Scholars are divided on the role that social media platforms played in the Egyptian revolution. Killian Clarke and Korhan Kocak argue that Facebook and Twitter contributed meaningfully to mobilizing the “first movers” (the demonstrators who participated in the protest on Jan. 25, 2011) to form an ad hoc domestic opposition. These platforms helped to produce this outcome by recruiting people, planning and coordinating a leaderless protest, and providing live updates. The success across these three dimensions helped to convince many other Egyptians to join in subsequent protests, thus setting in motion a revolutionary cascade that resulted in Mubarak’s ouster.74 Juby John Eipe also underlines the significant role that Twitter played in initiating, organizing, and executing a powerful political movement in Egypt, including mobilizing people with no political background.75 Philip Howard and Muzammil Hussain note that YouTube and other video archiving platforms allowed citizen journalists, using mobile phone cameras and consumer electronics, to broadcast stories that the mainstream media could not or did not want to cover.76

Others are not so fast to give all the praise to social media. Tarak Barkawi is critical of the credit given to “Western technology” rather than to the “ordinary Egyptians, mothers and fathers, daughters and sons, who toppled the regime.”77 He argues that the West imagines itself as the real agent in the uprisings and he denounces “fantastically Eurocentric” narratives. “To listen to the hype about social networking websites and the Egyptian revolution, one would think it was Silicon Valley and not the Egyptian people who overthrew Mubarak,” Barkawi writes. Mason agrees that social networks allow people to assemble and protest but insists that the revolutions in the Arab world “have been social, political and real — not virtual.”78 According to Mohamed Ben Moussa, social media platforms were only effective because they operated in synergy with a huge array of “other more conventional media and offline societal networks.”79 Regina Salanova agrees that, in the end, Al-Jazeera and other international media “amplified the message, attracted the majority of the population to join the revolts and put pressure on the authoritarian states by engaging international audiences.”80 Ian Black notes that state surveillance of social media platforms compelled activists to use alternative media and communication tools.81

The Egyptian uprising is not the only example of social media playing a prominent role in political upheaval. Mark Pfeifle, a former U.S. national security adviser in the George W. Bush administration, wrote regarding the 2009 Green Revolution in Iran that “[w]ithout Twitter, the people of Iran would not have felt empowered and confident to stand up for freedom and democracy.”82 He also called for Twitter to be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. In the uprising in Tunisia, the blogosphere provided a forum for open political dialogue on regime corruption and the potential for political change.83 In Sudan’s 2019 uprising, social media platforms (Twitter, Instagram, Telegram, and Facebook) gave people an alternative source of information and an opportunity to organize and rebel against their government.84 This enabled dissent to spread from regional cities, such as Atbara, to Khartoum and elsewhere much faster.85 Social media platforms also helped diaspora communities to stay updated about events in Sudan and play an invaluable role in the uprisings by sharing updates and fostering solidarity.86

Again, some scholars have downplayed the impact of social media on these events. Golnaz Esfandiari wrote regarding the Green Movement after the 2009 elections in Iran: “Simply put: There was no Twitter Revolution inside Iran.”87 Bruce Etling and his coauthors agree that Twitter did not necessarily play a role in organizing the Iranian protests.88 Others attribute less importance to social media’s role in rallying local audiences and focus instead on the “bridging function” of social media platforms, which allows them to inform international audiences and mainstream media.89

Social media platforms can also be effective in bolstering authoritarian regimes,90 which may help explain why, in the years after the Arab Spring, there were fewer revolutions in weak authoritarian regimes. Authoritarian regimes, even those that lack financial resources, can now use social media surveillance tools that weren’t available to Egypt during its revolution to monitor and control society.91 This is due to the availability of various low-cost surveillance tools exported by China and Russia.92

The Iranian regime, which learned from the 2009 unrest, is an example of a weak authoritarian regime that took the use of social media platforms for surveillance to the next level. It combined using surveillance tools with exerting strict control over the domestic internet infrastructure. The development of Iran’s state-controlled National Internet Network significantly enhanced the government’s ability to restrict, block, and monitor internet use in Iran,93 providing it with one of the world’s most sophisticated mechanisms for controlling and censoring the internet and allowing it to examine the content of individual online communications on a massive scale.94 In 2009, mass surveillance operations significantly aided the authorities’ ability to identify, track, arrest, and imprison protesters.95 During the unrest that swept through Iran at the end of 2017, the authorities implemented major disruptions to internet access by slowing it down, blocking social media platforms (such as Instagram and Telegram) that were used by the protesters to mobilize street protests, and briefly cutting off Iranians’ access to the global internet. Some weak authoritarian governments have also learned to control the networked public sphere through “surveillance and repression, using fear, blocking of information, mobilizing armies of supporters or paid employees who muddy the online waters with misinformation, doubt, confusion and distraction.” This makes it hard for ordinary people to “navigate the networked public sphere and sort facts from fiction.”96 Instead of denying internet access to dissidents, which is sometimes difficult to do, these governments prefer to “deny attention, focus, and credibility.”97

Clarke and Koçak claim that social media platforms were, and still are, relevant because dissidents in authoritarian environments have simply switched to new social media platforms that the government hasn’t started monitoring yet.98 The new generation of dissidents uses messaging apps like WhatsApp and Telegram. Activists used these apps instead of Twitter in the 2018 revolt in Armenia and have used “Facebook live” for real-time coverage of anti-governmental protest activities in Nicaragua.99

In summary, social media can have a destabilizing political effect in weak authoritarian regimes. Social media (a liberalizing force) can help to create and mobilize domestic opposition by making it easier to alert and connect people who have shared interests. It also helps people to organize more easily and lets protesters know that they are not alone. Facebook’s filter bubbles may help to convince people that there is more support for their position than there really is, thus generating a self-fulfilling prophecy that drives people to the streets. Although social media may not be the only reason why a revolution takes place, it can certainly play a significant role. However, in the last several years, many weak authoritarian regimes have been able to afford the purchase of surveillance systems from China and Russia that monitor social media platforms and assist the repressive governing regime, deterring and countering dissidents during organization stage.100 The governing regime also uses social media platforms to spread misinformation, leading people to doubt what they read on these platforms and perhaps deterring them from joining a potential uprising.

The Radicalizing Effect in Weak Democratic Regimes

Social media is a low-cost and convenient communication tool that can be used by opposition populists to reach their supporters, by the governing regime to engage directly with the electorate, and by malign external forces to spread fake news. These platforms can be exploited to spread fake news and narratives that are polarizing, divisive, and anti-liberal because they lack the fact-checking found in traditional media outlets. Social media helps populists (both as candidates and as part of the governing regime) to aggregate and unify people to promote a shared cause against the liberal establishment and liberal freedoms and to erode democratic pillars. Malign external actors use social media to intervene in democratic elections in weak democratic countries to cause further erosion of trust in the democratic system. These combined actions create a radicalizing effect in weak liberal democracies that can potentially turn a liberal-democratic regime into an illiberal regime, or even an autocratic one.

There are several examples of weak liberal-democratic regimes worldwide, namely new democracies in Eastern Europe, East Asia, and Latin America. Freedom House’s freedom score has declined in some of these countries over the last several years: From 2016 to 2020 Brazil’s score dropped six points, from 81 to 75; the Philippines fell six points, from 65 to 59; and Mexico lost three points, going from 65 to 62. This decrease in freedom scores may be explained by the rise of populist leaders in these countries and the erosion of democratic pillars, such as free and unbiased elections.101 According to the Democracy Report 2020, Latin America has regressed to a level of democracy last recorded around 1992.102

In the last decade, Latin American presidents and candidates started using social media to engage directly with the electorate. Social media is perceived as the voice of the people and more authentic than the mainstream media, “which responds to the agenda of their super-rich owners and their political allies, rather than to the real needs and interests of the public.”103 By 2014, the region had the world’s highest use of social media by politicians.104

According to Emarketer, people in Latin America are the most avid social media users in the world.105 The vast majority of them get their news straight from social media services because they place less trust in traditional media. For example, WhatsApp has 120 million users in Brazil, a country with a population of 200 million. Thirty-five percent of these users regularly rely on the messaging platform for their news consumption, which makes WhatsApp networks “fertile for planting false information that can spread quickly from group to group until it is out of control.”106 These countries are therefore more susceptible to efforts to promote divisive and anti-liberal narratives, whether by domestic opposition or malign external forces, via online platforms. Moreover, polarization is a significant characteristic of Latin American politics, and the use of fake news communicated via social media platforms has proved to be more effective within polarized societies.107 This environment is primed for the rise of populist candidates who are inclined to promote an illiberal regime and can further foster radicalization and change toward a national-populist, illiberal, and even autocratic regime. This is especially true given that the checks and balances in states with only a short democratic history are less effective than in long-established liberal states.108

Populism is an ideology that views society as divided into two homogenous and antagonistic groups: the pure people and the corrupt elite — “us” versus “them.”109 Populists portray themselves as anti-elitist, anti-pluralist, supporters of moralism, and the exclusive legitimate representatives of the people in defiance of the unresponsive political elites. The rhetoric used by populist leaders generally focuses on the perception of a state in a crisis that needs to be resolved. Populists often use a dramatized and discursive repertoire that creates tension between antagonistic blocks.110 Pippa Norris notes that populism undercuts the legitimacy of the checks and balances on executive power that were “protecting citizens from strong leaders advocating authoritarian values attacking the heart of liberal freedoms, social tolerance, and cosmopolitanism.”111

Populism exists across the political spectrum. According to Paolo Gerbaudo, the populist right “tends to take highly exclusionary and xenophobic forms, whereby the people are constructed in opposition to the Other, and in particular migrants and ethnic and religious minorities.” Left-wing populism, on the contrary, opposes “immoral privilege, as embodied by greedy bankers, rogue entrepreneurs, and corrupt politicians accused of exploiting the people.”112 Postill also discusses centrist populists — opportunistic technocrats who borrow populist rhetoric and blend it with a pro-market language of job flexibility, entrepreneurship, and economic growth.113

Gerbaudo, who studies the relationship between populism and social media, explains that social media provides a platform for populists to gain people’s support against a liberal establishment that is supposedly victimizing them.114 Populists are able to unify otherwise dispersed and divided people to promote a shared cause, exploiting the platforms’ “economy of attention” and filter bubble effect. In this way, populists develop online followers of like-minded individuals and “siloed communities that experience their own reality and operate with their own facts.”115

In Brazil’s 2018 elections, Bolsonaro, a far-right candidate, was elected president with 55 percent of the vote, putting an end to the social-democratic pact that had been established after the end of the military dictatorship in the 1980s. In these elections, the far-right opposition movement “Brazil over Everything, God above Everyone” overtly used the spread of misinformation and fake news through social media to advance its discourse. This included attacks against the Workers’ Party, the group’s main competitor, associating them with child abuse, female nudity, and more. Bolsonaro’s campaign also used social media platforms to attack feminists and minority groups, including the LGBT community, blacks, and indigenous people.116

Up until the 2018 election, political television advertising was the primary means of reaching out to Brazil’s electorate. Bolsonaro’s low-budget campaign, however, relied heavily on political micro-targeting via social media to directly engage with his electoral base.117 His early supporters distrusted mainstream media and assumed that social media is more genuine “because it’s filled with friends and family.”118 The campaign focused on professionalizing a fake news industry by using WhatsApp, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook.119 Bolsonaro’s entire campaign was built upon “exploiting a political behavior tied into a sense of fear — fear of being shot, of crime, of unemployment — that ends up creating space for the acceptance of authoritarian feelings latent in society.”120

Angered by violence, scandals, and a deep recession, voters were ready for Bolsonaro’s messages about crime, corruption, and family values. He energized voters who disliked the ruling party and who detested all the other candidates.121 He benefited from the high levels of cognitive dissonance that some voters were experiencing — between their image of the country and the world as it is.

Over the years, Bolsonaro has repeatedly called for Congress to be closed and has said that he would “start a dictatorship right away if elected president.”122 During the 2018 election, he continued his attacks on the idea of liberal democracy and the legitimacy of the media as well as on other political opponents.123 His final speech before election day was a direct attack on several democratic norms, reiterating the central themes of his campaign: diluting the power of minorities, closing down non-government organizations, and promising to imprison his opponent in the race, Fernando Haddad.124 Democratic principles further erode when candidates such as Bolsonaro, who use social media manipulation as part of their campaign strategy, continue with these tactics after assuming power and becoming part of the governing regime.125 For example, since assuming power, Bolsonaro has used different means, including fake news, to discredit Brazil’s electoral processes (such as when he questioned the integrity of the 2020 municipal elections), lash out at the Brazilian Supreme Court and Supreme Electoral Tribunal, and fight federal police on investigating him and his allies.126

Support for democracy in Brazil dropped from a peak level of 55 percent in 2009 to 34 percent in 2018.127 By 2020, only 15 percent of Brazilians said they were satisfied with democracy, a drop of 35 points compared to 2014.128 Bolsonaro’s election thus marks the intensification of a process of decay that has affected Brazil’s democratic system for some time. Brian Winter suggests that Bolsonaro, when faced with resistance as a president, “will ignore or trample democratic practices and norms to get his way.”129 Since the checks and balances in Brazil, as in many other Latin countries, are weak and insufficient, such action by the president could further weaken democratic institutions and lead to regime change.

In addition to the domestic attack on democratic institutions, Brazil is also experiencing external intervention as part of Russia’s propaganda operations in Latin America aimed at promoting divisive narratives through online platforms.130 According to Brian Fonseca, Russia’s objective is “to erode confidence in Western institutions such as democracy and free trade, as well as Western-dominated sources of information.”131 Moscow has been using social media platforms to exaggerate, distort, and fabricate falsehoods regarding U.S. and Western activities in the region.132 As a liberal-democratic regime, Brazil has only a limited set of tools to defend itself from the malign use of social media both from outside and within the country.

Brazil is not the only country in which democracy has been deteriorating. In Mexico, internal support for democracy dropped from 48 percent in 2015 to 38 percent in 2018,133 and a far-left populist, anti-establishment candidate, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, was elected in 2018 in a campaign that made heavy use of social media. Since his election, democratic institutions in Mexico have been under attack. For example, Obrador has stated that the National Electoral Institute and the Electoral Tribunal of the Federal Judiciary “were created to prevent democracy.”134 Another example is the actions taken by Obrador to weaken the autonomy of the judiciary and to replace some judges with Obrador’s close allies. Mexico has also been the target of Russian propaganda operations.135 Other Latin American countries with characteristics similar to those of Brazil and Mexico are at risk of following the same path of eroding democratic norms.136

In summary, social media platforms have a radicalizing effect in weak liberal democracies, facilitating the rise of populist candidates who erode the country’s democratic norms and institutions and may lead to regime change. Social media is a playground for spreading fake news and narratives that are polarizing, divisive and anti-liberal — without the fact-checking filter of the traditional media. It helps populists to aggregate and unify people to promote a shared cause against the liberal establishment or the corrupt elites, positioning themselves as worthy alternatives to the existing governments. Malign external forces also try to use social media platforms to intervene in these countries’ democratic elections.137

The Intensifying Effect in Strong Authoritarian Regimes

Social media platforms can intensify the power of strong authoritarian regimes by helping them, directly or indirectly, to become “digital dictatorships.”138 These regimes use the knowledge power of social media platforms as part of their surveillance machine. They can monitor and block social media platforms to hinder the ability of dissidents and domestic opposition groups to organize and mobilize. Authoritarian regimes also use social media platforms as tools to apply sharp power against liberal-democratic countries worldwide and as a way to spread fake news in democratic elections.

Between 2000 and 2017, 60 percent of all dictatorships faced at least one anti-government protest of 50 participants or more. Ten authoritarian regimes fell during this period and 19 were replaced through elections, many of which came in the wake of mass protests.139 According to Democracy Report 2020, pro-democracy protests reached an all-time high in 2019 as people took to the streets to protest the erosion of democracies and to challenge dictators.140 The leaderless nature of 2019 Hong Kong protests against China, for example, was made possible by social media. Protesters took their cues from more than 100 groups on the instant messaging app Telegram, dozens of Instagram pages, and online forums like LIHKG. These groups were used to post everything from news on upcoming protests and tips on defending oneself from tear gas canisters fired by the police to the identities of suspected undercover police and the access codes to buildings in Hong Kong where protesters could hide.141 Overseas Chinese dissidents and activists played a crucial role by assisting and even guiding activists in Hong Kong. Chinese expatriates connected with those in Hong Kong via social media to get information about what was going on to journalists, non-governmental organizations, and activists in other countries.142

In the last 20 years, the more durable authoritarian regimes have been those that have implemented digital repression.143 In order to avoid regime change, strong authoritarian regimes have used their economic strength and coercive power to embrace technology and become “digital autocracies.” That is, they restrict their citizens’ use of the internet and social media while harnessing a new arsenal of digital tools to deal with mass anti-government protests.

China has long maintained strict regulations that determine which websites and social media platforms are accessible in the country and which are blocked behind its “Great Firewall” of internet censorship, which is part of the country’s “cyber sovereignty” model.144 In 2003, Debora Spar claimed that “if people in China want to get information from sites in Silicon Valley, even the most omnipotent of governments will be hard-pressed to stop them.”145 But recent years have proven her wrong. China blocked YouTube in March 2008, the same month that a significant wave of protests-turned-riots swept Tibet. It blocked Facebook and Twitter the next year, soon after an outbreak of ethnic unrest rocked Xinjiang in July 2009.146

China employs advanced technology to censor its citizens on social media (and access their private information). This technology, combined with laws, regulations, and ramped up enforcement, is increasingly being used to repress dissidents and domestic opposition voices and shape the online conversation.”147 Many of the state’s censorship tactics operate with a “light touch,” so that Chinese internet users do not necessarily detect the filtering and deletion of material that is going on behind the scenes. There are seven topics that social media content shouldn’t contravene according to the Chinese government: “China’s rules and laws, the socialist system, the country’s national interests, the legitimate interests of citizens, public order, morality, and authentic information.”148 Chinese social media platforms such as WeChat and Sina Weibo have no choice but to actively participate in the monitoring and censorship of their users in order to stay in business.149

U.S. social media platforms, which could potentially act as a liberalizing external force, cannot operate in China without becoming active partners in the government’s efforts to silence dissent through censorship, mass surveillance, and the use of criminal charges.150 In December 2017, an official from China’s Cyberspace Administration stated: “If they [foreign social media] want to come back, we welcome [them]. The condition is that they have to abide by Chinese law and regulations and that they also would not do any harm to Chinese national security and national consumers’ interests.”151 Collaboration with the Chinese government contradicts the liberal agenda of most of these corporations, which see themselves as champions of free expression. However, some of them, including Google, are directly and indirectly helping China to enhance its internet surveillance capabilities and censorship technology.152

Russia, another strong authoritarian regime, lives in constant fear of U.S. efforts to interfere with the Russian regime. After witnessing the role that social media played in the Arab Spring, Russia became increasingly concerned that America had “found a truly magic tool that could bring people to the streets without any organizing structure.”153 This fear was amplified by several statements made by Alec Ross, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s senior adviser for innovation at the U.S. State Department, including his comment in 2011 that “the Che Guevara of the twenty-first century is the network” and “dictatorships are now more vulnerable than they have ever been before … because of the devolution of power from the nation-state to the individual.”154 This fear became a reality when protests erupted over irregularities in the 2011 Russian legislative elections — protests that were facilitated by Facebook and Twitter.155

Sergei Smirnov, director of the FSB (Russia’s security agency), stated in 2012: “New technologies are being used by Western special services to create and maintain a level of continual tension in society with serious intentions extending even to regime change.” He emphasized that Russia needed to develop ways to respond to such technologies.156 In June 2012, legislation was introduced in the Duma, the lower house of parliament, to impose a nationwide filtering system on the internet. The legislation was approved a month later. In 2013, a system for social media monitoring — Mediaimpuls — was introduced. Russian law allows the authorities to block online content, including social media websites whose activities are deemed “undesirable” or “extremist,” and to prevent users of social media and communications platforms from remaining anonymous.157 Under its 2019 Sovereign Internet Law, Russia is centralizing internet traffic in the country and creating chokepoints (similar to China’s Great Firewall). The Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information Technology and Mass Media (or Roskomnadzor) is exercising its authority inside Russia and outside its borders to silence protesters and anti-Russian voices.158

China and Russia have started to proliferate their models of digital authoritarianism across the globe. China is exporting its digital tools for domestic censorship and surveillance to different countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, and Venezuela. Russia is disseminating its tightened information control model coupled with intimidation of internet service providers, telecom providers, private companies, and civil society groups.159 Russia’s model may be an appealing, relatively low-tech, and inexpensive alternative to the Chinese model because it does not require information filtration capabilities and can be implemented without a pre-existing government firewall.160

In addition, some of these tools that were initially developed for domestic use are now being used as part of the “sharp power” campaign that Russia is waging against liberal-democratic regimes. This includes using automated accounts (“bots”) on social media to manipulate and “amplify influence campaigns and produce a flurry of distracting or misleading posts,” sowing confusion and uncertainty through the dissemination of alternative narratives.161 Another tool, the use of internet trolls, involves paying people to disrupt online discussions by deliberately posting inflammatory or off-topic messages over social media platforms in order to provoke and intimidate. Russia conducted a massive troll attack against Ukraine and other countries after annexing Crimea.162 Both trolls and bots have been used by Russia through social media platforms in democratic elections across the world in the last five years.163 They helped to elect populist nominees or promote their agendas, deepening domestic polarization, ethnic tensions, and anti-migrant and anti-minority sentiments while eroding democratic institutions.

To summarize, American social media platforms may intensify the power of strong authoritarian regimes by helping them, directly and indirectly, to become digital dictatorships. They use the knowledge power of compliant platforms as part of their surveillance machine while blocking those platforms that refuse to play by their rules.

China and Russia export their restrictive practices to other authoritarian states, helping them to adopt similar practices in their countries. Russia also uses social media platforms as tools to apply sharp power against liberal-democratic countries around the world.

The Weakening Effect in Strong Democratic Regimes

The spread of fake news, disinformation, misleading information, and falsehoods through social media platforms as part of malign “perception management”’ orchestrated by domestic populists and external forces (such as Russia) may weaken strong liberal-democratic regimes. Such social media campaigns amplify extreme views, polarization, conspiracy theories, and doubts about democratic institutions and processes and weaken people’s trust and confidence in these institutions and processes. In strong democracies, the erosion of democratic pillars is less dramatic than in weak democracies because the checks and balances of strong democratic regimes remain a solid protection against domestic populist opponents and malign external actors.

The use of social media for political campaigning is not new to liberal-democratic regimes. American President Barack Obama used big data and individual marketing to drive people to the voting booths in both the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections.164 What is new is the malign use of these platforms and their mobilization by external forces and populist domestic opponents to change people’s perceptions. The dependence of democracies on free and open political discourse provides opportunities for external forces to infiltrate their information ecosystems.165 Researchers identify the 2016 U.S. presidential elections as a watershed moment in terms of the impact of fake news on social media platforms on presidential elections.166

A U.S. national intelligence report claims that Russia’s Internet Research Agency, an army of social media trolls created in 2014, was part of Russia’s efforts to interfere in the 2016 U.S. elections. This interference included propaganda campaigns in the media and a troll campaign on social media aimed at undermining public faith in the American democratic process.167 The Internet Research Agency spent more than $100,000 on Facebook political ads between June 2015 and May 2017, using 470 fake accounts.168 Facebook reported to the U.S. Senate that Russian trolls created events on Facebook that were seen by more than 300,000 users between 2015 and 2017 and that around 62,500 people planned to attend these events. Russian accounts used Facebook to promote pro-Trump rallies, such as “Florida Goes Trump” in August 2016, as well as events in May 2016 protesting the opening of an Islamic Center library.169 Facebook acknowledged that 146 million users might have viewed Russian misinformation on its platform during the election campaign, while YouTube identified 1,108 Russian-linked videos and Twitter acknowledged 36,746 Russian-linked accounts.170

Similarly, researchers discovered massive Russian meddling on Twitter in the lead up to the Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom in 2016.171 More than 150,000 Russian-language Twitter accounts posted tens of thousands of messages in English urging British people to vote to leave the European Union in the days prior to the referendum. Most of the messages sought to inflame fears about Muslims and immigrants and to intensify the polarization of the electorate.172 British Prime Minister Theresa May even publicly accused Moscow of seeking to “weaponise information” and “sow discord in the West and undermine our institutions.”173 She added that Russia’s cyber activities included “deploying its state-run media organizations to plant fake stories and photo-shopped images.”174 This phenomenon seems to be spreading and intensifying. In 2017, for example, one year after the U.S. presidential elections, at least 18 other national elections were targeted by social media manipulation and disinformation tactics.175

According to the U.S. Justice Department, the Internet Research Agency used Facebook’s own tools to ensure that its propaganda was as effective as possible. These tools allowed the agency to receive real-time feedback about which ad campaigns were reaching their target audience and which posts were generating the most engagement with viewers.176 These “active measures” of media manipulation and disinformation, using social media campaigns, fake news, and troll armies, are designed to exploit political division and subvert the democratic process in the United States and Europe, “destabilizing the society and the state.”177

Russian “perception management” during liberal-democratic elections is based on the art of disinformation, or “using false or misleading information and injecting it or getting it credited by legitimate and credible sources.”178 Russia typically manipulates information using social media platforms to sow confusion and disruption. The aim is to create the impression that truth does not exist, thus undermining trust and authority in democracies. Russian manipulators on social media amplify extreme views, conspiracy theories, and doubts about democratic institutions.179 Russian intervention has found a receptive audience of people who believe that all truths are partial and that there are many legitimate ways to understand or represent an event.180 Using disinformation and fake news in the public sphere may diminish the role of facts in public life and lead to what Jennifer Kavanagh and Michael Rich call “truth decay.”181 Truth is a cornerstone of democracies and what distinguishes them from autocracies. The decaying of truth is dangerous for American democracy.182

But not everyone agrees that Russian intervention actually affected the 2016 election process. Hunt Allcott and Matthew Gentzkow show in their research that exposure to fake news was insufficient to make a difference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and that the effect of fake news was smaller than Trump’s margin of victory in key states.183 Another group of researchers also claim that the advertisements that Russia reportedly bought on social media were not targeted effectively on battlegrounds states and that the money it spent was dwarfed by the money spent by Trump and Clinton. Although Russia bought thousands of ads, they constituted only a fraction of the overall posts and tweets circulated on social media in the months leading up to the election. Moreover, even if people engaged with Russian-sponsored content, there is still the question of whether and how it affected their voting behavior.184 Even if Russian influence was not the main reason for Trump’s victory in the 2016 election, the spread of fake news via social media platforms deepened liberal societies’ distrust of political institutions and distrust of the media in particular.

It can be hard to distinguish fake news and misinformation originating from external forces, such as Russia, from information coming from anti-establishment populist candidates in strong liberal democracies, such as Trump and Sen. Bernie Sanders in the United States and Boris Johnson and Jeremy Corbyn in the United Kingdom.185 These populists promote divisive narratives of “them” versus “us,” the “pure” against the “corrupt,” “the masses” against “the elite,” “the people” versus “politicians/parliament/judges.”186 These narratives deepen the polarization that already exists in these countries. The Fragile States Index shows that the Group Grievance and Factionalized Elites indicators in America and the United Kingdom doubled in the last 12 years.187 This polarization may lead to brinksmanship or gridlock, making the country less functional. According to Nate Haken, in this situation of fragmentation “the usual brokers (media, state institutions, opinion leaders, religious and community leaders) lose relevance and legitimacy, making consensus-building difficult with no shared vision or context to build from and organize around.”188

When populists mix divisive speech with fake news and disinformation, they further erode people’s trust in democratic institutions, processes, and the media. However, strong liberal democracies are still unlikely to undergo the same democratic decay experienced by some weak liberal regimes. While they are constrained in the means they can employ to counter the malign use of social media, their checks and balances are more stable and robust than in weak liberal democracies. Their greater resilience is grounded in a long-standing democratic tradition, and their checks and balances are less affected by recent actions, especially when the support for democracy among citizens is still high.189

Social media platforms can be used to weaken strong liberal-democratic regimes. These regimes derive their power from liberal-democratic institutions, which need constant attention and reinforcement in order to serve as effective bulwarks of democracy. It is also important to keep the media free, unbiased, and devoid of fake news and disinformation. The spread of fake news and disinformation on social media as part of malign “perception management” orchestrated by domestic populists and external forces may weaken liberal-democratic regimes. Liberal democracies are restricted in the means they can employ to counter the malign use of social media. For now, the checks and balances of liberal-democratic regimes remain a solid protection against domestic populist opponents and malign external forces.

Counterfactual Reasoning

The causal model presented in the article proposes that social media platforms are used by three types of actors — domestic opposition, external forces, and the governing regime — for political purposes, and that their overall influence on the political system is determined both by the state’s capacity and the type of regime. One may ask whether these same outcomes — destabilizing, radicalizing, intensifying, and weakening — would still take place without social media. The problem is that exposure to social media is so extensive that it is almost impossible to find examples where an uprising took place without social media. Nevertheless, we will mention some counterfactual reasoning related to weak authoritarian and weak democratic countries found in our research.

According to one study, during the Arab spring in 2011, internet penetration was higher in the countries that were experiencing unrest than in those that weren’t.190 Internet users made up just 1.1 percent of Iraqis and 3.4 percent of Afghans in 2010, for example, compared to over 21 percent of the population in Egypt, 34 percent in Tunisia, and 88 percent in Bahrain. In the first three months of 2011, the number of Facebook users in the Arab world increased by 30 percent compared to an 18 percent growth over the same period in 2010.191 Countries where major civil movements have occurred have shown exponential growth in social media use during and after those movements. Still, it is hard to say that social media’s absence decreased the probability of online mobilization campaigns against the governing regime taking form. Some of the unrest was also fueled by traditional media outlets, as discussed earlier.192 In addition, some protest movements were constrained by the ability of governments to block internet access, as was the case in Iran.

When it comes to Brazil, the percentage of people using the internet grew from 40 percent in 2009 to 70 percent in 2018, while support for democracy dropped from a peak level of 55 percent to 34 percent during the same time period.193 Only 15 percent of Brazilians said they were satisfied with democracy in 2018 (a drop of 35 points compared to 2014).194 A survey conducted in August 2018 by the Brazilian Institute of Public Opinion and Statistics showed that only 25 percent of citizens trusted the federal government and only 18 percent trusted Congress.195 These numbers may indicate that Brazil had been radicalizing and drifting away from democracy for several years in relation to the growth in use of social media. But several researchers question the assertion that social media platforms are solely responsible for the deterioration of Brazil’s democracy, pointing to the many years of government corruption, rising crime, and economic recession.196

The above examples show that social media platforms did affect the political system in several countries, but that there may have been other causes as well. Nevertheless, as Patrícia Campos Mello claims, “the use of WhatsApp and other internet platforms amplifies whatever a political group says in an exponential way … If you find the right conditions in a country, they are really dangerous tools to undermine democracy and manipulate public debate.”197

The Way Ahead

This article looked at four case studies to illustrate the varying effects of social media platforms depending on who is using them — domestic opposition, external actors, or the governing regime — the regime type of the country, and the state’s capacity. In weak authoritarian states, social media can help dissidents to communicate and organize more easily (the destabilizing effect), while strong authoritarian states can use it as a suppressive tool to exploit the knowledge aggregated on the different social media platforms (the intensifying effect). When used to disseminate distorted information and fake news in strong liberal democracies, social media platforms can erode democratic institutions (the weakening effect). These platforms can facilitate populist leaders’ rise in weak liberal states (the radicalizing effect), making them more susceptible to turning into an illiberal or even authoritarian regime.

The malign use of various inherent characteristics of social media platforms — such as filter bubbles, echo chambers, a low entry bar, aggregate knowledge about people, the lack of fact-checking, information cascades, and the automatic recommendation algorithm — may lead to the erosion of democratic principles and institutions in liberal democracies across the world.

Although the Russian intervention during the 2016 U.S. elections caught the attention of American policymakers and the American public, what has been less discussed is social media’s impact on other liberal democracies and what that might mean for U.S. national security and the liberal international order. The malign use of social media platforms is only one reason for the disruption of that order. Other factors include the 2008 financial crisis, job losses related to changes in trade and technology, and the increased flow of migrants and refugees, among others.198 But when it comes to the abuse of social media platforms, America should not wait for social media companies to fix the problem themselves.199

In order to prevent liberal democracies from becoming illiberal or autocratic regimes and potentially drifting into the Russian or Chinese spheres of influence, it is crucial that the United States and other democracies take action today. Maintaining the current liberal international order requires keeping the internet an American project led by private companies. This means countering Russia’s and China’s efforts to gain a greater voice in internet governance and to promote their agenda of cyber sovereignty, under which government control and internet regulations would replace a global and open internet.200

U.S. policymakers cannot rely solely on social media companies to implement policies and technological means to decrease the flow of hate speech and fake news on their platforms.201 There are a number of possible approaches to this problem that have been suggested. One possible solution that the U.S. government can pursue is to reintroduce competition into this sector of the market by passing antimonopoly legislation in order to dilute the concentrated power of social media platforms.202 This approach views social media platforms as essential infrastructure (like public utilities) needing specific regulation.203 These regulatory tools would ensure that the infrastructure “serves the public’s needs — rather than incentivizing exploitative or exclusionary uses for private profit.”204 Relatedly, policymakers could consider breaking up or decentralizing these corporations.205 Other options are more concentrated on users and the data that these companies own. One possibility is to make the companies declare “platform bankruptcy,” whereby social media platforms would reset their entire user and group follower counts to zero and rebuild communities from the ground up, with the platforms’ current rules in place.206 Another approach is to make these corporations collect less data and adopt practices to treat that data in a “manner commensurate with its value.”207 The problem is that none of these solutions is a “silver bullet” and American legislators may risk trampling on the constitutional right to free speech that they are trying to preserve.208

#### Extinction

Joseph S. Nye 17, University Distinguished Service Professor at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, January/February 2017, “Will the Liberal Order Survive?,” Foreign Affairs, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/system/files/pdf/anthologies/2017/b0033\_0.pdf

The order will inevitably look somewhat different as the twenty-first century progresses. China, India, and other economies will continue to grow, and the U.S. share of the world economy will drop. But no other country, including China, is poised to displace the United States from its dominant position. Even so, the order may still be threatened by a general diffusion of power away from governments toward nonstate actors. The information revolution is putting a number of transnational issues, such as financial stability, climate change, terrorism, pandemics, and cybersecurity, on the global agenda at the same time as it is weakening the ability of all governments to respond.¶

Complexity is growing, and world politics will soon not be the sole province of governments. Individuals and private organizations—from corporations and nongovernmental organizations to terrorists and social movements—are being empowered, and informal networks will undercut the monopoly on power of traditional bureaucracies. Governments will continue to possess power and resources, but the stage on which they play will become ever more crowded, and they will have less ability to direct the action.¶

Even if the United States remains the largest power, accordingly, it will not be able to achieve many of its international goals acting alone. For example, international financial stability is vital to the prosperity of Americans, but the United States needs the cooperation of others to ensure it. Global climate change and rising sea levels will affect the quality of life, but Americans cannot manage these problems by themselves. And in a world where borders are becoming more porous, letting in everything from drugs to infectious diseases to terrorism, nations must use soft power to develop networks and build institutions to address shared threats and challenges.¶ China is unlikely to surpass the United States in power anytime soon.¶

Washington can provide some important global public goods largely by itself. The U.S. Navy is crucial when it comes to policing the law of the seas and defending freedom of navigation, and the U.S. Federal Reserve undergirds international financial stability by serving as a lender of last resort. On the new transnational issues, however, success will require the cooperation of others—and thus empowering others can help the United States accomplish its own goals. In this sense, power becomes a positive-sum game: one needs to think of not just the United States’ power over others but also the power to solve problems that the United States can acquire by working with others. In such a world, the ability to connect with others becomes a major source of power, and here, too, the United States leads the pack. The United States comes first in the Lowy Institute’s ranking of nations by number of embassies, consulates, and missions. It has some 60 treaty allies, and The Economist estimates that nearly 100 of the 150 largest countries lean toward it, while only 21 lean against it.¶

Increasingly, however, the openness that enables the United States to build networks, maintain institutions, and sustain alliances is itself under siege. This is why the most important challenge to the provision of world order in the twenty-first century comes not from without but from within.

### New Affs---1NC

#### Undisclosed new affs are bad---decrease depth of research and force reactionary generics which subverts clash.

### Case

#### Extinction outweighs---it’s the upmost moral evil and disavowal of the risk makes it more likely

Burns 17 (Elizabeth Finneron-Burns is a Teaching Fellow at the University of Warwick and an Affiliated Researcher at the Institute for Futures Studies in Stockholm, What’s wrong with human extinction?, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/00455091.2016.1278150?needAccess=true>, Canadian Journal of Philosophy, 2017)

Many, though certainly not all, people might believe that it would be wrong to bring about the end of the human species, and the reasons given for this belief are various. I begin by considering four reasons that could be given against the moral permissibility of human extinction. I will argue that only those reasons that impact the people who exist at the time that the extinction or the knowledge of the upcoming extinction occurs, can explain its wrongness. I use this conclusion to then consider in which cases human extinction would be morally permissible or impermissible, arguing that there is only a small class of cases in which it would not be wrong to cause the extinction of the human race or allow it to happen. 2.1. It would prevent the existence of very many happy people One reason of human extinction might be considered to be wrong lies in the value of human life itself. The thought here might be that it is a good thing for people to exist and enjoy happy lives and extinction would deprive more people of enjoying this good. The ‘good’ in this case could be understood in at least two ways. According to the first, one might believe that you benefit a person by bringing them into existence, or at least, that it is good for that person that they come to exist. The second view might hold that if humans were to go extinct, the utility foregone by the billions (or more) of people who could have lived but will now never get that opportunity, renders allowing human extinction to take place an incidence of wrongdoing. An example of this view can be found in two quotes from an Effective Altruism blog post by Peter Singer, Nick Beckstead and Matt Wage: One very bad thing about human extinction would be that billions of people would likely die painful deaths. But in our view, this is by far not the worst thing about human extinction. The worst thing about human extinction is that there would be no future generations. Since there could be so many generations in our future, the value of all those generations together greatly exceeds the value of the current generation. (Beckstead, Singer, and Wage 2013) The authors are making two claims. The first is that there is value in human life and also something valuable about creating future people which gives us a reason to do so; furthermore, it would be a very bad thing if we did not do so. The second is that, not only would it be a bad thing for there to be no future people, but it would actually be the worst thing about extinction. Since happy human lives have value, and the number of potential people who could ever exist is far greater than the number of people who exist at any one time, even if the extinction were brought about through the painful deaths of currently existing people, the former’s loss would be greater than the latter’s. Both claims are assuming that there is an intrinsic value in the existence of potential human life. The second claim makes the further assumption that the forgone value of the potential lives that could be lived is greater than the disvalue that would be accrued by people existing at the time of the extinction through suffering from painful and/or premature deaths. The best-known author of the post, Peter Singer is a prominent utilitarian, so it is not surprising that he would lament the potential lack of future human lives per se. However, it is not just utilitarians who share this view, even if implicitly. Indeed, other philosophers also seem to imply that they share the intuition that there is just something wrong with causing or failing to prevent the extinction of the human species such that we prevent more ‘people’ from having the ‘opportunity to exist’. Stephen Gardiner (2009) and Martin O’Neill (personal correspondence), both sympathetic to contract theory, for example, also find it intuitive that we should want more generations to have the opportunity to exist, assuming that they have worth-living lives, and I find it plausible to think that many other people (philosophers and non-philosophers alike) probably share this intuition. When we talk about future lives being ‘prevented’, we are saying that a possible person or a set of possible people who could potentially have existed will now never actually come to exist. To say that it is wrong to prevent people from existing could either mean that a possible person could reasonably reject a principle that permitted us not to create them, or that the foregone value of their lives provides a reason for rejecting any principle that permits extinction. To make the first claim we would have to argue that a possible person could reasonably reject any principle that prevented their existence on the grounds that it prevented them in particular from existing. However, this is implausible for two reasons. First, we can only wrong someone who did, does or will actually exist because wronging involves failing to take a person’s interests into account. When considering the permissibility of a principle allowing us not to create Person X, we cannot take X’s interest in being created into account because X will not exist if we follow the principle. By considering the standpoint of a person in our deliberations we consider the burdens they will have to bear as a result of the principle. In this case, there is no one who will bear any burdens since if the principle is followed (that is, if we do not create X), X will not exist to bear any burdens. So, only people who do/will actually exist can bear the brunt of a principle, and therefore occupy a standpoint that is owed justification. Second, existence is not an interest at all and a possible person is not disadvantaged by not being caused to exist. Rather than being an interest, it is a necessary requirement in order to have interests. Rivka Weinberg describes it as ‘neutral’ because causing a person to exist is to create a subject who can have interests; existence is not an interest itself.3 In order to be disadvantaged, there must be some detrimental effect on your interests. However, without existence, a person does not have any interests so they cannot be disadvantaged by being kept out of existence. But, as Weinberg points out, ‘never having interests itself could not be contrary to people’s interests since without interest bearers, there can be no ‘they’ for it to be bad for’ (Weinberg 2008, 13). So, a principle that results in some possible people never becoming actual does not impose any costs on those ‘people’ because nobody is disadvantaged by not coming into existence.4 It therefore seems that it cannot be wrong to fail to bring particular people into existence. This would mean that no one acts wrongly when they fail to create another person. Writ large, it would also not be wrong if everybody decided to exercise their prerogative not to create new people and potentially, by consequence, allow human extinction. One might respond here by saying that although it may be permissible for one person to fail to create a new person, it is not permissible if everyone chooses to do so because human lives have value and allowing human extinction would be to forgo a huge amount of value in the world. This takes us to the second way of understanding the potential wrongness of preventing people from existing — the foregone value of a life provides a reason for rejecting any principle that prevents it. One possible reply to this claim turns on the fact that many philosophers acknowledge that the only, or at least the best, way to think about the value of (individual or groups of) possible people’s lives is in impersonal terms (Parfit 1984; Reiman 2007; McMahan 2009). Jeff McMahan, for example, writes ‘at the time of one’s choice there is no one who exists or will exist independently of that choice for whose sake one could be acting in causing him or her to exist … it seems therefore that any reason to cause or not to cause an individual to exist … is best considered an impersonal rather than individual-affecting reason’ (McMahan 2009, 52). Another reply along similar lines would be to appeal to the value that is lost or at least foregone when we fail to bring into existence a next (or several next) generations of people with worth-living lives. Since ex hypothesi worth-living lives have positive value, it is better to create more such lives and worse to create fewer. Human extinction by definition is the creation of no future lives and would ‘deprive’ billions of ‘people’ of the opportunity to live worth-living lives. This might reduce the amount of value in the world at the time of the extinction (by killing already existing people), but it would also prevent a much vaster amount of value in the future (by failing to create more people). Both replies depend on the impersonal value of human life. However, recall that in contractualism impersonal values are not on their own grounds for reasonably rejecting principles. Scanlon himself says that although we have a strong reason not to destroy existing human lives, this reason ‘does not flow from the thought that it is a good thing for there to be more human life rather than less’ (104). In contractualism, something cannot be wrong unless there is an impact on a person. Thus, neither the impersonal value of creating a particular person nor the impersonal value of human life writ large could on its own provide a reason for rejecting a principle permitting human extinction. It seems therefore that the fact that extinction would deprive future people of the opportunity to live worth-living lives (either by failing to create either particular future people or future people in general) cannot provide us with a reason to consider human extinction to be wrong. Although the lost value of these ‘lives’ itself cannot be the reason explaining the wrongness of extinction, it is possible the knowledge of this loss might create a personal reason for some existing people. I will consider this possibility later on in section (d). But first I move to the second reason human extinction might be wrong per se. 2.2. It would mean the loss of the only known form of intelligent life and all civilization and intellectual progress would be lost A second reason we might think it would be wrong to cause human extinction is the loss that would occur of the only (known) form of rational life and the knowledge and civilization that that form of life has created. One thought here could be that just as some might consider it wrong to destroy an individual human heritage monument like the Sphinx, it would also be wrong if the advances made by humans over the past few millennia were lost or prevented from progressing. A related argument is made by those who feel that there is something special about humans’ capacity for rationality which is valuable in itself. Since humans are the only intelligent life that we know of, it would be a loss, in itself, to the world for that to end. I admit that I struggle to fully appreciate this thought. It seems to me that Henry Sidgwick was correct in thinking that these things are only important insofar as they are important to humans (Sidgwick 1874, I.IX.4).5 If there is no form of intelligent life in the future, who would there be to lament its loss since intelligent life is the only form of life capable of appreciating intelligence? Similarly, if there is no one with the rational capacity to appreciate historic monuments and civil progress, who would there be to be negatively affected or even notice the loss?6 However, even if there is nothing special about human rationality, just as some people try to prevent the extinction of nonhuman animal species, we might think that we ought also to prevent human extinction for the sake of biodiversity. The thought in this, as well as the earlier examples, must be that it would somehow be bad for the world if there were no more humans even though there would be no one for whom it is bad. This may be so but the only way to understand this reason is impersonally. Since we are concerned with wrongness rather than badness, we must ask whether something that impacts no one’s well-being, status or claims can be wrong. As we saw earlier, in the contractualist framework reasons must be personal rather than impersonal in order to provide grounds for reasonable rejection (Scanlon 1998, 218–223). Since the loss of civilization, intelligent life or biodiversity are per se impersonal reasons, there is no standpoint from which these reasons could be used to reasonably reject a principle that permitted extinction. Therefore, causing human extinction on the grounds of the loss of civilization, rational life or biodiversity would not be wrong. 2.3. Existing people would endure physical pain and/or painful and/or premature deaths Thinking about the ways in which human extinction might come about brings to the fore two more reasons it might be wrong. It could, for example, occur if all humans (or at least the critical number needed to be unable to replenish the population, leading to eventual extinction) underwent a sterilization procedure. Or perhaps it could come about due to anthropogenic climate change or a massive asteroid hitting the Earth and wiping out the species in the same way it did the dinosaurs millions of years ago. Each of these scenarios would involve significant physical and/or non-physical harms to existing people and their interests. Physically, people might suffer premature and possibly also painful deaths, for example. It is not hard to imagine examples in which the process of extinction could cause premature death. A nuclear winter that killed everyone or even just every woman under the age of 50 is a clear example of such a case. Obviously, some types of premature death themselves cannot be reasons to reject a principle. Every person dies eventually, sometimes earlier than the standard expected lifespan due to accidents or causes like spontaneously occurring incurable cancers. A cause such as disease is not a moral agent and therefore it cannot be wrong if it unavoidably kills a person prematurely. Scanlon says that the fact that a principle would reduce a person’s well-being gives that person a reason to reject the principle: ‘components of well-being figure prominently as grounds for reasonable rejection’ (Scanlon 1998, 214). However, it is not settled yet whether premature death is a setback to well-being. Some philosophers hold that death is a harm to the person who dies, whilst others argue that it is not.7 I will argue, however, that regardless of who is correct in that debate, being caused to die prematurely can be reason to reject a principle when it fails to show respect to the person as a rational agent. Scanlon says that recognizing others as rational beings with interests involves seeing reason to preserve life and prevent death: ‘appreciating the value of human life is primarily a matter of seeing human lives as something to be respected, where this involves seeing reasons not to destroy them, reasons to protect them, and reasons to want them to go well’ (Scanlon 1998, 104). The ‘respect for life’ in this case is a respect for the person living, not respect for human life in the abstract. This means that we can sometimes fail to protect human life without acting wrongfully if we still respect the person living. Scanlon gives the example of a person who faces a life of unending and extreme pain such that she wishes to end it by committing suicide. Scanlon does not think that the suicidal person shows a lack of respect for her own life by seeking to end it because the person whose life it is has no reason to want it to go on. This is important to note because it emphasizes the fact that the respect for human life is person-affecting. It is not wrong to murder because of the impersonal disvalue of death in general, but because taking someone’s life without their permission shows disrespect to that person. This supports its inclusion as a reason in the contractualist formula, regardless of what side ends up winning the ‘is death a harm?’ debate because even if death turns out not to harm the person who died, ending their life without their consent shows disrespect to that person. A person who could reject a principle permitting another to cause his or her premature death presumably does not wish to die at that time, or in that manner. Thus, if they are killed without their consent, their interests have not been taken into account, and they have a reason to reject the principle that allowed their premature death.8 This is as true in the case of death due to extinction as it is for death due to murder. However, physical pain may also be caused to existing people without killing them, but still resulting in human extinction. Imagine, for example, surgically removing everyone’s reproductive organs in order to prevent the creation of any future people. Another example could be a nuclear bomb that did not kill anyone, but did painfully render them infertile through illness or injury. These would be cases in which physical pain (through surgery or bombs) was inflicted on existing people and the extinction came about as a result of the painful incident rather than through death. Furthermore, one could imagine a situation in which a bomb (for example) killed enough people to cause extinction, but some people remained alive, but in terrible pain from injuries. It seems uncontroversial that the infliction of physical pain could be a reason to reject a principle. Although Scanlon says that an impact on well-being is not the only reason to reject principles, it plays a significant role, and indeed, most principles are likely to be rejected due to a negative impact on a person’s well-being, physical or otherwise. It may be queried here whether it is actually the involuntariness of the pain that is grounds for reasonable rejection rather than the physical pain itself because not all pain that a person suffers is involuntary. One can imagine acts that can cause physical pain that are not rejectable — base jumping or life-saving or improving surgery, for example. On the other hand, pushing someone off a cliff or cutting him with a scalpel against his will are clearly rejectable acts. The difference between the two cases is that in the former, the person having the pain inflicted has consented to that pain or risk of pain. My view is that they cannot be separated in these cases and it is involuntary physical pain that is the grounds for reasonable rejection. Thus, the fact that a principle would allow unwanted physical harm gives a person who would be subjected to that harm a reason to reject the principle. Of course the mere fact that a principle causes involuntary physical harm or premature death is not sufficient to declare that the principle is rejectable — there might be countervailing reasons. In the case of extinction, what countervailing reasons might be offered in favour of the involuntary physical pain/ death-inducing harm? One such reason that might be offered is that humans are a harm to the natural environment and that the world might be a better place if there were no humans in it. It could be that humans might rightfully be considered an all-things-considered hindrance to the world rather than a benefit to it given the fact that we have been largely responsible for the extinction of many species, pollution and, most recently, climate change which have all negatively affected the natural environment in ways we are only just beginning to understand. Thus, the fact that human extinction would improve the natural environment (or at least prevent it from degrading further), is a countervailing reason in favour of extinction to be weighed against the reasons held by humans who would experience physical pain or premature death. However, the good of the environment as described above is by definition not a personal reason. Just like the loss of rational life and civilization, therefore, it cannot be a reason on its own when determining what is wrong and countervail the strong personal reasons to avoid pain/death that is held by the people who would suffer from it.9 Every person existing at the time of the extinction would have a reason to reject that principle on the grounds of the physical pain they are being forced to endure against their will that could not be countervailed by impersonal considerations such as the negative impact humans may have on the earth. Therefore, a principle that permitted extinction to be accomplished in a way that caused involuntary physical pain or premature death could quite clearly be rejectable by existing people with no relevant countervailing reasons. This means that human extinction that came about in this way would be wrong. There are of course also additional reasons they could reject a similar principle which I now turn to address in the next section. 2.4. Existing people could endure non-physical harms I said earlier than the fact in itself that there would not be any future people is an impersonal reason and can therefore not be a reason to reject a principle permitting extinction. However, this impersonal reason could give rise to a personal reason that is admissible. So, the final important reason people might think that human extinction would be wrong is that there could be various deleterious psychological effects that would be endured by existing people having the knowledge that there would be no future generations. There are two main sources of this trauma, both arising from the knowledge that there will be no more people. The first relates to individual people and the undesired negative effect on well-being that would be experienced by those who would have wanted to have children. Whilst this is by no means universal, it is fair to say that a good proportion of people feel a strong pull towards reproduction and having their lineage continue in some way. Samuel Scheffler describes the pull towards reproduction as a ‘desire for a personalized relationship with the future’ (Scheffler 2012, 31). Reproducing is a widely held desire and the joys of parenthood are ones that many people wish to experience. For these people knowing that they would not have descendants (or that their descendants will endure painful and/or premature deaths) could create a sense of despair and pointlessness of life. Furthermore, the inability to reproduce and have your own children because of a principle/policy that prevents you (either through bans or physical interventions) would be a significant infringement of what we consider to be a basic right to control what happens to your body. For these reasons, knowing that you will have no descendants could cause significant psychological traumas or harms even if there were no associated physical harm. The second is a more general, higher level sense of hopelessness or despair that there will be no more humans and that your projects will end with you. Even those who did not feel a strong desire to procreate themselves might feel a sense of hopelessness that any projects or goals they have for the future would not be fulfilled. Many of the projects and goals we work towards during our lifetime are also at least partly future-oriented. Why bother continuing the search for a cure for cancer if either it will not be found within humans’ lifetime, and/or there will be no future people to benefit from it once it is found? Similar projects and goals that might lose their meaning when confronted with extinction include politics, artistic pursuits and even the type of philosophical work with which this paper is concerned. Even more extreme, through the words of the character Theo Faron, P.D. James says in his novel The Children of Men that ‘without the hope of posterity for our race if not for ourselves, without the assurance that we being dead yet live, all pleasures of the mind and senses sometimes seem to me no more than pathetic and crumbling defences shored up against our ruins’ (James 2006, 9). Even if James’ claim is a bit hyperbolic and all pleasures would not actually be lost, I agree with Scheffler in finding it not implausible that the knowledge that extinction was coming and that there would be no more people would have at least a general depressive effect on people’s motivation and confidence in the value of and joy in their activities (Scheffler 2012, 43). Both sources of psychological harm are personal reasons to reject a principle that permitted human extinction. Existing people could therefore reasonably reject the principle for either of these reasons. Psychological pain and the inability to pursue your personal projects, goals, and aims, are all acceptable reasons for rejecting principles in the contractualist framework. So too are infringements of rights and entitlements that we accept as important for people’s lives. These psychological reasons, then, are also valid reasons to reject principles that permitted or required human extinction.

#### Competition solves their impacts and is the most effective means of solving collective action problems---their ev only assumes unhealthy competition, which the plan solves

Joseph Heath 7, Professor of philosophy at the University of Toronto, “An Adversarial Ethic for Business: or When Sun-Tzu Met the Stakeholder”, Springer, 2007, Journal of Business Ethics 72:359-374

As soon as another buyer or seller enters the market, however, the strategic situation changes completely. The presence of multiple buyers and sellers dramatically reduces the ability of any one

buyer or seller to make a credible ‘‘take-it-or-leave-it’’ offer. If the price that the sellers are charging is above the price at the point where supply and demand curves intersect, then they will wind up with unsold goods at the end of the day. If they are both charging the same price, then one can assume that they will split the sales between them, and so both wind up with unsold goods. Yet this creates a temptation for both sellers. By dropping the asking price somewhat, it should be possible to sell one’s entire inventory. The loss of revenue caused by the lower price will then be made up for by the increased volume of sales. Of course, if one seller does this, then the other has no choice but to respond in kind. The result is lower profits for both of them. This competition will continue until the volume of sales at a given price level leaves neither of them with unsold goods. This is the point at which supply and demand curves intersect (which is why the price at that point is known as the ‘‘market clearing’’ price). The same sort of competition develops among buyers in cases where the price is lower than the market-clearing price – some buyers will be left with unsatisfied demand at the end of the day, and so will have an incentive to defect, by paying more than the going rate, in order to guarantee that they secure enough of the good.3

Clearly, it is not in the joint interest of either suppliers or buyers to compete with one another in this way. Thus, the reason that price competition is desirable is not that it benefits the people involved, but rather that it generates external benefits for society at large. In this respect, it is quite similar to athletic competition. But what are these external benefits, in the case of the competitive market? When suppliers compete with one another it benefits buyers, and vice versa. Thus the competitive market works to eliminate ‘‘deadweight losses’’ from the economy, ensuring that the maximum number of mutually beneficial economic exchanges take place. But more importantly, a competitive market also gives rise to a set of prices, which provide crucial information to everyone else in society about the relative scarcity of the various resources, skills,

goods and services being exchanged. In the same way that an infrared camera takes invisible light and converts it to a wavelength that the human eye can see, the competitive market takes people’s invisible preferences regarding both production and consumption and converts them to something that can be observed with the naked eye, viz. prices. This is what makes economically rational decision-making even roughly possible in every sector of the economy, including the public sector. The operation of the price system therefore allows for a more efficient (i.e. less wasteful) use of resources and labor.

Furthermore, the failure on the part of either producers or buyers to compete with one another can cause considerable mischief, insofar as it sends the wrong ‘‘signals,’’ via the price mechanism, to other economic actors. When suppliers, through collusion or cartelization, are able to maintain prices for some good at above-market-clearing rates, it suggest that there is ‘‘not enough’’ of that good, and so encourages a shift of resources away from other economic activities towards increased production of that good, combined with a shift among consumers toward goods that serve as substitutes (assuming such are available). Similarly, when buyers form a ‘‘consumer co-op,’’ or some similar organization, in order to hold out for lower prices, it sends the signal to suppliers that there is ‘‘too much’’ of the relevant good, and so encourages them to shift investment out of that sector.

This is, of course, the substance of ‘‘invisible hand’’ arguments for the market since Adam Smith. It is why David Gauthier, in his article ‘‘No Need for Morality: The Case of the Competitive Market,’’ argues that in market transactions, moral constraints ‘‘would be not merely pointless, but positively harmful’’ (Gauthier, 1982, 54). One is not merely encouraged to act non-cooperatively in a competitive market, social welfare considerations require one to do so, because the price mechanism requires competition in order to generate the right information about the relative scarcity or need for different goods.

Of course, it is important to recognize that there is nothing magical about the ability of markets to transform private vices into public virtues. This sort of laundering is a general feature of all competitively structured social interactions. And like all other forms of competition, market competition must be governed by a set of rules, restricting the range of strategies that individuals may employ, in order to ensure that it remains healthy. For suppliers, offering to sell at a lower price – and making the necessary changes in the production process that will enable one to do so – is the most important permissible strategy. Adjusting the quantity that is supplied, and making improvements in product quality are also permissible.

But like every other form of competition, market competition also has a tendency to go off the rails when improperly regulated. In principle, there is no reason why firms could not compete with one another by blowing up each others’ factories and hiring assassins to kill each others’ CEOs. Such a scenario is no less implausible than figure skaters sending out thugs to kneecap their opponents. In fact, one need only look at the experiences of the 364 various ‘‘transition economies’’ in the former Communist bloc to see the sort of outrageous behavior that improperly regulated marketplace competition may generate. For example, in 1994, shortly after the privatization of agriculture and food production in Hungary, the country was swept by an epidemic of lead poisoning. After searching far and wide for the cause, doctors and scientists finally tracked down the source of the problem. Manufacturers of paprika – a staple of Hungarian cuisine – had been grinding up old paint, much of it lead-based, and adding it to the spice in order to improve its color. The practice was so widespread that officials in Hungary were forced to order all the paprika in the country removed from store shelves and destroyed. This is a clear example of firms using an impermissible strategy – exploiting an information asymmetry – in order to compete, and other firms being forced to do the same, in order to retain position. The race to the top of the competitive market is thereby transformed into a race to the bottom, one that can have devastating consequences for the society at large.

### Thesis---1NC

#### Cognitive strikes are utopian, empirically impotent, and get cracked down on.

Nowak and Gallas, 14—PhD in political science AND Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science, University of Kassel (Jörg and Alexander, “Mass Strikes Against Austerity in Western Europe – A Strategic Assessment,” Global Labour Journal, Vol. 5, No. 3, dml)

The frequency of general strikes during the crisis years surpasses anything seen post-1980: the number of general strikes in the EU-15 plus Norway was 18 between 1980 and 1989, 26 from 1990 to 1999 and 27 between 2000 and 2009 (Hamann et al., 2013). In contrast, there were 38 general strikes in the period between 2010 and May 2014 (own count). The focus of this strike wave is in the five countries with the highest incidence of general strikes since 1980, which are all severely affected by the Eurozone crisis: 19 of these 38 strikes were in Greece, six in Italy, five in Portugal, four in Spain and three in France. In Belgium, there was one general strike in January 2012, the first one since 1984 (ibid.).

But this increase in the incidence of general strikes is no reason for optimism on the side of labour: The context of the wave of general strikes is a long-term decline of the relevance of economic strikes in the same countries. While the average number of strike days per year had been 16.6 per 10,000 employees in 1980-2 for the EU-15 plus Norway, it fell continuously to 1.1 in 2004-6 (Hamann et al., 2013). The strike activity also fell if we consider the share of workers (out of 1,000) on strike: In Western Europe, it plunged from 97 in the 1970s to 67 in the 1980s and 29 in the 1990s (Scheuer, 2006: 148f). In the 2000s, the number went down again, this time to 21 (European Commission, 2011: 46; Vandaele, 2011: 29). In other words, unions were increasingly unable to organise sectoral strikes, which can be explained with the restructuring of work and labour relations in the neoliberal era and its results: the overall decline of industries with a strong union presence; a secular decline of union density; and the fact that many trade unions focussed their strategies on (industrial) core workers, whose numbers also decreased (Vandaele, 2011: 32f.).

The upsurge of general strikes is a consequence of the fact national governments increasingly adopted neoliberal and austerity agendas: welfare state retrenchment moved the terrain of struggle to the political level. Governments curtailed social rights and workers rights, as well as cutting public expenditure. This development gained traction in the course of the global financial and economic crisis when governments started to impose draconian austerity agendas in an authoritarian fashion. This suggests that the increasing popularity of political strikes and general strikes is due to the fact that governments on the whole refused to negotiate with unions when they adopted the politics of austerity.

While the participation in general and political strikes since 2008 was spectacular, they were on the whole unsuccessful. There is not a single case of a government offering substantial concessions after one of the general strikes since 2008. Similarly, there were minor concessions only in one case, the general strike in Belgium in January 2012. This in stark contrast to the period before 2008: Between 1980 and 2011, there were government concessions in 27 of 68 cases (40 per cent; substantial: 8, minor: 19) and no concessions in 41 of 68 cases (60 per cent) (Hamann et al., 2013). Post-2008, one and two day general strikes (and even the fighting strike in France in 2010) were ineffective regarding material concessions. In other words, the class relations of forces in the crisis were unfavourable to labour.

The Limits of Quantitative Analyses

Interpretations of the strike wave since 2008 diverge considerably. Stefan Schmalz and Nico Weinmann argue that there is a trend towards more irregular conflicts and more incoherence between countries compared with the wave of mass strikes from 1968 to 1973 (Schmalz and Weinmann, 2013). Kurt Vandaele contends that there is an increasing convergence between European countries, both in terms of the long term decline of economic strikes (Vandaele, 2011) and the growing significance of political mass strikes (Vandaele, 2013). Gregor Gall also sees a trend towards convergence, which consists in the growing significance of political mass strikes and the emergence of the public sector as the centre of trade union activities (Gall, 2012).

Both Vandaele and Gall highlight that there are limits to quantitative analyses as they have been conducted in the past 30 years, thus questioning to some extent their own approaches. Vandaele implies that if strike action takes place in the public sector, it is not primarily at decreasing profits, but at disrupting everyday life through the suspension of public services. In this context, the number of days not worked, or of workers participating, are not the best indicators for the strength of a stoppage because it is possible to block a service with a small number of workers (Vandaele, 2011: 33). It follows that analyses of labour activism should take on board qualitative factors in order to grasp the full picture. Gall highlights other aspects when he discusses the limits of quantitative approaches: Many political strikes in the public sector and many general strikes are not counted in the official statistics – despite the fact that they have been a dominant form of industrial action in Europe at least since the 2000s (Gall, 2012: 14f). For Gall the decrease of strike activity is exaggerated if one operates on the grounds of these numbers.

The limits of quantitative approaches are visible in Schmalz and Weinmann’s analysis, which draws its political conclusions almost entirely from an evaluation of quantitative data about ‘nonnormative conflicts’. They state that trade unions exercise less control over mobilizations than they did between 1968 and 1973 (Schmalz and Weinmann, 2013). It disappears from the picture that many of the big trade union-led stoppages in the 1970s drew their momentum from wildcat strikes (Birke, 2007: 218f, 274f.; Gallas and Nowak, 2013), which is not the case for the current European strike wave, where union federations predominantly instigate the action.1 Hamann et al. (2013) also work with a quantitative approach, trying to detect patterns that explain under which circumstances general strikes yield successful results. Since the current strike wave is marked by the general absence of concessions, this methodology is difficult to apply. In contrast, Gall’s analysis considers the political context of the European strike wave, explaining its novelty by highlighting that unions are either excluded ‘from the process of political exchange’ (Gall, 2012: 2) or that political negotiations increasingly yield poor results for workers. Following him, there has been an erosion of corporatism, which means that the political strike became the primary means of struggle in France, Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal. According to Gall, this form of strike has strength to it because it entails big political mobilizations as ‘expression of collective discontent against and contestation of neoliberal policies’ (Gall, 2012: 20).

A Luxemburgian Typology

In this section, we propose a qualitative account of mass strikes inspired by Rosa Luxemburg. With regard to the recent wave of mass strikes, we can show what type of industrial action we are examining, and where its strategic limits lie. For this purpose, we develop a typology of strikes based on a qualitative description with four axes.

LUXEMBURG’S UNDERSTANDING OF MASS STRIKES

While scholars tend to reflect on the political context of political mass strikes and its strategic implications, they tend to neglect two aspects: The strikes are defensive strikes, and they are, to a large extent, without success, -- despite the unprecedented size of the mobilizations. Before we elaborate on these aspects, we will discuss the concept of the ‘mass strike’, which is used by Gall and Vandaele without providing a proper definition. We believe that Rosa Luxemburg’s work provides some insightful observations on mass strikes, which can be used to determine the concept. These can be found in her text The Mass Strike, the Political Parties and the Trade Unions, written in 1906, after the strike wave that led up to the (failed) Russian revolution in 1905. Obviously, there is no revolutionary situation in contemporary Europe (quite the contrary), but we believe that we can gain some general insights from Luxemburg by isolating her observations from their historical context.

She does not confine the concept of ‘mass strike’ to political strikes and highlights that purely economic strikes sometimes very quickly get a political dimension. One of her examples is a stoppage in the railway repair workshops in Kiev in July 1903. The strike movement grew after the police arrested two delegates of the railway workers. The subsequent blockade of the local railway station led to a police massacre with more than 30 dead workers. On the next day, a general strike started in all parts of Kiev. Inspired by these events, there was a general strike in Jekaterinoslaw in early August 1903 (Luxemburg, 1906/2008: 125). The famous strike in Petersburg in January 1905 exhibits a similar dynamic: Two workers were dismissed because of their membership in a legal official workers’ association. About one week later, 200,000 workers attended a march to the castle of the Tsar in order to submit a petition. A bloodbath followed, leaving between 200 and 1,000 workers dead. This in turn paved the way for a wave of mass strikes that lasted until the summer of that year, which led to the introduction of the 8-hour day in many sectors of the Russian economy (12 to 14 hours were the standard before the events) and to wage increases of around 15 per cent all over the country (Luxemburg, 1906/2008: 127f).

But Luxemburg underlines differences as well: While the strikes in 1903 started as sectoral, economic strikes and became political conflicts in their final phase, the mass strikes in 1905 reversed the pattern: they started with a unified political programme and led to many partial and independently organized economic strikes all over Russia. This distinction is not just of historical importance, but pertains to a central feature of Luxemburg’s understanding of mass strikes: The mass strike does not exhibit a unified pattern and cannot be identified ahead of its unfolding in a concrete struggle: ‘Its adaptability, its efficiency, the factors of its origin are constantly changing’ (Luxemburg, 1906/2008: 140). It is only possible ex post to chart mass strikes in a given conjuncture. But there are some defining features, which we can extract from Luxemburg’s account of the events in Russia: First of all, they disrupt political life, affect public discourse and provoke massive responses from governments or other state bodies (Luxemburg, 1906/2008: 140f). A second central aspect is the mobilizing character of mass strikes for the working class: Workers experience the power that goes along with collective action, gain experience in political struggles and see the need for organization. Importantly, these are qualitative features: the mass strike is not defined on the grounds of simple numbers (be they absolute numbers of participants or working days lost or relative numbers compared to the size of the population), but in terms of its effects, both on the political scene and the working class. In this sense, the 1984-5 Miners’ Strike in Britain can be seen as a mass strike (even though it was confined to one industry); in contrast, the public sector strikes in Germany in 1992 and 2006 involving hundreds of thousands of workers are not necessarily mass strikes, because they did not have persistent effects on the political scene and their mobilizing character for the German working class was limited.

Importantly and contrary to some readings of her work, Luxemburg does not glorify the mass strike. She underlines that there are limits to its effectiveness in the Russian context: While the first general strike in January 1905 led to a national wave of economic strikes, and a second national strike in October ended with political concessions of the Tsar, the third general strike in December resulted in defeat: An armed uprising of workers in response to state repression against the strike in Moscow was crushed by the military, and efforts by the social democrats to organize a fourth national strike in 1906 were not successful (Luxemburg, 1906/2008: 139f.). Luxemburg concludes the chapter with the following words: ‘The role of the political mass strike alone is exhausted, but, at the same time, the transition of the mass strike into a general popular rising is not yet accomplished. (…) The stage remains empty for the time being.’ (Luxemburg, 1906/2008: 140). This suggests that calls for mass strikes are only useful in specific conjunctures, and that other forms of political and social action prevail in other periods.

FOUR ANALYTICAL DISTINCTIONS

Against this backdrop, we propose a typology of the mass strike inspired by Luxemburg’s analysis (cf. Gallas and Nowak, 2012: 25f.). We use four distinctions to describe the different types of the mass strike. These distinctions are inspired by Luxemburg, who operated in a similar way without providing a systematic conceptual elaboration. They are analytical in character. Of course, the reality of a particular strike is always messy and sometimes produces grey zones that complicate or even defy categorization. But it is impossible to understand the causes, dynamics and effects of strikes without the use of analytical distinctions.

1. The first distinction concerns the aims of strikes. It runs between economic strikes that relate predominantly to the workplace, and political strikes that address extra-economic issues. Economic strikes address issues such as wages, layoffs and working conditions. One example for a political strike is the fight for universal suffrage: the labour movements in Belgium, Britain and Germany in the 19th and early 20th century demanded the vote not just through demonstrations, but also by going on strike. Luxemburg emphasizes that political and economic strikes constantly blend into each other (Luxemburg, 1906/2008: 144).

2. The second distinction relates to the extension of strikes: there are ‘partial’ strikes that affect just one sector of the economy (sectoral strikes) or one particular region or city (local or regional strikes), and general strikes that cut across sectors and are held at the national level (for Luxemburg’s use of the term ‘partial’, see 1906/2008: 142).

3. The third distinction is about the direction of a strike movement: Offensive strikes aim to reach a goal set by the strikers themselves (that is, wage increases or the recognition of independent unions by the state and employers), while defensive strikes try to block measures proposed by the government or employers (that is, layoffs or cutbacks of pensions) or are intended to defend rights such as universal suffrage or freedom of the press (Luxemburg, 1906/2008: 119).

4. The fourth distinctions reflects the form of strike: Demonstrative strikes voice the opinion of workers and are limited to one or two days, while fighting strikes are about striking until the goal of the stoppage or a compromise has been reached, or until the workers decide to give in (Luxemburg, 1906/2008: 143).

The vast majority of the mass strikes in Western Europe since 2008, on the grounds of our typology, are political strikes because they are directed against plans of the government to restrict rights and cut social expenditure. Furthermore, they are defensive and general strikes. Finally, they are usually demonstrative strikes limited to one or two days.2 In a nutshell, the type of strike dominating the Western European wave of mass strikes is the political, general, defensive and demonstrative strike.

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC PATTERNS

Vandaele stresses that there are regional patterns of strike activity, and he is grouping European countries into five categories according to their different industrial relations regimes (Vandaele, 2011). For a group of ‘Southern’ European countries – France, Italy, Greece, Spain and Portugal – he describes a common pattern characterized by ‘long-lasting employer hostility towards union recognition’ (Vandaele, 2011: 16) and a weak institutionalization of collective bargaining. Similarly, Gall argues that the political mass strike became the main strike method in the same countries since the late 1990s, reflecting the fact that the ties between social democratic parties and the union movement have not been very close in these countries, given the huge weight of communist trade unions (Gall, 2012: 20ff).

What is noteworthy is that the countries in question are also those where the vast majority of political strikes against austerity happened after 2008. So one could see this as a case of path dependency rather than a new political dynamic. But there is still a much higher frequency of these strikes since 2009. This suggests that two factors come together: First, the countries already had an established tradition of the political strike, which emerged in the late 1990s; and, second, the countries are worst hit by the Eurozone crisis (with the exception of France). Besides, there is a genuinely new development in that the strike wave reaches countries that do not belong to this first group: there were political strikes against austerity in the UK (which, according to Vandaele, belong to a Western European group) and in Belgium (which belongs to a Western-central European group). In the UK, the strikes have so far been confined to the public sector, but there are debates among the unions about the possibility of a genuine general strike (Gallas and Nowak, 2012: 70ff) – something that has not taken place in the country since 1926.

Political Strikes Against Austerity as a Reflection of the Conjuncture

The type of strike that is prevailing in the Eurozone Crisis, the defensive political strike, is both a reflection of a specific political conjuncture and of class relations of forces unfavourable to labour. Two aspects of this situation are important for debates on strategies: the fact that the strikes have been unsuccessful to a large extent and the fact that they are facing ‘physical limits’ in the form of violent state repression.

Against this backdrop, it appears that many of the big trade unions in the countries that are affected heavily by the crisis are halfway stuck between organizing protests against austerity and attempts to keep channels of negotiations open. This is changing slowly in some of the countries, for example in Britain, Spain and in Portugal, where unions are beginning to take a more confrontational stance vis-à-vis governments. To illustrate the two aspects, we will take a closer look at the strike against the pension cuts in France in October 2010, given that they were most advanced form of protest against austerity: it went against the dominant pattern insofar as the strike was not a demonstrative strike limited to one or two days; in fact, it lasted for about three weeks.

THE FRENCH STRIKE AGAINST PENSION CUTS

In spring 2010, the French government announced pension cuts. As a reaction, a three-week general strike against pension cuts erupted in October 2010, the main issue being the increase of the retirement age from 60 to 62. Similar mobilizations in 1995 and 2006 had brought substantial concessions (Lindvall, 2011). The strongholds of the 2010 strike were the refineries.

The strike was unsuccessful despite the fact that there was a broad consensus among the main trade unions behind the strike and public opinion was in favour: According to opinion polls, 60 to 70 percent of the population supported it. Furthermore, participation in demonstrations was high – much higher than in 1968 and comparable to 1995 (1968: 500,000; in 2010, 2.5-3 millions on various occasions). However, in 2010, the number of workers on strike was comparably low: estimates run between 500,000 and 1,000,000. In 1968, nine million workers were on strike, and in 1995, it was considerably more than one million workers. (During the 2006 protest movement, there were no mass strikes) (Gallas and Nowak, 2012: 56ff; USS, 2010).

In 2010, participation rates among important groups like railway workers and students were low because these groups had just been defeated in drawn-out conflicts that had taken place only a few months before the strike. The main bases of the strike were the oil refineries, the ports, and the public sector in the region of Marseille. Outside these main bases, the strikers were very much dispersed across sectors and workplaces, so that demonstrations became the focal points of the mobilization. Obviously, these demonstrations did not have much of an impact on the economy or the public infrastructure. The strikes in the refineries, which led to a shortage of fuel, had not been organized properly by the unions. As soon as the police and military arrived at the scene, the strikers gave up blockading (Gallas and Nowak, 2012: 59ff).

Arguments between the main unions (CFDT - Confédération française démocratique du travail and CGT - Confédération générale du travail) resulted in a moderate strategy: When the fuel shortages led to problems in the productive sector, the main unions distanced themselves from blockading refineries and fuel stores. The main unions were not prepared to start a proper confrontation with the Sarkozy government, because they believed that the Socialist Party (PS) was not ready for a change of government: The PS was divided on the issue of pensions and quarreled about the party leadership. Sarkozy’s strategy to refrain from offering negotiations or concessions surprised the unions. It was a new pattern of class politics in France.

The conditions of struggle throughout Europe had changed considerably with the onset of the financial crisis, but the main unions in France used the same old political strategies (Gallas and Nowak, 2012: 59ff): they wanted to change public opinion. Furthermore, they banked on the PS gaining the presidency in 2012 and repealing the restructuring of the pensions system. Hollande was carried to office by the strike movement but did not deliver on the demands of the strikers that he had included in his agenda. His attempt to restore the status quo ante in the area of pensions was half-hearted: the return to a lower pension age (60) will only affect 110,000 people. The focus of the unions on a change of government turned out to be a strategic mistake.

DEADLOCK

The French example reveals the deadlock that trade unions in many European countries face in the crisis. The old strategies of working with threats and blockades as well as hoping for negotiations and changes of government do not appear to work any longer. The political strikes against austerity conform mostly to what Beverly Silver (2003: 20) calls ‘Polanyi-type of labor unrest’: they are struggles predominantly based in sectors where layoffs, privatisations and restrictions of workers’ rights pose a threat to the existing labour force. This constellation of struggle produces specific challenges and dilemmas for labour, which mean that winning is difficult: If public sector workers, who were crucial for most of the mobilisations in Europe, go on strike, the state saves money. The strikers can make up for this by interrupting the economic and social infrastructure, for example by blockading public transport and roads, but this is difficult to sustain and creates tensions with the infrastructure users. Furthermore, if workers are indeed blockading key sites of the infrastructure or of production, there is a real danger that the repressive state apparatuses break strikes with force: this happened when air traffic controllers struck in Spain in 2010, and also in France in 2010 at the refineries.

Surely, the political strikes against austerity had a mobilizing character. But the fact that unions in the crisis countries on the whole did not gain any concessions – neither through negotiations nor through attempts to exert ‘influence from without’ (Gall, 2012) – reveals that the working classes in these countries generally lacked any sort of political leverage, which goes further than just saying that we are witnessing the ‘end of social democracy as a credible political force’ (ibid.). And in those cases where workers were able to mount effective resistance and put pressure on governments, repressive state apparatuses intervened on their behalf. How is it possible to overcome this impasse? There are three possible ways: (1) blockades are so widespread and massive that there are not enough repressive forces available to effectively break them; (2) political pressure is strong enough that the government withdraws from violent intervention; or (3) labour activists develop new tactics that deal with violence in one way or another. The first option of an all-out blockade seems utopian, and it is difficult to build effective political pressure. But the labour movements across Europe cannot evade the question of how to build up effective pressure when faced with governments unprepared to make concessions, but ready to break strikes with violent means. If organized labour is not able to address this question, ‘the stage will remain empty’ for the time being.

Strategic Lessons

Unions are faced with a dilemma in the European crisis. They find themselves in a situation of weakness where it would be better to lay low and gain strength first, but they are not controlling the conditions under which they operate. They are under attack and cannot afford to lose because this would have devastating consequences: unemployment and impoverishment for the working people in the crisis countries and a seriously constrained room for manoeuvre for labour. In this situation, they tend to resort to staging symbolic political strikes, which thus become the terrain for the reconstitution for working class movements across Europe. The strikes are supposed to represent shows of strength, but their results in terms of concessions are meagre. In other words, governments across the Eurozone have called the bluff of the trade unions by choosing not to move in response to the strikes.

In this situation, unions have to rethink their strategies. But it is not enough to simply call for a radicalization of trade unionism. There are reasons why unions resort to the rather moderate means of the symbolic political strike. Thanks to the crisis, their members are faced with the serious economic hardship caused by wage cuts. Furthermore, they are under the threat of being laid off, and finding a new job is very difficult under conditions of a deep economic crisis. The ‘silent compulsion of economic relations’ (Marx, 1867: 899) is further amplified through cuts in the welfare system, which make it even harder to cope with unemployment. Finally, it is difficult to call for a radicalization when people have already been defeated at various occasions, which has a demoralizing effect. In this situation, simplistic calls for militant action have a ring of radical posturing. As a result, the starting point of any debate on union strategy should be on the existing pattern of struggle, and how its elements can be recomposed to lead to a more forceful result.

#### Speed hasn’t collapsed politics. Moments of decision are preceded by innumerable opportunities for intervention, which tech only proliferates.

Grove 8 – Jairus Victor Grove, Ph.D. Candidate at Johns Hopkins University in International Relations and Political Theory, “Chapter 1: A Schmittian Century?: From Nuclear Leviathan to Nuclear-Sovereign-Assemblage”, 3-17, http://becomingwar.blogspot.com/2008/03/chapter-1-schmittian-century-from.html

Initially nuclear weapons seemed to solidify even complete the decisionistic model of sovereignty once and for all. In Virilio’s reading of Schmitt’s the state of emergency became permanent and democracy ended once it became possible for a single individual to decide to got to war and to finish that war in 30 minutes. At first glance Virilio’s apocalyptic diagnosis seems accurate. Nuclear weapons at their current numbers could destroy the entire planet and given the structure of the United States nuclear command any Congressional or popular attempt to stop the war would be in vain. This is the backbone of Virilio’s argument. Politics and a democratic balance of power require time. Time to react, time to respond, time to debate, time to strategize, time to implement and ICBMS nullify time.

But Virilio is wrong. The threat of the extreme case has obscured the actual or present case that presents new opportunities for intervention. Politics, whether micro or macro, does not begin and end with the sovereign decision; the sovereign decision (both expressively and in its enactment) emerges from a relay of forces, connections, and other previous decisions, resonances, forces, and actants that are presupposed in each subsequent iteration of the sovereign decision, and layered in multiple streams of time. Even an increasingly automated nuclear arsenal requires the participation of literally millions of people and countless networks, objects, tectonic stability, stable solar flare activity and on and on. The decision only appears singular when Virilio truncates time to the moment the president ‘pushes the button.’ We are not as of yet in that moment so other temporal rhythms abound and each part of the nuclear assemblage follows a different temporal course.

The physical infrastructure of the nuclear arsenal for instance decays at every level. Even steel and concrete are not permanent and must be repaired and replaced. However the Department of Defense does not in fact have an industrial capacity of its own nor has it successfully deployed robots to run the nuclear silos or mined enough uranium or manufactured enough tritium to maintain the weapons we currently have. The liability of a neo-liberal system of procurement and production (including its all volunteer army) is that seemingly top secret and sequestered sites of nuclear stewardship bleed into the everyday economy of Americans citizen and the broader ecology of the planet.

Certainly the sovereign decision is a powerful, expressive, performative act of individuation for the sovereign and highly affective in mobilizing populations, but it is not self-constituted or self-causal. The process of individuation and mobilization necessitates a field of relations and resonances from which the sovereign decision emerges. The decision is also not decisive. Instead it territorializes the relations from which it emerges through its resonant modulation. The enunciation of a sovereign decision (a distinct inquiry from the ‘making of a decision. Certainly no less emeshed but nonetheless ought to remain analytically different) is something like a refrain, the sovereign—in so far as it is constituted by the enunciation of decisions—is a condensation point for national ethos, affect, and institutional identity making. Each decision is constitutive not of the ‘sovereign’ as is the case in Schmitt’s analysis but of a sovereign point of identification or reified, dogmatic consistency which can be recognized but need not remain static or immobile.

Again however such a node is only possible because of its attachments whether physical or resonant (both material) to the complex system of tradition, culture, wires, telephones, satellites, nuclear silos, television cameras, previous sovereign decisions, personal affective characteristics, character, etc. This list is not exhaustive by any measure however it gestures in the direction of what I am trying to get at. The sovereign is not an individual, at best it is an iterative series of moments of performative or expressive individuation resulting from a complex interface with machines, networks, affective fields. The assemblage has a life of its own that cannot and should not be reduced to a single point simply because that is most consistent with our common sensibilities.

In some sense the sovereign is a prosthesis or interface to be worn by whoever is elected to office. (President as first-person-shooter?) This does in part explain why there is so little transition time between each sovereign and so little variation in war powers. It is reference point or index for a history of actions and events made more complex by the function it is meant or believed to serve. It is the titular focal point of an assemblage that if recognized as such would undermine its own function. An assemblage that function because it can inspire belief in it is unity not its dispersed and multivalent organization.

The irony is that the development of miles of fiberoptic networks, new technological interfaces and mobility was supposed to save the centralized and hierarchical sovereign form from its obvious strategic liability—that of being an easy target. However in increasing its ‘survivability’ it has also opened innumerable points of access to the supposed center. Each access point whether it be technological, affective, or economic that can recenter, or reterritorialize the sovereign assemblage. I do not want to make this sound ‘easy’ or ‘painless’ however as this ‘dispersed’ or redundant network system has become ‘everyday’ increasingly the President has been unaware of exactly who is in control or even at how many levels the Nuclear-sovereign-assemblage can be engaged or reterritorialized.

The former Soviet Union has faced the dark side of this arrangement in the phenomena of ‘loose nukes’. In general the loss of sovereign control is seen as a ‘tragedy’, a prelude to destruction. As a result, the positive sites of intervention are less frequently recognized. However even the ‘dark side’ of losing control has a silver lining. North Korea has not been invaded and is now receiving significant food aid to relieve an ongoing famine in part because of it furtive nuclear development no doubt aided by the ‘loose nuke’ phenomena even if only the phenomena of ‘loose lips’ in the transfer of information.

It is also the case that the nuclear-sovereign-assemblage requires a massive industrial capacity to continue its day-to-day operations not to mention the difficulty of disposing of the waste made in its production. At both ends of the nuclear fuel cycle—mining and disposal—the Department of Defense lacks the industrial and waste management capacity to sustain either effort. Once private businesses, public and private land, and public finance become involved so to new population gain access to the assemblage and indeed become part of the assemblage. Effective divestment of South Africa and blood diamond producing countries demonstrate that the neo-liberal state apparatus cannot survive in isolation. The protest of many Indian nations from the Western Shashone in Nevada, the Navajo in New Mexico, to the Lakota Sioux, to allow new uranium mining and waste disposal on their land has politicized what was thought to be unpoliticizable. In each protest or hearing before the court the nuclear fuel cycle and its connection to a history of genocide and subsequent irradiation of the Indian survivors must be confronted. The Lakota Sioux—who have fought the expansion of Uranium mining and milling in the Dakotas—have as of December 20th, 2008 successfully succeeded from the United States and declared themselves a newly independent nation.

I will refer to this phenomenon as the neo-liberal liability a liability that is created from the economic and material assemblage required to support the nuclear arsenal. It is difficult to oppose capitalism because of its dispersed and differentiated machinic capabilities however the logic of capitalism—flow—is at odds with the necessities of the Nuclear-Sovereign-Assemblage—secrecy and carceral terroritoriality, the restriction or repression of flow. New lines of flight are created by the attempt to enhance the survivability of the sovereign. As the assemblage becomes more distributed and more complex a new fragility emerges. The assemblage is not fragile, the redundant network system enhances its ability to ‘survive’. However it undermines its ability to remain aborescent to sustain the identity necessary for centrality and hierarchy.

#### There is no singular prevailing social condition and it’s not ‘caused’ by acceleration or technology---dystopian speed determinism is completely misguided

Germain 9 – Dr. Gilbert G. Germain, Assistant Professor of Political Studies at the University of Prince Edward Island, PhD in Political Science from Notre Dame, MA and BA in Political Science from Carleton University, Spirits in the Material World: The Challenge of Technology, p. 158-162 [language modified]

THE PROBLEM OF TECHNOLOGY

To this point I have presented a largely sympathetic reading of the main players reviewed in these pages, focusing on their respective contributions to a self-defined problem. The time now has come to ask ourselves whether the problem they address exists at all. Although I have stressed that several of the readings of the reality problematic must be read ironically, I nonetheless have presented reasons why we ought not dismiss their admittedly dire assessments of our technological society and its future. Is this defense well taken? Are their more convincing arguments suggesting their pessimism is misguided and that modern technoscience is not as problematic as they claim it to be? A brief survey of the main counterarguments to technological pessimism will set the stage for further analysis.

The charge of technological determinism is often raised in connection with the dystopianism of thinkers like Virilio and Lyotard, not to mention Heidegger, Ellul, and others who share their intellectual sympathies. The criticism is that those who demonize technology often wrongly attribute to it, as one commentator notes, “a specific, coherent, and all-determining significance.” 7 They are thought guilty of reifying technology, which explains in part their penchant for referring to technology in the singular. Conflating the idea of technology with technology proper, the argument continues, these dystopians are able to impute to technological development an exclusive goal, such as the enslavement or dehumanization of humankind. Along with this error, critics assert that technological determinists fall prey to reductionist thinking. Reductionism is said to err on two fronts. One, it assumes the relative autonomy of various aspects of a social order, and for this reason assumes as well that they can be excised neatly from the whole and examined in isolation. Two, reductionist thinking errs in singling out a particular aspect of the social order, such as technology or the economy, and claiming it to be the efficient cause of the whole of that order. In response to the reductionist’s presuppositions and assertions, the critics argue that because no aspect of the whole stands in isolation from other aspects, technology, like every other component of society, functions as both cause and effect.

As stated, dystopians maintain that technology is the efficient cause of societal development. There is no countervailing force in their view to the technological imperative of efficiency. All aspects of the social order are informed and reordered in accordance with the dictates of technology, which themselves are immune to overriding influences by any kind of extraneous input, be it political, economic, or cultural. Although not a dystopian himself, the contemporary critical theorist Jürgen Habermas takes seriously the determinists’ concerns in his analysis of “the mediatization of the lifeworld.”8 His critique of technology asserts that the rationality associated with technology has overpowered the domain of communicative action, the “lifeworld.” This latter realm, the realm of politics, broadly defined, is being corrupted and distorted by the “system,” which has as its goal not mutual understanding but control in accordance with rational rules and procedures. Habermas shares with the dystopians a concern that, if not technology per se, then at least the spirit of technology, has colonized the social order as a whole to its detriment. But what he and most critics of the determinist position cannot countenance is the assumption that no force exists within society capable of altering the course of what is purported to be “autonomous” technological development. Habermas sees the lifeworld, and the rationality which informs it, as a distinct mechanism of coordinating societal action: It therefore stands against the system and its rationality. Both mechanisms serve as means to satisfy different sets of societal interests, and so both for him have their place within a well-functioning social order. For Habermas, the problem with technology has nothing to do with technology itself, with either its purposiveness or its focus on efficiency, but with its domination as a mechanism of societal coordination. Accordingly, the solution to the problem of technology for him lies in reinvigorating the lifeworld and the integrity of communicative action.

All critics of the dystopian philosophy of technology share with Habermas the view that there are competing logics at play within the social order which see to it that the domination of technology is less than total. Technology, they say, is not sufficiently monolithic to warrant either deification or demonization, but instead has the power both to restrict and extend human freedom. In monumentalizing technology and seeing it primarily as a negative force, the critics charge the dystopians with falling prey to one or more common fallacies. The first of these may be called the “design fallacy,” or the view that a technology invariably functions in the manner it was originally intended to function. Those who succumb to this fallacy see technology as an instrument that advances the power of those who own and implement it. Since technologies are regarded primarily as tools designed to extend control over the domain to which they are applied, their imposition necessarily leads to a loss of freedom on behalf of those at the receiving end of these instrumental forces. Dystopians, for instance, would regard technologies such as communications networks or the Internet as classic illustrations of “system” forces in that they are rationally structured and managed, and are distributed on a market that rewards efficiency. The freedoms and powers these technologies confer upon their users are more apparent than real, they assert, since their realization is framed by the rational demands of these specific technologies, as well of those of the larger technological system within which they are embedded. The critics, on the other hand, counter it is misleading to assume that just because these technologies are designed to maximize efficiency and extend the power of their managers, they must remain mere instruments of the system. They argue that the communicative practices facilitated by these technologies need not produce outcomes which reinforce system needs. Some observers cite the Minitel incident of the 1980s, where the French government’s introduction of an information distribution system was effectively sabotaged by the public to serve its own ends, as proving a more general claim that all technologies have the potential to be implemented in ways that can subvert the interests of the system.9

Critics also allege dystopians as falling victim to the “appeal-to-tradition fallacy.” The guiding assumption of this fallacy is that older technologies, by virtue of their relative primitiveness, function more directly as extensions of the human body and therefore are more attuned to the essence of our humanity. This nostalgic embrace of primitiveness leads dystopians to interpret every technological advance as another step toward an increasingly mediated and ultimately dehumanized existence. Looking, for instance, at the evolution of inscription technologies—extending from the first etching tools to word processing systems—dystopians see only a progression from more to less embodied forms of writing. Where words and symbols once were committed to a surface with the aid of a steady hand and a focused mind, they are now abstract “objects” of manipulation to be arranged and rearranged in accordance with the whims of the moment.

Heidegger perfectly captures this sentiment in his analysis of the typewriter, the word processing system of his era: “Mechanized writing,” he tells us, “deprives the hand of dignity in the realm of the written word and degrades the word to a mere means for the traffic of communication.”10 Heidegger’s fear, and the fear of dystopians in general, is that a change in the medium of linguistic expression affects not only the form of language, but more importantly the content of what is expressed. Hardly neutral, they see technology as actively transforming what it acts upon, conforming it to the technological demands of efficiency and standardization. While many critics of dystopianism concede that technology is not neutral, they take issue with the view that technological progress is necessarily dehumanizing. Admitting different technologies impose different forms on the material they act upon, and that some these forms indeed may be more mediated or mechanical than others, they conclude that never is the form so alien to human purposes that it precludes being used as a means of true intellectual or creative expression. To argue otherwise would be to claim, for example, that because a keyboard is a mechanized hand, those who use it are capable only of expressing mechanized thoughts. This absurd conclusion, the critics argue, underscores the fact that while technology imposes a form on what is expressed, this imposition does not necessarily extend to its content.

Finally, dystopians are accused of exaggerating the uniformity with which technology advances. In part as a consequence of their reifying technology, dystopians see the evolution of technology as a lock-step process composed of successive phases of instrumental sophistication. So it is, for instance, that we see ourselves living today in the Computer or Digital Age, as distinct from the Mechanical Age which preceded it. Critics dispel what may be called the “coherency fallacy” by pointing out that in any given period there is considerable diversity in types of technology. Hi-tech never displaces lo-tech entirely. Antiquaries such as bicycles, typewriters, vinyl LPs, pencils, and handpowered reel lawnmowers, still have a place in a world otherwise given over to the latest technological innovations. While dystopians tend to dismiss the persistence of antiquarian technologies as unimportant in relation to the overarching pattern of development, the critics see it as providing more evidence that technology is hardly the hegemon some claim it is. If, they say, we reflect on the manner we actually live our lives and the tools we rely on to facilitate our actions, we will see that our technological milieu is multilayered. That we lead technologically disjointed lives proves that technology does not hold sway over the human, at least not in the totalistic sense the dystopians would have us believe. We use technologies to satisfy our needs and desires, the nature of which (while conditioned by the technologies at our disposal) is not wholly determined by the technological milieu. If it were otherwise, they ask, how could one explain the enduring appeal of the lowly pencil in a virtual world, or the persistence of analog technologies in a digital age?

If the arguments against technological pessimism mentioned above hold any merit, then the problem with technology stems more from a misreading of technology than from technology itself. The critics of the dystopian vision, while cognizant of technology’s dark side, refuse to see its powers of coercion and self-perpetuation as anything more than propensities. Technology for them remains subvertible because it does not constitute a closed system. It follows that we do not, strictly speaking, live in a technological society because technology’s final end (i.e., efficiency) is not the only determinant of societal evolution. As powerful a force as technology may be, they assert, it remains one force among others and therefore subject to challenge. If there is a problem with technology, the critics of determinism say, it is a consequence of the failure of politics. Following Habermas, they assume that the excesses of technology result from underdeveloped communicative capacities and a corresponding weakened capacity for communities to dictate the ends to which technologies ought to be employed.

Much of what has been said in the preceding pages about the fate of reality is predicated on the determinist assumption that humanity is being ineluctably driven by technological development from the real world of space and time. The expressed concerns about reality’s demise and its dehumanizing consequences would lose their force if it could be shown that nothing in the logic of technology dictates such an end and that our technological “fate” remains, as always, squarely in our hands. Before we can decide which of the two sides of the debate presents the stronger argument, we must review the dystopian position’s likely response to the charge that it seriously misreads the essence of technology.

As noted, the critics of dystopianism argue that technological pessimists wrongly attribute to technology a single and all-determining purpose. They do so because they conflate the idea of technology with its exercise, thereby granting the essence of technology (i.e., efficiency) an inflated significance in the workings of society. By adopting this high-altitude intellectual posture, they invariably neglect the real world of technology, with its inconsistencies, paradoxes, and cleavages. This oversight accounts for the dramatic flair of much contemporary theorizing about technology, especially continental philosophizing, with its sweeping generalizations and dire pronouncements on the end of [hu]man[s], nature, or reality. Unfortunately, these critics charge, the grandiosity of their claims is matched by an equally formidable misreading of the nature of technology.

#### Acceleration is tempered and most politics, including extreme cases of outright war, are slow---their examples are cherry-picked

**Thommesen 3 –** Jacob Thommesen, Doctoral Student at the Center for Tele-Information at the Technical University of Denmark, Master’s Degree in Computer Science from the University of Copenhagen, “Virilio: From Space to Time, From Reality to Image”, Ephemera, Volume 3, Number 2, http://www.ephemeraweb.org/journal/3-2/3-2thommesen.pdf

It seems appropriate to close this review by returning once more to the issue of technology and warfare, which has resumed actuality with two recent hi-tech wars. It will also provide an opportunity to explain his method. Leaving aside the idea of society being shaped by military logic, one might question whether Virilio exaggerates the significance of technology in warfare, that is, whether he accepts at face value the picture presented by the proponents of televised high-precision missile systems. Without being an expert in military history, I seem to remember that those bombs were never quite as smart and precise as announced by military spokesmen. And it has also been argued that at least the more recent war in Afghanistan was not won from the air but depended quite largely on ground personnel (at a mere 'relative speed'4). Furthermore, the example of automatic defence systems also seems to show that he echoes the optimistic arguments about the potential for Artificial Intelligence. He accepts that this degree of automatization - not only in warfare, but also as a general tendency - is a realistic vision, while the fact is that research in AI has failed to deliver for decades. (On other hand it is a relief that he does not simply argue that AI is impossible due to phenomenological insights). Thus, while Virilio offers a critical antidote to the choir of IT evangelists, i.e. the idea of us all getting together in the global village (which he explicitly criticizes), he may be criticized for a similar tendency to attribute too much importance to the isolated factor of Technology. And perhaps this critique could be extended to his method in general, that is, dying to read signs of the future in various contemporary events without resorting to any elaborate empirical study, picking out convenient examples without over-zealous attention to then actual representativity - a method Brugger and Petersen (1994) label 'archaeology of the future\*. On the other hand, those may be exactly the conditions and risks involved in trying to grasp the future: the intention is to identify future tendencies rather than merely describe contemporary reality. Although the critique of his empirical 'method' should not be completely silenced, neither should critique silence the observations of an analytical and somewhat cynical 'visionary'. I certainly find many of his ideas and arguments inspiring for further study, without having to subscribe to all of his theses.

### Solvency---1NC

#### Micropolitics can’t alter structural conditions of speed that necessitate antitrust---their response of ‘thinking differently’ is useless

Cole 12 – David Cole, Professor at the Georgetown University Law Center, “RESPONSE: Confronting the Wizard of Oz: National Security, Expertise, and Secrecy”, Connecticut Law Review, 44 Conn. L. Rev. 1627, July, Lexis

Rana's account of the epistemological underpinnings of the national security state offers an astute and novel perspective on a familiar story. Few would dispute that the national security agenda is today dominated by agencies in the executive branch. 4Link to the text of the note Other scholars have identified different causes for this development. Many have pointed to such factors as the growth of the administrative state; the increasingly interventionist role the United States plays in the world; the rise of technological threats such as [\*1629] nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons; the spread of international terrorism; and the risks posed by the increasing interconnectedness of the globalized world. 5Link to the text of the note But Rana adds a further dimension, attributing the evolution to a shift in how the American public thinks about national security. In his view, the modern era has erroneously accepted the view that security matters should be left to "the experts." 6Link to the text of the note Until we successfully challenge that assumption, he contends, legal reforms addressed to the problem are doomed to fail. 7

Rana is right to focus our attention on the assumptions that frame modern Americans' conceptions about national security, but his assessment raises three initial questions. First, it seems far from clear that there ever was a "golden" era in which national security decisions were made by the common man, or "the people themselves," as Larry Kramer might put it. 8 Rana argues that neither Hobbes nor Locke would support a worldview in which certain individuals are vested with superior access to the truth, and that faith in the superior abilities of so- called "experts" is a phenomenon of the New Deal era. 9Link to the text of the note While an increased faith in scientific solutions to social problems may be a contributing factor in our current overreliance on experts, 10 I doubt that national security matters were ever truly a matter of widespread democratic deliberation.

Rana notes that in the early days of the republic, every able-bodied man had to serve in the militia, whereas today only a small (and largely disadvantaged) portion of society serves in the military. 11Link to the text of the note But serving in the militia and making decisions about national security are two different matters. The early days of the Republic were at least as dominated by "elites" as today. Rana points to no evidence that decisions about foreign [\*1630] affairs were any more democratic then than now. And, of course, the nation as a whole was far less democratic, as the majority of its inhabitants could not vote at all. 12Link to the text of the note Rather than moving away from a golden age of democratic decision- making, it seems more likely that we have simply replaced one group of elites (the aristocracy) with another (the experts).

Second, to the extent that there has been an epistemological shift with respect to national security, it seems likely that it is at least in some measure a response to objective conditions, not just an ideological development. If so, it's not clear that we can solve the problem merely by "thinking differently" about national security. The world has, in fact, become more interconnected and dangerous than it was when the Constitution was drafted. At our founding, the oceans were a significant buffer against attacks, weapons were primitive, and travel over long distances was extremely arduous and costly. The attacks of September 11, 2001, or anything like them, would have been inconceivable in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. Small groups of non-state actors can now inflict the kinds of attacks that once were the exclusive province of states. But because such actors do not have the governance responsibilities that states have, they are less susceptible to deterrence. The Internet makes information about dangerous weapons and civil vulnerabilities far more readily available, airplane travel dramatically increases the potential range of a hostile actor, and it is not impossible that terrorists could obtain and use nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons. 13Link to the text of the note The knowledge necessary to monitor nuclear weapons, respond to cyber warfare, develop technological defenses to technological threats, and gather intelligence is increasingly specialized. The problem is not just how we think about security threats; it is also at least in part objectively based.

Third, deference to expertise is not always an error; sometimes it is a rational response to complexity. Expertise is generally developed by devoting substantial time and attention to a particular set of problems. We cannot possibly be experts in everything that concerns us. So I defer to my son on the remote control, to my wife on directions (and so much else), to the plumber on my leaky faucet, to the electrician when the wiring starts to fail, to my doctor on my back problems, and to my mutual fund manager on investments. I could develop more expertise in some of these areas, but that would mean less time teaching, raising a family, writing, swimming, [\*1631] and listening to music. The same is true, in greater or lesser degrees, for all of us. And it is true at the level of the national community, not only for national security, but for all sorts of matters. We defer to the Environmental Protection Agency on environmental matters, to the Federal Reserve Board on monetary policy, to the Department of Agriculture on how best to support farming, and to the Federal Aviation Administration and the Transportation Security Administration on how best to make air travel safe. Specialization is not something unique to national security. It is a rational response to an increasingly complex world in which we cannot possibly spend the time necessary to gain mastery over all that affects our daily lives.

If our increasing deference to experts on national security issues is in part the result of objective circumstances, in part a rational response to complexity, and not necessarily less "elitist" than earlier times, then it is not enough to "think differently" about the issue. We may indeed need to question the extent to which we rely on experts, but surely there is a role for expertise when it comes to assessing threats to critical infrastructure, devising ways to counter those threats, and deploying technology to secure us from technology's threats. As challenging as it may be to adjust our epistemological framework, it seems likely that even if we were able to sheer away all the unjustified deference to "expertise," we would still need to rely in substantial measure on experts.

The issue, in other words, is not whether to rely on experts, but how to do so in a way that nonetheless retains some measure of self-government. The need for specialists need not preclude democratic decision-making. Consider, for example, the model of adjudication. Trials involving products liability, antitrust, patents, and a wide range of other issues typically rely heavily on experts. 14Link to the text of the note But critically, the decision is not left to the experts. The decision rests with the jury or judge, neither of whom purports to be an expert. Experts testify, but do so in a way that allows for adversarial testing and requires them to explain their conclusions to laypersons, who render judgment informed, but not determined, by the expert testimony.

#### A rejection of the choice offered by the resolution is not a program for action, just an empty moralistic call that does nothing to alter the trajectory of acceleration

Kellner 99 – Douglas Kellner, Distinguished Professor in the Departments of Education, Gender Studies, and Germanic Languages at UCLA, “Virilio, War, and Technology: Some Critical Reflections”, https://pages.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/essays/viriliowartechnology.pdf

Summing Up: Virilio, War, and Technology

I don't claim to define the situation, I try to reveal tendencies. And I think I've revealed a number of important ones: the question of speed; speed as the essence of war; technology as producer of speed war as logistics, not strategy; war as preparation of means and no longer as battles, declaration of hostilities (Virilio and Lotringer 1983: 157).

This seems like a fair summary of Virilio's lasting contributions and I would suggest that the power of his work resides in his sustained interrogation of the virulence and power of military technology, but his works' limitation in turn results from using the model of military technology to interrogate technology as such and particularly the new information technologies. Virilio was justly distressed by the specter of total war, by the forces of military-technological domination, by the inexorable growth of power and the danger of the military-industrial complex during the Cold War and in particular the era between the Vietnamese and Gulf wars. During the era of the Cold War, the propagation and growth of the military-industrial complex and military state capitalism was the fundamental project and the organizing force behind the development of science, technology, and the allocation of public resources. More money was spent on this project than any other domain of existence and military priorities helped determine the mode of science, technology, and industry that developed in the Cold War period.

Military capitalism helped produce Big Government, Big Corporations, and a Big Military that deployed a tremendous array of manpower, weapons, and resources. Computers were largely developed from military imperatives, producing large, centralized calculating machines and information machines, including the so-called "information superhighway" which had its origins in the defense industry (see Edwards 1996). The military, big government, and giant corporations also controlled scientific and technological research and development, with the militaryindustrial complex dominating the post-World War Two Cold War economies (see Melman 1965 and 1974).

But while there are still threats to world peace and even human survival from the dark forces of military capitalism, one of the surprising events of the past decade is the emergence of a new form of Microsoft capitalism, of less lethal and more decentralized new technologies, of new modes of peaceful connection and communication. The project of this new form of technocapitalism is the development of an information-entertainment society that we might call the infotainment society and which is sometimes described as the "information superhighway." This form of capitalism is a softer capitalism, a less violent and destructive one, a more ecological mode of social organization, based on more flexible, smaller-scale, and more ludic technologies.[6]

The differences between hard military capitalism and a softer Microsoft capitalism are evident in the transformation of the computer from a top-down, highly centralized, specialized machine controlled by big organizations to the smaller scale, more flexible, and more ludic personal computer (see Turkle 1996 for elaboration of this distinction). Moreover, the surprising development of the Internet opens up new public spheres and the possibility of political intervention by groups and individuals excluded from political dialogue during the era of Big Media, controlled by the state and giant corporations (for elaboration of this argument see Kellner 1995, 1996, and forthcoming).

Of course, Microsoft capitalism has its own dangers ranging from economic worries about nearmonopoly control of economic development through software domination to the dangers of individuals getting lost in the proliferating terrains of cyberspace and the attendant decline of individual autonomy and initiative, social relations and interaction, and community. Yet the infotainment society promises more connections, interactions, communication, and new forms of community. The project is in far too early stages to be able to appropriately evaluate so for now we should rest content to avoid the extremes of technophobia which would reject the new technologies out of hand as new forms of alienation or domination contrasted to technophilic celebrations of the information superhighway as the road to a computopia of information, entertainment, affluence, and democracy.

Virilio misses a key component of the drama of technology in the present age and that is the titanic struggle between national and international governments and corporations to control the structure, flows, and content of the new technologies in contrast to the struggle of individuals and social groups to use the new technologies for their own purposes and projects. This optic posits technology as a contested terrain, as a field of struggle between competing social groups and individuals trying to use the new technologies for their own projects. Despite his humanism, there is little agency or politics in Virilio's conceptual universe and he does not delineate the struggles between various social groups for the control of the new technologies and the new politics that they will produce. Simply by damning, demonizing and condemning new technologies, Virilio substitutes moralistic critique for social analysis and political action, reducing his analysis to a lament and jeremiad rather than an ethical and political critique å la Ellul and his tradition of Catholic critique of contemporary civilization, or critical social theory. Virilio has no theory of justice, no politics to counter, reconstruct, reappropriate, or transform technology, no counterforces that can oppose technology. Thus, the increasing shrillness of his lament, the rising hysteria, and sense of futile impotence.

#### Their politics has no ability to alter key sites of power and only locks in violence

Bayat 13 – Dr. Asef Bayat, Professor of Sociology and the Catherine and Bruce Bastian Professor of Global and Transnational Studies at the Department of Sociology at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, PhD from the University of Kent, Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East, Second Edition, p. 41-45

The Resisting Poor

The dearth of conventional collective action— in par tic u lar, contentious protests among the subaltern groups (the poor, peasants, and women) in the developing countries, together with a disillusionment with dominant socialist parties, pushed many radical observers to “discover” and highlight different types of activism, however small- scale, local, or even individualistic. Such a quest, meanwhile, both contributed to and benefited from the upsurge of theoretical perspectives, during the 1980s, associated with poststructuralism that made micropolitics and “everyday resistance” a popular idea. James Scott’s departure, during the 1980s, from a structuralist position in studying the behavior of the peasantry in Asia to a more ethnographic method of focusing on individual reactions of peasants contributed considerably to this paradigm shift .27 In the meantime, Foucault’s “decentered” notion of power, together with a revival of neo- Gramscian politics of culture (hegemony), served as a key theoretical backing for micropolitics, and thus the “resistance” perspective.

The notion of “resistance” came to stress that power and counterpower were not in binary opposition, but in a decoupled, complex, ambivalent, and perpetual “dance of control.”28 It based itself on the Foucauldian idea that “wherever there is power there is resistance,” although the latter consisted largely of small- scale, everyday, tiny activities that the agents could afford to articulate given their political constraints. Such a perception of resistance penetrated not only peasant studies, but a variety of fields, including labor studies, identity politics, ethnicity, women’s studies, education, and studies of the urban subaltern. Thus, multiple researchers discussed how relating stories about miracles “gives voice to popular resistance”29; how disenfranchised women resisted patriarchy by relating folktales and songs or by pretending to be possessed or crazy;30 how reviving extended family among the urban popular classes represented an “avenue of political participation.”31 The relationships between the Filipino bar girls and western men were discussed not simply in terms of total domination, but in a complex and contingent fashion;32 and the veiling of the Muslim working woman has been represented not in simple terms of submission, but in ambivalent terms of protest and co-optation— hence, an “accommodating protest.”33 Indeed, on occasions, both veiling and unveiling were simultaneously considered as a symbol of resistance.

Undoubtedly, such an attempt to grant agency to the subjects that until then were depicted as “passive poor,” “submissive women,” “apolitical peasant,” and “oppressed worker” was a positive development. The resistance paradigm helps to uncover the complexity of power relations in society in general, and the politics of the subaltern in particular. It tells us that we may not expect a universalized form of struggle; that totalizing pictures often distort variations in people’s perceptions about change; that local should be recognized as a significant site of struggle as well as a unit of analysis; that organized collective action may not be possible everywhere, and thus alternative forms of struggles must be discovered and acknowledged; that organized protest as such may not necessarily be privileged in the situations where suppression rules. The value of a more flexible, small- scale, and unbureaucratic activism should, therefore, be acknowledged.34 These are some of the issues that critiques of poststructuralist advocates of “resistance” ignore.35

Yet a number of conceptual and political problems also emerge from this paradigm. The immediate trouble is how to conceptualize resistance, and its relation to power, domination, and submission. James Scott seems to be clear about what he means by the term:

Class resistance includes any act(s) by member(s) of a subordinate class that is or are intended either to mitigate or deny claims (for example, rents, taxes, prestige) made on that class by superordinate classes (for example, landlords, large farmers, the state) or to advance its own claims (for example, work, land, charity, respect) vis-à- vis these superordinate classes.36 [emphasis added]

However, the phrase “any act” blocks delineating between qualitatively diverse forms of activities that Scott lists. Are we not to distinguish between large- scale collective action and individual acts, say, of tax dodging? Do reciting poetry in private, however subversive- sounding, and engaging in armed struggle have identical value? Should we not expect unequal affectivity and implications from such different acts? Scott was aware of this, and so agreed with those who had made distinctions between different types of resistance— for example, “real resistance” refers to “organized, systematic, pre- planned or selfless practices with revolutionary consequences,” and “token resistance” points to unorganized incidental acts without any revolutionary consequences, and which are accommodated in the power structure.37 Yet he insisted that the “token resistance” is no less real than the “real resistance.” Scott’s followers, however, continued to make further distinctions. Nathan Brown, in studying peasant politics in Egypt, for instance, identifies three forms of politics: atomistic (politics of individuals and small groups with obscure content), communal (a group eff ort to disrupt the system, by slowing down production and the like), and revolt ( just short of revolution to negate the system).38

Beyond this, many resistance writers tend to confuse an *awareness* about oppression with *acts* of resistance against it. The fact that poor women sing songs about their plight or ridicule men in their private gatherings indicates their understanding of gender dynamics. This does not mean, however, that they are involved in acts of resistance; neither are the miracle stories of the poor urbanites who imagine the saints to come and punish the strong. Such an understanding of “resistance” fails to capture the extremely complex interplay of conflict and consent, and ideas and action, operating within systems of power. Indeed, the link between consciousness and action remains a major sociological dilemma.39

Scott makes it clear that resistance is an intentional act. In Weberian tradition, he takes the meaning of action as a crucial element. This intentionality, while significant in itself, obviously leaves out many types of individual and collective practices whose intended and unintended consequences do not correspond. In Cairo or Tehran, for example, many poor families illegally tap into electricity and running water from the municipality despite their awareness of their behavior’s illegality. Yet they do not steal urban services in order to express their defiance vis-à- vis the authorities. Rather, they do it because they feel the necessity of those services for a decent life, because they find no other way to acquire them. But these very mundane acts when continued lead to significant changes in the urban structure, in social policy, and in the actors’ own lives. Hence, the significance of the unintended consequences of agents’ daily activities. In fact, many authors in the resistance paradigm have simply abandoned intent and meaning, focusing instead eclectically on both intended and unintended practices as manifestations of “resistance.”

There is still a further question. Does resistance mean defending an already achieved gain (in Scott’s terms, denying claims made by dominant groups over the subordinate ones) or making fresh demands (to “advance its own claims”), what I like to call “encroachment”? In much of the resistance literature, this distinction is missing. Although one might imagine moments of overlap, the two strategies, however, lead to different political consequences; this is so in par tic u lar when we view them in relation to the strategies of dominant power. The issue was so crucial that Lenin devoted his entire What Is to Be Done? to discussing the implications of these two strategies, albeit in different terms of “economism/trade unionism” vs. “social democratic/party politics.”

Whatever one may think about a Leninist/vanguardist paradigm, it was one that corresponded to a particular theory of the state and power (a capitalist state to be seized by a mass movement led by the working- class party); in addition, it was clear where this strategy wanted to take the working class (to establish a socialist state). Now, what is the perception of the state in the “resistance” paradigm? What is the strategic aim in this perspective? Where does the resistance paradigm want to take its agents/subjects, beyond “prevent[ing] the worst and promis[ing] something better”?40

Much of the literature of resistance is based upon a notion of power that Foucault has articulated, that power is everywhere, that it “circulates” and is never “localized here and there, never in anybody’s hands.” 41 Such a formulation is surely instructive in transcending the myth of the powerlessness of the ordinary and in recognizing their agency. Yet this “decentered” notion of power, shared by many poststructuralist “resistance” writers, underestimates state power, notably its class dimension, since it fails to see that although power circulates, it does so unevenly— in some places it is far weightier, more concentrated, and “thicker,” so to speak, than in others. In other words, like it or not, the state does matter, and one needs to take that into account when discussing the potential of urban subaltern activism. Although Foucault insists that re sis tance is real when it occurs outside of and in de pen dent of the systems of power, the perception of power that informs the “resistance” literature leaves little room for an analysis of the state as a system of power. It is, therefore, not accidental that a theory of the state and, therefore, an analysis of the possibility of cooptation, are absent in almost all accounts of “resistance.” Consequently, the cherished acts of resistance float around aimlessly in an unknown, uncertain, and ambivalent universe of power relations, with the end result an unsettled, tense accommodation with the existing power arrangement.

Lack of a clear concept of resistance, moreover, often leads writers in this genre to overestimate and read too much into the acts of the agents. The result is that almost any act of the subjects potentially becomes one of “resistance.” Determined to discover the “inevitable” acts of resistance, many poststructuralist writers often come to “replace their subject.”42 While they attempt to challenge the essentialism of such perspectives as “passive poor,” “submissive Muslim women,” and “inactive masses,” they tend, however, to fall into the trap of essentialism in reverse— by reading too much into ordinary behaviors, interpreting them as necessarily conscious or contentious acts of defiance. This is so because they overlook the crucial fact that these practices occur mostly within the prevailing systems of power.

For example, some of the lower class’s activities in the Middle East that some authors read as “resistance,” “intimate politics” of defiance, or “avenues of participation” may actually contribute to the stability and legitimacy of the state.43 The fact that people are able to help themselves and extend their networks surely shows their daily activism and struggles. However, by doing so the actors may hardly win any space from the state (or other sources of power, like capital and patriarchy)— they are not necessarily challenging domination. In fact, governments often encourage self- help and local initiatives so long as they do not turn oppositional. They do so in order to shift some of their burdens of social welfare provision and responsibilities onto the individual citizens. The proliferation of many NGOs in the global South is a good indicator of this. In short, much of the resistance literature confuses what one might consider coping strategies (when the survival of the agents is secured at the cost of themselves or that of fellow humans) and effective participation or subversion of domination.

There is a last question. If the poor are always able to resist in many ways (by discourse or actions, individual or collective, overt or covert) the systems of domination, then what is the need to assist them? If they are already politically able citizens, why should we expect the state or any other agency to empower them? Misreading the behavior of the poor may, in fact, frustrate our moral responsibility toward the vulnerable. As Michael Brown rightly notes, when you “elevate the small injuries of childhood to the same moral status as suffering of truly oppressed,” you are committing “a savage leveling that diminishes rather than intensifies our sensitivities to injustice.” 44

## 2NC

## T USFG

#### Clash---pitting revolutions against one another fractures effective political decision-making---using the resolution as a foundation for their formation is key.

Rashmee Kumar & Asad Haider 18, Deputy Managing Editor at The Intercept, B.A. in journalism and media studies from Rutgers University; founding Editor of Viewpoint Magazine, PhD candidate in the History of Consciousness at UC Santa Cruz, “How Identity Politics Has Divided the Left: An Interview With Asad Haider,” The Intercept, 05-27-2018, https://theintercept.com/2018/05/27/identity-politics-book-asad-haider/

How can identity politics be brought back to its radical origins within contemporary political discourse and organizing?

I think we have to be open to understanding that our identities are not foundations for anything; they are unstable, they are multifarious — and that can be unsettling. But we have to find ways to become comfortable with that, and part of how we can do that is by creating new ways of relating to each other, which can come through mass movements. The way we can overcome the fragmentation that identity seems to lead to now is precisely by recognizing what the Combahee River Collective proposed: being able to assert a political autonomy and also being in coalitions. I think that’s very practical. It’s not going to come from having endless arguments on Twitter; it’s something that has to come through political activity. It’s through working on concrete, practical projects in coalition with others. That in itself is a process in which racism is undermined, and white people who are working together with people of color can learn to question their own assumptions and overcome racist impulses.

I’m very inspired by the rapid growth of socialist organizations right now, but I am concerned sometimes that socialism gets equated with some kind of program for economic redistribution that has been the same since the 19th century. Socialists have always been engaged in coalition-building — there was always a principle of internationalism, there was never a fixed conception of the kinds of demands a socialist movement has to put forward. Sometimes a demand that may not seem to be directly related to the redistribution of wealth can be part of coalition-building and mobilizing people. If a socialist organization is at the forefront of a movement against racism — and this was the goal of certain black members of the Communist Party in the ’30s — then people are going to look around and say, “Who’s on our side? It’s these people. When we were dealing with police violence, these were the people, this was the organization that stepped in to help. And this is an organization that is multiracial, and they think that these issues we encounter in our daily lives matter, just as much as any other economic demand might matter.” So socialist organizations also have to be open to experimentation and flexibility in order to pre-empt identity as a source of division and instead, pre-emptively build solidarity.

Can you explain your vision of a universalist political framework?

We have to set aside the kind of universalism that resolves divisions and difficulties in advance by saying that we have some kind of universal foundation, like human nature or materialism like it’s some physical matter, which has nothing to do with materialism as Marx talked about it. That’s not the universalism I’m advocating for because that kind of universalism has historically been caught up with exclusion and domination — like what was put forth by the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, the American Revolution, which were systematic with slavery, colonialism, and various forms of violence. … My understanding of universalism is when the people and groups that are excluded from this [definition of] universal rise up and claim their autonomy to produce a new kind of universality. It’s not something that pre-exists; it’s a break with the existing state of things. The classic example is the Haitian Revolution, which came after the French Revolution, which pointed out that France still held colonies in which there was slavery, despite whatever was happening there.

We’d be able to see a new universalism if these rigid divisions between so-called identity categories like race and gender and the category of class were overcome in a real, practical movement. If we were able to see organizations emerge and make real, concrete change in which they bridge those gaps — in which it would become impossible to say that “this is a white organization” or “this is a male-dominated organization” — it would necessarily involve challenging economic inequality and the class structures of American society. For a movement to arise, which tackled the fundamental structures of inequality, domination, and exploitation in American society in such a way that identity as a force of division could not exist — that would be a real universal moment.

## Case

#### A legion of empirical studies show the opposite of their claim. Politics is robust and only improved by acceleration.

Thrift 11 – Nigel Thrift, Executive Director of the Schwarzman Scholars, Professor Human Geography at the University of Warwick, “Panicsville: Paul Virilio and the Esthetic of Disaster” in Virilio Now: Current Perspectives in Virilio Studies, Ed. Armitage, p. 148-149

Well, it’s certainly a way of looking at things, and one with a long and honorable pedigree: let’s face it, it’s not often that you read social theorists who want to present garlands to the world. But I don’t think it even vaguely holds up to serious scrutiny as an account of how the modern world is. If Virilio ever read much in the way of serious social science research, which is, after all, flooding in from all quarters of the globe, he would surely have to backtrack. Almost everything he says about the modern city would have to be seriously qualified or reconstructed or just plain retracted. Take information technology to begin with. Here detailed studies show that Virilio’s idea that we are moving into a machinic age needs qualification, to put it but mildly. Thus, prompted by the growth of sociology of science, actor-network theory, material culture studies, and so on, there has been a systematic rethinking of what human might mean as a tool-using entity. The general conclusion is well summarized by Clark (2003: 198):

Some fear . . . a loathsome “post-human” future. They predict a kind of technologically incubated mind-rot, leading to loss of identity, loss of control, overload, dependence, invasion of privacy, isolation, and the ultimate rejection of the body. And we do need to be cautious, for to recognise the deeply transformative nature of our biotechnological unions is at once to see that not all such unions will be for the better. But if I am right – if it is our basic human nature to annex, exploit, and incorporate nonbiological stuff deep into our mental profiles – then the question is not whether we go that route, but in what ways we actively sculpt and shape it. By seeing ourselves as we truly are, we increase the chances that our future biotechnological unions will be good ones.

Thus, there is a veritable legion of careful empirical studies of information technology that very often show the polar opposite of what Virilio would have us believe. Instead of taking on the cyberbole of firms and marketing agencies, researchers have gone out and looked at what people do with information technology and what information technology does with them and, surprise, surprise, there is a divergence. Just as one example, a common rule in this literature is “the more virtual the more real” (Woolgar 2002), that is, the introduction of new “virtual” technologies can actually stimulate more of the corresponding “real” activity.

Then take speed. I have shown in numerous papers, as have many commentators now, that any serious historical analysis of the impact of increasing speed on society demonstrates that its impact is much more variegated than Virilio credits, and does not add up to any particular tendency (such as that sad old chestnut, the “time-space compression” story). I, like many other commentators, have demonstrated this over and over again, pretty well to distraction – and largely to no avail it has to be said. The idea that increasing speed somehow has causality is an urban myth so deeply engrained in Western individuals’ idea of themselves and how they are that it is probably not dislodgeable – but that doesn’t mean that philosophers have to power it up.

## 1NR

## Frame Subtraction

#### “Trade” is a propaganda word that shuts down deliberation and ensures gut rejection of political alternatives---every use cements neoliberal hegemony

Johnson 9 – Dave Johnson, Fellow at Campaign for America’s Future, Senior Fellow at Renew California, “Stop Calling the TPP A Trade Agreement – It Isn’t”, Common Dreams, 5-26, https://www.commondreams.org/views/2015/05/26/stop-calling-tpp-trade-agreement-it-isnt

This is a message to activists trying to fight the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Stop calling the TPP a “trade” agreement. TPP is a corporate/investor rights agreement, not a “trade” agreement. “Trade” is a good thing; TPP is not. Every time you use the word “trade” in association with the TPP, you are helping the other side.

“Trade” is a propaganda word. It short-circuits thinking. People hear “trade” and the brain stops working. People think, “Of course, trade is good.” And that ends the discussion.

Calling TPP a “trade” agreement lets the pro-TPP people argue that TPP is about trade instead of what it is really about. It diverts attention from the real problem. It enables advocates to say things like, “95 percent of the world lives outside the U.S.” as if that has anything to do with TPP. It lets them say, “We know that exports support American jobs” to sell a corporate rights agreement. It enables them to say nonsense like this about a corporate rights agreement designed to send American jobs to Vietnam so a few “investors” can pocket the wage difference: “Exports of U.S. goods and services supported an estimated 9.8 million American jobs, including 25 percent of all manufacturing jobs … and those export-supported jobs pay 13 to 18 percent higher than the national average wage.”

Trade is good. Opening up the border so you can get bananas and they can get fertilizer is trade because they have a climate that lets them grow bananas and you already have a fertilizer plant. Enabling companies to move $30/hour jobs to countries with $.60/hour wages so a few billionaires can pocket the difference is not trade.

Calling TPP a “trade” agreement lets TPP supporters say people opposed to TPP are “anti-trade.”

TPP Is A Corporate/Investor Rights Agreement

TPP is a corporate/investor rights agreement, and that is the problem.

TPP extends patents, copyrights and other monopolies so investors can collect “rents.”

TPP elevates corporations and corporate profits to and above the level of governments. TPP lets corporations sue governments for laws and regulations that cause them to be less profitable. Enabling tobacco companies to sue governments because anti-smoking campaigns limit profits has nothing to do with trade. Enabling corporations to sue states that try to regulate fracking has nothing to do with trade.

While giving corporations a special channel to sue governments, labor, environmental, consumer and other “stakeholder” organizations do not get a channel for enforcement. This helps enable corporations to break unions, force wages down and pollute without cost. This increases the power of corporations over governments – and us.

#### **‘Trade’ is an attempt to dignify the structural degradation inherent to capitalism, which is misleading and delinked from theory necessary to respond to massive global environmental and social destruction---extinction!**

Foster 11 – John Bellamy Foster, Editor of Monthly Review and a Professor of Sociology at the University of Oregon, Brett Clark, Richard York, Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Oregon, The Ecological Rift: Capitalism's War on the Earth, p. 370-371

The Nature of Ecological Imperialism

The economic development of capitalism has always carried with it social and ecological degradation—an ecological curse. Moreover, ecological imperialism has meant that the worst forms of ecological destruction, in terms of pillage of resources and the disruption of sustainable relations to the earth, fall on the periphery rather than the center. Ecological imperialism allows imperial countries to carry out an “environmental overdraft” that draws on the natural resources of periphery countries. As the material conditions of development are destroyed, third world countries are more and more caught in the debt trap that characterizes extractive economies. The principles of conservation that were imposed partly by business in the developed countries, in order to rationalize their resource use up to a point, were never applied to the same extent in the third world, where imperialism nakedly imposed an “after me the deluge” philosophy. The guano and nitrates trade during the mid to late nineteenth century highlights the unequal exchange and degradation associated with the ecological contradictions of Britain and other dominant countries in the global economy.

Indeed, it is rather misleading to dignify with the word *trade* what was clearly robbery of ecological and economic resources on a very high order, rooted in one of the most exploitative labor processes in history and backed up by war and imperialism. The result for Peru and Chile (and also Bolivia, which lost its nitrates in the War of the Pacific) was not development, but rather, as explained by critics from Mariátegui in the 1920s to Frank in the 1960s, constituted the “development of underdevelopment.”100 All of this, following Marx, needs to be understood in terms of the larger theory of global metabolic rift, which captures the underlying nature of the capitalist relation to the environment. In the case of the guano trade, the development of ecological imperialism necessitated not only an enormous net flow of ecological resources from South to North, but also gave added impetus to the importation of foreign labor, particularly coolie labor from China, under conditions that, as Marx said, were “worse than slavery.” Within the world system of capital, the robbing of the soil in Europe necessitated the importation of guano from Peru, and in the process fed into the robbing of human labor on a truly global scale. This might even be referred to as the “triangle trade” of mid-nineteenth-century ecological imperialism.

Ironically, the exploitation of guano in Peru in recent years is raising the question once again of the complete exhaustion of this natural resource, with the price in export markets in the United States, Europe, and Israel between 2007 and 2008 doubling to $500 a ton (as opposed to the $250 a ton it sells for in Peru). Peruvian guano is now highly prized as an organic fertilizer for organic farms around the world. But this new global demand, which has increased the rate of guano extraction, is pointing to “the end of guano” with supplies likely to run out in a decade or two, negating decades of successful sustainable development of this resource. In the Chincha Islands, where 60 million seabirds once deposited guano at the height of the nineteenth-century guano boom, there are now about four million birds. The guano deposits, which were once 150 feet high, reach on some islands, such as Isla de Asia, south of Lima, “less than a foot or so.” The once abundant anchoveta (of the anchovy family) that once constituted the main food for the seabirds has been depleted by commercial fishing, since it is sold globally as fishmeal for poultry and other animals. Where Chinese laborers once dug guano, it is now worked by impoverished Quechua-speaking native laborers from the Peruvian highlands. In all respects this shows the absolute devastation that constitutes the natural end state of ecological imperialism.101

The nature of ecological imperialism is continually to worsen ecological conditions globally. Capital in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century is running up against ecological barriers at a biospheric level, barriers that cannot be so easily displaced, as was the case previously, through the spatial fix of geographical expansion and global labor and resource exploitation. Ecological imperialism—the growth of the center of the system at unsustainable rates, through the more thoroughgoing ecological degradation of the periphery—is now generating a planetary-scale set of ecological contradictions, imperiling the entire biosphere as we know it. Only a social solution that addresses the rift in ecological relations on a planetary scale and their relation to global structures of imperialism and inequality offers any genuine hope that these contradictions can be transcended. More than ever the world needs what the early socialist thinkers, including Marx, called for: the rational organization of the human metabolism with nature by a society (or societies) of freely associated producers, in order to establish a social metabolic order no longer predicated on capital accumulation, ecological imperialism, and the degradation of the earth.

#### Neoliberal exploitation is theft, not trade because voluntary exchange requires consent that is impossible when inequality denies the power to refuse

Garcia 7 – Frank J. Garcia, Professor of Law at the Boston College School of Law, J.D. from the University of Michigan Law School, “Is Free Trade "Free?" Is It Even "Trade?" Oppression and Consent in Hemispheric Trade Agreements”, Seattle Journal for Social Justice, Volume 5, p. 1-11

I Introduction

The phrase “free trade” invokes the idea of freedom in two ways. The conventional meaning of the phrase is that trade is free if it is not subject to distorting governmental regulation. The second, less obvious meaning is that free trade involves consensual exchange – it has the consent of those involved in the trade. This is true at the level of private exchange, and at the institutional level, involving the structure and negotiation of the agreements framing trade relations. In this essay, I will argue that for free trade to be both free and trade, it must be free in the second sense as well: it must be consensual. Trade must involve the consent of both the participants and the states involved. Otherwise, it is not trade in the fullest sense, but partakes of some form of oppression: predation, exploitation, or coercion.

In this essay I will focus on the public level of trade, involving trade as a set of economic relations and as a system for governing such relations, rather than on the private level of individual transactions, although I will draw illustrations from private exchange. Through an examination of CAFTA’s negotiation process and select substantive provisions, I hope to tease out elements of trade agreements which represent dynamics other than trade – predation, exploitation or coercion. Such an argument cannot hope to be definitive, but I hope it is suggestive – reliably so – of subtle but important forces at work in contemporary trade relations, particularly as they involve substantial inequalities in power among participating states.

II Investigation of Trade as a Human Experience

Both our language and our collective experience of trade suggest many possible aspects or dimensions of the experience that merit further inquiry as we try to understand just what trade is.

A. Sampling the Many Dimensions of Trade

1. Trade as Exchange

To begin with, we can see trade as involving transactions. When we trade, we engage in a transaction – something changes hands, so to speak. I exchange this with you, for that which you have that I want. In this sense, trade is a basic everyday experience among people.2

We also speak of trade in a specifically international sense, as exchanges involving the crossing of geographic and political boundaries. This evokes other dimensions, such as trade as exploration, where economic need rouses us out of the known into the unknown; and trade as adventure: will this gamble pay off? Will the merchant ships arrive? Will my fortune grow or be lost?3

2. Trade as Encounter

The desire to exchange brings us into contact with another; historically as we cross boundaries to trade, it has meant encounter with the Other.4

Thus trade is one of the prime forces bringing peoples in contact with other peoples, on terms which might result in a mutually beneficial exchange. In this way, trade is a primal form of communication: this is who we are, what we make, what we want and how we exchange.

One of the marvelous aspects of trade is that it can involve communication and exchange with the Other where there is no shared language, culture or history – only the mutual desire to exchange. In this way we can see that trade involves what Stanley Cavell calls “acknowledgement”- the recognition that the Other exists as a separate, recognizable human person, even if we cannot directly or fully know their mind.5 Of course, encounters with the Other are not always beneficent.6

We can try to profit from the lack of shared language, or other information asymmetries, to engage in sharp dealing – trade as trickery or deceit. We have many colloquial examples of this: offering to sell one another the Brooklyn Bridge, or the fable about Manhattan being “purchased” from indigenous Americans for a “handful of beads.”7

3. Trade as Domination

This raises another, more serious aspect of trade, trade as conquest. Obviously, we cannot mean this literally: conquest is conquest. However, if we consider the “trade” relations of the East India Company, for example, or the notorious “Unequal Treaties” between China and the West, we can see an aspect of trade as ‘domination’ under the guise of trading.8 Anthony Anghie chronicles the way in which trading companies were used to assert sovereignty and extend dominion of colonizing states over vast territories that European states were not yet ready to administer directly.9 Similarly, James Gaathi documents the role of free trade concepts in legitimating Belgium’s monopoly on exploitation of the Congo under the “freedom of commerce” principles agreed at the Berlin Conference.10 By arguing that trade should be free, the U.S. in effect left the stage open for unregulated exploitation of the Congo.11 This suggests how trade can function as a form of dominance over the Other.12

B. Investigating Trade as a Transaction

I would now like to take a few of these aspects of trade that seem most essential, and explore them further in order to construct a preliminary picture of trade as a human experience.

1. Trade as an Exchange of Value

I will begin with the notion of trade as a transaction. We engage in many types of transactions throughout our lives, involving money, sentiment, goods, ideas, services, affinity, information, etc. But if we think of what distinguishes trade from the many other exchanges we experience, it is that trade involves a transfer of economic value.

2. Trade as a Bilateral Exchange of Value

There are many different types of transactions involving a transfer of value. Gifts, for example, are transactions involving a transfer of value, but one of their distinguishing characteristics is their unilateral nature: the gift giver transfers something of value for nothing in return.13 This helps us see that trade transactions are bilateral, or mutual, in nature. They involve a bilateral exchange of economic value.

3. Trade as a Voluntary Bilateral Exchange for Value

There is another type of unilateral transaction helpful in clarifying the nature of trade: theft. A theft involves a transfer of value, but it is not voluntary. It could be said that theft is not trade because it is unilateral, but it is easy to see that this is not the essence of the distinction; the thief could give you a cheap watch in return for your wallet, and it would still be a theft despite its bilateral quality. Thus trade must also be voluntary – both parties must consent to the transaction, or there is some element of theft. This also fits our intuitions as reflected in our language. We can speak of good trades versus bad trades in terms of meeting our goals, and yet we also distinguish even bad trades from “rip-offs” or thefts. We would not refer to the experience of being robbed as a “bad trade,” except in a deliberately ironic sense. Thus trade involves bilateral voluntary exchanges.

4. Trade as a Voluntary Negotiated Exchange for Value

There is a further particular aspect to this voluntariness, which we can express in the notion of bargain. Bargaining, or the process of reaching mutually agreeable terms, is a necessary element of reaching consent, and presumes the freedom of both parties to consider and propose a variety of possibilities on the road to saying yes, or no. Where either of the parties is not able to bargain freely, the resulting transaction may still be voluntary in a basic sense, but something has been lost. This is more like coercion than trade, and I will say more about this in a moment.

This notion of bargained-for consent is reflected in our law through the concept of a meeting of minds. The “meeting of minds” in contract law, even as a constructive notion, is key to the whole doctrinal armature for enforcing promises. For example, if we look at many of the key justifications for getting out of a contract – mistake, duress, fraud – we can see that they reflect the absence of a meeting of minds, an absence of bargainedfor consent. This brings us back to the aspect of trade as acknowledgement: the act of reaching a bargain presupposes the existence of another mind, similar enough in its basic functions (consulting self-interest, evaluating, judging, bargaining) to be recognizably human – “like me.”14 The reaching of a bargain can be a moment of affirmation of the Other’s humanity, of similarity to self. In fact, acknowledgement is a presupposition of consent, and therefore of trade, in that we have to acknowledge the Other’s humanity before we can value the Others’ consent.15

To summarize, trade can be understood as consisting of voluntary, bargained-for exchanges of value among persons for mutual economic benefit.

C. What is Not Trade, and Why

Based on this preliminary inquiry, I would like to look more closely at several alternatives to trade, i.e., other forms of economic interaction that are not trade, or at least not simply trade, in order to paint a fuller picture of what trade is, and what it is not. In doing so, I will be relying primarily on the work of Simone Weil, the “philosopher of oppression,”16 for her frank examination of the role of consent and its absence in distinguishing between economic transactions and economic oppression

1. Predation

In the discussion above on the nature of exchange, I introduced the concept of theft as a contrast to trade. What is essential to this distinction is the absence of consent on the part of the one surrendering economic value. Simone Weil writes that one cannot seek consent where there is no power of refusal.17 Thus where there is no power to refuse, there is no trade, because there can be no consent.

#### ‘Trade’ flattens all forms of economic dealings into one overarching category with a presumed two-way and obviously economic character---that subtly normalizes settler behavior and produces a colonization of the mind that terminates in mass extermination of indigenous life

Leary 13 – Helen Erana Ferris-Leary, Doctor of Philosophy in Pacific Studies, The University of Auckland, “An Analytical Perspective on Moana Research And the Case of Tongan Faiva”, https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/2292/21498/whole.pdf?sequence=2

Western colonization then, was never just about the simple exploitation of physical resources, but always included the governance of indigenous populations and “colonization of the indigenous mind” so to speak.1 This served not only to “civilize the savage” but also to profoundly infiltrate the cultural infrastructures and deeper psychology of indigenous peoples, with the “Western way”. For instance Linda Smith states:

When confronted by the alternative conceptions of other societies, Western reality become reified as representing something ‘better’, reflecting ‘higher order’ of thinking, and being less prone to the dogma, witchcraft and immediacy of people and societies which were so ‘primitive’. Ideological appeals to such things as literacy, democracy and the development of complex social structures, make this way of thinking appear to be a universal truth and a necessary criterion of civilized society. (Smith 2005:48)

Without spending more time on the unfortunate historical aspects of this, it is enough to point out, whilst this agenda has changed somewhat in its modus operandi, it has not entirely gone away. In fact, this ideology, or the “Westernizing” of others, and its ethnocentric presentation as some form of “development” is still inherent and to be found in many modern development and aid programs in so called “third world” countries.

Whilst a difference in cultural values has been at the root of the conflict between Westerners and their Indigenous counterparts and whilst this is not entirely unexpected, it is unfortunate for modern research that Westerners always formalized their ethnocentricity in a way that saw indigenous peoples as having no science, no academic traditions, and no real knowledge or history.2 The lack of Western style technology was also seen as a “lack of civilization” in indigenous peoples and further evidence that Westerners were not just more “civilized” but also “superior.”3 Even indigenous languages were classed as a less developed and a more primitive form of speech.4 Combined with imperial and colonial agendas,5 these sorts of attitudes led to an extensive history of unfortunate events for indigenous peoples, in most cases culminating in a rapid and traumatic end to an indigenous way of life. 6

[FOOTNOTE]

5 Although much has been written about the development of trade and the role of traders and trading companies in imperialism, including the role of indigenous entrepreneurs in the process, the indigenous world is still coming to grips with the extent to which the ‘trade’ of human beings, artifacts, curios, art works, specimens and other cultural items has scattered our remains across the globe. The term ‘trade’ assumes at the very least a two-way transaction between those who sold and those who bought. It further assumes that human beings and other cultural items were commodities or goods and were actually available ‘for sale’. For indigenous peoples those assumptions are not held. From indigenous perspectives territories, peoples and their possessions were stolen, not traded. (Smith, 2005:89)

#### Mundane economic terminology conditions us to accept neoliberalism as natural and inevitable---the alternative’s close scrutiny of language re-politicizes ‘common sense’ and addresses the root cause of political constructions

Massey 13 – Doreen Massey, Professor of Geography at The Open University, UK, “Neoliberalism Has Hijacked Our Vocabulary”, The Guardian, 6-11, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jun/11/neoliberalism-hijacked-vocabulary

‘Customer'; 'growth'; 'investment'. We should scrutinise the everyday language that shapes how we think about the economy

At a recent art exhibition I engaged in an interesting conversation with one of the young people employed by the gallery. As she turned to walk off I saw she had on the back of her T-shirt "customer liaison". I felt flat. Our whole conversation seemed somehow reduced, my experience of it belittled into one of commercial transaction. My relation to the gallery and to this engaging person had become one of instrumental market exchange.

The message underlying this use of the term customer for so many different kinds of human activity is that in all almost all our daily activities we are operating as consumers in a market – and this truth has been brought in not by chance but through managerial instruction and the thoroughgoing renaming of institutional practices. The mandatory exercise of "free choice" – of a GP, of a hospital, of schools for one's children – then becomes also a lesson in social identity, affirming on each occasion our consumer identity.

This is a crucial part of the way that neoliberalism has become part of our commonsense understanding of life. The vocabulary we use to talk about the economy is in fact a political construction, as Stuart Hall, Michael Rustin and I have argued in our Soundings manifesto.

Another word that reinforces neoliberal common sense is "growth", currently deemed to be the entire aim of our economy. To produce growth and then (maybe) to redistribute some of it, has been a goal shared by both neoliberalism and social democracy. In its crudest formulation this entails providing the conditions for the market sector to produce growth, and accepting that this will result in inequality, and then relying on the redistribution of some portion of this growth to help repair the inequality that has resulted from its production.

This of course does nothing to question the inequality-producing mechanisms of market exchange itself, and it has also meant that the main lines of struggle have too often been focused solely on distributional issues. What's more, today we are living with a backlash to even the limited redistributional gains made by labour under social democracy. In spite of all this, growth is still seen as providing the solution to our problems.

The second reason our current notion of wealth creation, and our commitment to its growth, must be questioned is to do with our relationship with the planet. The environmental damage brought about by the pursuit of growth threatens to cause a catastrophe of which we are already witnessing intimations. And a third – and perhaps most important – defect of this approach is that increased wealth, especially as measured in the standard monetary terms of today, has few actual consequences for people's feelings of wellbeing once there is a sufficiency to meet basic needs, as there is in Britain. In pursuing "growth" in these terms, as a means to realise people's life goals and desires, economies are pursuing a chimera.

Instead of an unrelenting quest for growth, might we not ask the question, in the end: "What is an economy for?", "What do we want it to provide?"

Our current imaginings endow the market and its associated forms with a special status. We think of "the economy" in terms of natural forces, into which we occasionally intervene, rather than in terms of a whole variety of social relations that need some kind of co-ordination.

Thus "work", for example, is understood in a very narrow and instrumental way. Where only transactions for money are recognised as belonging to "the economy", the vast amount of unpaid labour – as conducted for instance in families and local areas – goes uncounted and unvalued. We need to question that familiar categorisation of the economy as a space into which people enter in order to reluctantly undertake unwelcome and unpleasing "work", in return for material rewards which they can use for consuming.

This is a view that misunderstands where pleasure and fulfilment in human lives are found. Work is usually – and certainly should be – a central source of meaning and fulfilment in human lives. And it has – or could have – moral and creative (or aesthetic) values at its core. A rethinking of work could lead us to address more creatively both the social relations of work and the division of labour within society (including a better sharing of the tedious work, and of the skills).

There are loads of other examples of rarely scrutinised terms in our economic vocabulary, for instance that bundle of terms clustered around investment and expenditure – terms that carry with them implicit moral connotations. Investment implies an action, even a sacrifice, undertaken for a better future. It evokes a future positive outcome. Expenditure, on the other hand, seems merely an outgoing, a cost, a burden.

Above all, we need to bring economic vocabulary back into political contention, and to question the very way we think about the economy in the first place. For something new to be imagined, let alone to be born, our current economic "common sense" needs to be challenged root and branch.

#### Linguistic choice is crucial for matters of economic exchange---the frame of ‘trade’ shapes policy understanding and shifts the debate

Grabow 18 – Colin Grabow, Policy Analyst at the Cato Institute's Herbert A. Stiefel Center for Trade Policy Studies, “There’s No Such Thing as a Trade Deficit”, Cato @ Liberty, 7-30, https://www.cato.org/blog/theres-no-such-thing-trade-d%C3%A9ficit

This is no exercise in pedanticism. Precision of language is important. Terms matter, and the way in which trade is discussed influences how it is perceived. One can’t help but wonder how many people have an irrational fear of imports because they are said to contribute to a “trade deficit” or a “negative trade balance”—terms laden with unfavorable connotations. It’s not difficult to imagine that U.S. trade policy would be on a very different trajectory if President Trump spent his formative years in a world that did not speak of trade deficits and instead used more exact language and terms.

It may be too late for Trump, but a change in terminology could go a long way toward improving the conversation around trade and clearing the path for better policy.

### Case---1NR

#### Undoing squo power relations requires analyzing and attacking power structures through pragmatic struggle---normative appeals alone are ineffective.

Naomi **Zack 17**. Professor of philosophy at the University of Oregon. 02/2017. “Ideal, Nonideal, and Empirical Theories of Social Justice: The Need for Applicative Justice in Addressing Injustice.” The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Race, Oxford University Press.

Ideals of justice may do little toward the correction of injustice in real life. The influence of John Rawls’s A Theory of Justice has led some philosophers of race to focus on “nonideal theory” as a way to bring conditions in unjust societies closer to conditions of justice described by ideal theory. However, a more direct approach to injustice may be needed to address unfair public policy and existing conditions for minorities in racist societies. Applicative justice describes the applications of principles of justice that are now “good enough” for whites to nonwhites (based on prior comparisons of how whites and nonwhites are treated). Social information just dribbles in, bit by bit, and we simply get used to it. A single story about a person really hits home at once, but the grinding injustices of daily life are endured. It is easy to ignore them and we do. Judith Shklar, The Faces of Injustice (Shklar 1990, 110) IDEAL theory about justice extends from Plato’s Republic to John Rawls’s A Theory of Justice, including many careers devoted to analyses and criticism about such texts in political philosophy. Rawls offers a picture of the basic institutional structures of a just society, on the premise that in order to correct injustice, we must first know what justice is. According to Rawls, while “partial compliance theory” studies the principles that govern how we are to deal with injustice, full compliance theory, or ideal theory, studies the institutional principles of justice in a stable society where citizens obey the law. Rawls began A Theory of Justice with the claim: “The reason for beginning with ideal theory is that it provides, I believe, the only basis for the systematic grasp of these more pressing problems” (Rawls 1971, 8). Rawls’s ideal theory is too abstract to correct injustice or provide justice for victims of injustice in reality, because it is based on a thought experiment and the assumption of a “well-ordered” society in which there already is compliance with law (Zack 2016, 1–64). What people care about in reality concerning justice is not what ideal justice is or would be, but how immediate injustice can be corrected. Injustice is always specific in concrete events that are recognizable as certain types, for example, theft, murder, or police racial profiling. Injustice can be corrected by punishing those responsible for it in specific cases and instituting social changes that prevent or reduce future occurrences of the same type. Rawlsian nonideal theories of justice, constructed for societies where people do not comply with just laws, rely on ideal theory as a standard for just institutional structures. The main question driving nonideal theory is how to construct a model or picture of justice that will result in the future correction or avoidance of present injustices. John Simmons quotes John Rawls from Law of Peoples, on this matter. Nonideal theory asks how this long-term goal might be achieved, or worked toward, usually in gradual steps. It looks for courses of action that are morally permissible and politically possible as well as likely to be effective [LOP p. 89]. (Simmons 2010, 7) However, injured or indignant parties may not care about the long-term goal of justice that could lead to balance or compensation for their situations. Not only are what P. F. Strawson (1962) called “reactive attitudes,” such as moral indignation, blame, and a desire for deserved punishment, strong in their focus on injustice, but the best theory of justice in the world does not tell us what to do about the injustices we are faced with in the here and now, especially “the more pressing problems” of race-related injustices. Such questions cannot be answered with reference to ideal theory or some application of ideal or nonideal theory to their concrete situations, because the a priori nature of both of these does not provide a fit with specific contingencies—ideal and nonideal theories do not generate practical bridge principles. As theories, they posit ideal entities, but without the apparatus of scientific theories which provides connections to observable entities or events. (Moulines 1985). The correction of injustice or injustice theory requires a philosophical foundation for itself. Models of justice have often been naïvely utopian throughout the history of philosophy, because they are based on an assumption of automatic total compliance, as though the right words or pictures by themselves have the power to transform reality, or as though agreement with those right words or pictures will automatically result in action that will automatically make the world instantiate those words or pictures. When they are not fantastically and ineffectively utopian in this way, such models have been used to justify the already-existing dominance of some groups over others. (A prime example is John Locke’s Second Treatise of Government, written decades before 1688 Glorious Revolution, to express the interests of the new rising class of landed gentry, which were eventually fulfilled by a Protestant king on the throne and a strong representative parliament after that revolution [Laslett 1988].) Models of justice have legitimately served to inspire law in modern societies with government constitutions and national and local law. But, sometimes, as in US founding documents, although universal and absolute justice is proclaimed, subsequent events make it clear that this language was intended to legitimize just treatment for members of selected groups only, that is, white male property owners, at first. As a result of just law and its selective application, over time, there comes to be justice for an expanding group, but still not everyone in society. However, what is written, together with descriptions of real justice for some, can be a powerful lever for obtaining justice for at least some of the excluded. To understand how that works, it is necessary to develop an approach to justice that begins with injustice, in real situations where there is already some degree of justice in a larger whole. The extension of existing practices of justice to members of new groups is applicative justice, a concept with substantial historical and intellectual precedent, although not by that name. In what follows, more will be said about the idea of applicative justice and then its history will be considered. Voting rights and housing rights are examples of candidates for applicative justice in our time. Finally, content in the form of narrative may be motivational for social change. The Idea of Applicative Justice Applicative justice is an approach to justice with the goal of making the unjust treatment of some comparable to those who already receive just treatment. Applicative justice takes a comparative approach, for example, comparing how young black males are treated by police officers in contemporary US society, to how young white males are treated (Jones 2013; Zack 2013, 2015). Applicative justice rests on a pragmatic approach to social ills, which includes the premise, based on Arthur Bentley’s 1908 insights in The Process of Government, that government is much more than the apparatus of state and written laws and court decisions. Government is an extended, dynamic process, an ongoing contention among interest groups in society. This full-bodied, empirical and pragmatic view of government process entails, for example, that we consider as parts of the same political mix/phenomenon/raw material all of the foregoing: the Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments, the 1960s Civil Rights Legislation, doctrines of probable cause, the disproportionate incarceration of African Americans, racial profiling, and police homicide with impunity. Thus, Rawls’s insistence that “the rights secured by justice are not subject to political bargaining or to the calculus of social interests” (Rawls 1971, 4), should be understood as “the rights secured by justice should not be subject to political bargaining or to the calculus of social interests.” In reality, “the rights secured by justice” are constantly subject to political bargaining and the living calculus of social interests. One consequence of this empirical perspective is that moral outrage, critiques of white supremacy, or analyses of white privilege, along with other forms of blame, cannot be assumed to have the power to change anything, by themselves. By contrast, changing relationships between police officers and their local communities, or changing the rules of engagement when police stop or attempt to stop suspects, might on this view have some causal power (Ayres and Markovits 2014). It is important to realize that such changes in practice would not be specific applications of a theory of justice, but ways of changing social reality into a different political mix. However, a better theory of justice, even a more racially egalitarian one and even a theory of applicative justice that was widely accepted, would still be no more than a change in what Bentley calls “political content.” Any theory of justice or any set of just laws is compatible with widespread racially unequal and unjust practice. And the converse also holds. Unjust laws or laws with gaps for unjust practice are compatible with just practice. Thus, applicative justice is pragmatic in taking the whole political mix/ phenomenon/raw material as its subject for a specific injustice. Unlike ideal or nonideal justice theory, the applicative justice approach brooks little faith that reality can be changed by a special conceptual space or mode of critical moral discourse that is undertaken apart from reality. Reality cannot be changed by normative pronouncements, by or on behalf of the oppressed, but only by shifts in existing interests of groups of real people. To base hopes for change on normative content alone may ~~paralyze~~ [eliminate] the means for taking action that could result in change, because such content proceeds as though matters of justice were only matters of argument. Those who have opposed social racial justice have understood this well enough, because instead of mainly arguing against new just law over the twentieth century, they have taken action to block progress. Race and Justice Consideration of race and injustice together, within political philosophy, focuses on the need for specific groups to not be treated unjustly. For a group to be treated justly, a large number of its members need to be treated justly. But for a group to be treated unjustly, it is sufficient if a smaller number or lower proportion than required to meet the standard of just treatment be treated unjustly. One reason for this asymmetry is that just treatment is easily normalized within communities, whereas unjust treatment of only a few is disruptive and considered abnormal among other members of the group to which victims belong (although not necessarily by members of groups who are generally treated justly). The unjust treatment of a small number ripples from their friends and relations to other members of the same group, who realize that they are subject to similar unjust treatment from their membership in that group alone. More broadly, if the group treated justly and the group treated unjustly belong to the same larger collective, such as whites and blacks in the United States, then the unjust treatment of even a very small number of that total collective of residents or citizens should be disruptive to the whole collective, given promulgated principles of “justice for all.” But that does not always happen, at least not in ways that result in real change. Apathy and self-absorption of those not treated unjustly is part of the reason, although another significant part is that the group treated justly already knows that the national collective rhetoric of justice is intended to apply primarily to them. It is that kind of disparate treatment, which does not disrupt everyone, even though it should, which calls for a theory of applicative justice, on the abstract level where people call for justice. But applicative justice is not only an abstract theory. Applicative justice requires comparisons of group treatment. If minorities are treated unjustly, a description of that injustice does not require an ideal or nonideal theory or model of justice, but simply a comparison with how the majority is treated. (The term “minorities” refers to those disadvantaged or oppressed, because sometimes minorities are greater in number than “majorities,” e.g., blacks under apartheid in South Africa, American slaves in some Southern states, or black Americans in some twenty-first-century cities.) The principles and mechanics of justice that work well enough for most white Americans need to be applied to nonwhite Americans. For rhetorical purposes, it might be evocative to talk about black lives or black rights, but strictly speaking the subject is a racial framework that is color-blind in an important part of law—constitutional amendments and federal legislation—but not in reality. This gap between written law and social reality can be viewed as hypocrisy, racial bias, or white supremacy, only if one assumes that written law is an accurate description of, or blueprint for, social reality. But a perspective that takes in the whole process of government reveals that the gap and what is permissible within it, are parts of the same whole process. The contrast between blueprints and maps is important to consider. Political philosophers often proceed as though their writings about justice are blueprints, when they should instead begin by constructing maps. Present politics or a political party in power may present obstacles and challenges to applicative justice in any specific case. Those who aim for applicative justice must struggle against such obstacles and challenges, as well as the ignorance, prejudice, and ill will of large parts of voting publics under democratic government, and in addition, media misrepresentations, business interests in a status quo, and lack of understanding of oppression by those who are treated unjustly. For example, the injustice in the disproportionately large number of African Americans in the US criminal justice system has been supported by law-and-order politics, the War on Drugs, belief in racial gender myths (e.g., the larger-than-life black rapist), explicit racism, media sensationalism of crime committed by black men, profits made by for-profit prison corporations, and embrace of self-destructive subcultures by some black men who become incarcerated. At the same time, as an efficient cause or precipitating factor, ongoing racial profiling by police helps feed the system with new suspects, about 90 percent of whom plead guilty in preference to the risks and costs of a trial (Kerby 2013; Rakoff et al. 2014). Intergenerational poverty, unemployment, and undereducation contain people within this system, and the high rates of nonwhites in the prison population are used as official justification for racial profiling (Zack 2015, chap 2). Thus, the complexity of causes and background factors associated with the disproportionate number of African American male prison inmates can be understood through a number of approaches. The normative approach of applicative justice would be to address those causes or factors, distinctly and individually, through specific changes in concrete practice, as well as changes in law, as relevant.