# Wayne State---Round 2---Aff vs Wayne State HR

# 1AC

### Innovation

#### Advantage one is innovation:

#### Scenario 1 is Econ:

#### Antitrust is too tolerant of anti-competitive mergers now

Wessel 2018 - senior fellow in economic studies at the Brookings Institution and director of the Hutchins Center on Fiscal and Monetary Policy  
David, "Is Lack of Competition Strangling the U.S. Economy?," Mar/Apr, https://hbr.org/2018/03/is-lack-of-competition-strangling-the-u-s-economy

Reshaping the Antitrust Framework. In remedying the harmful effects of industry consolidation and declining competition, an obvious place to start is antitrust regulation and enforcement. The U.S. approach to antitrust has evolved significantly over the past century. In the 1950s and 1960s, many mergers — even ones that would have led to relatively modest increases in concentration — were routinely challenged, but in the 1970s the antitrust framework began to shift toward challenging many fewer mergers. Lawyer-judges Robert Bork and Richard Posner and Nobel laureate economists George Stigler and Oliver Williamson laid the intellectual foundation for this shift, which spread to the policy arena and the courts in the early 1980s. The more lenient approach relied on three ideas: that harm from increased concentration had to be weighed against the efficiencies to be achieved, that horizontal mergers between competitors were harmful only if they led to less output, and that vertical mergers between supplier and buyer generally were not a problem. This thinking solidified under the Reagan Justice Department, and for better or worse, the antitrust authorities stood by over the coming decades as the economy grew more concentrated. In the 2000s, under Barack Obama, the stance became somewhat more aggressive, but it remains unclear whether his executive orders to promote competitive markets, issued in the closing innings of his administration, were mere symbolism or a serious effort. It is time for antitrust authorities to renew their scrutiny of traditional mergers. A comprehensive review of retrospective studies of the thousands of mergers and joint ventures over the past 25 years by Northeastern University economist John Kwoka judged that antitrust authorities had been too tolerant both in letting certain types of mergers go unchallenged and in imposing conditions on mergers that were cleared. Prices following a subset of these mergers rose by an average of 4.3%, holding other factors constant, Kwoka found. The increases were particularly large in the airline and health care industries. “The diminished attention to mergers involving somewhat lower market shares and concentration appears to have resulted in approval of significantly more mergers that prove to be anticompetitive,” he wrote in a 2015 book. Kwoka’s meta-analysis suggests that antitrust authorities should be more inclined to block mergers in order to increase competition. Consider the wireless telephone business. In 2011, AT&T sought to acquire a struggling competitor, T-Mobile USA, in a $39 billion deal that would have reduced the number of major competitors in the industry from four to three. Unable to overcome the opposition of the Obama administration, however, AT&T abandoned the deal five months after announcing it. After the merger fell through, some argued that T-Mobile was doomed. It wasn’t. As writer Mark Rogowsky recounted in Forbes, “Within a year, T-Mobile hired John Legere as its new CEO and he threw out the business-as-usual approach. Legere dumped subsidies, lowered prices, offered more data and often poked fun at rivals.” T-Mobile thrived, signing up 4.4 million new subscribers in 2013. By 2017, competition among wireless carriers was so stiff that Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen cited falling prices for cell phone service as a cause of low inflation. Antitrust authorities must also tackle the vexing question of what constitutes illegal “predatory” pricing in today’s market. Consider Amazon’s alleged use of below-cost pricing to pressure and ultimately acquire a potential competitor. After the e-commerce company Quidsi — the owner of Diapers.com — rejected a 2009 acquisition overture from Amazon, Amazon responded by cutting prices for diapers and other baby products by as much as 30% on its site and rolling out Amazon Mom, which offered discounts and free shipping. Quidsi struggled, flirted with Walmart, but eventually sold itself to Amazon. By 2012, Amazon had begun raising prices and had slashed the benefits of Amazon Mom. These are live issues. In 2015, for instance, the Federal Trade Commission considered whether the merger of real estate sites Zillow and Trulia would reduce both companies’ incentives to develop new features for consumers. The FTC decided that it wouldn’t, and the merger went through. But in the same year, FTC sought to block a merger between Steris and Synergy Health, the number two and three companies in the health care facility-sterilization business. Because Synergy didn’t do business in the United States at the time, the FTC argued, a merger would preclude any competition that might result from Synergy’s eventual entrance into the U.S. market. A federal judge disagreed, and the merger was consummated. Even-more-complicated issues will arise as the economy evolves. How should the authorities view the unprecedented power of the new digital giants to crush competitors? Should they be more skeptical about mergers that might lessen “potential competition,” which occurs when one firm buys another in an adjacent market (think Google’s acquisition of YouTube or Microsoft’s acquisition of LinkedIn)? How about when a big firm swallows a tiny firm that might have grown into a mighty oak? The argument for reexamining current merger guidelines — and, where appropriate, challenging the case law that is said to make Department of Justice and FTC lawyers reluctant to bring cases — is very strong. The economy is more concentrated. Evidence that there’s too little competition is accumulating. Acquisitions that in the past were too small to attract the usual antitrust scrutiny can eliminate potential competition, especially in a world where a company like WhatsApp can grow in just a few years to reach a billion users a day. Indeed, the power of new tech giants to use their potent networks and the vast amounts of data they collect to thwart competition is one of the biggest challenges facing antitrust authorities today. Rethinking Regulation The worrisome aspects of increasing industry consolidation can’t be addressed solely through antitrust enforcement. Policymakers also need to scrutinize regulations that restrict competition across the economy. Owing in part to incumbent firms’ influence in shaping policy to preserve their positions at the expense of start-ups and other would-be competitors, the United States is no longer held up as an exemplar of free markets and regulatory restraint. In fact, in a dramatic change from the late 1990s, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development says the U.S. now regulates product markets more heavily than many developed economies including Australia, Canada, France, Germany, and Japan. Take the pharmaceutical industry. Although the United States doesn’t regulate pharmaceutical prices, as most rich countries do, it offers makers of brand-name drugs patent protection, periods of exclusivity, and other ways to recoup their investment in expensive research that produces new drugs. Once those protections expire, however, prices theoretically should fall as makers of generics enter the market. And that does happen — sometimes. According to Yale economist Fiona Scott Morton, however, over the past 10 to 15 years “industry participants have managed to disable many of these competitive mechanisms and create niches in which drugs can be sold with little to no competition.” For example, the marketing of some drugs with particularly severe side effects is now very tightly controlled through the FDA’s Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy, or REMS. The makers of those drugs, in some instances, cite the restrictions as a reason not to supply a generic maker with a sample to recreate the drugs. For example, it took Hikma Pharmaceuticals nearly seven years of litigation to get what it needed to produce, in accordance with REMS restrictions, a generic version of Jazz Pharmaceuticals’ major product, Xyrem, a $1-billion-a-year drug used to treat narcolepsy. The 2017 settlement allows Hikma to begin marketing the generic version only after January 1, 2023. Early in his tenure as President Trump’s FDA commissioner, Scott Gottlieb vowed to change the REMS rules to prevent drug makers from using them to thwart generic competition and in November announced a preliminary plan to do so. It is time for antitrust authorities to renew their scrutiny of traditional mergers.

#### Mergers cement high prices, job loss, and low wages.

Vaheesan ’19 -- Sandeep Vaheesan, legal director at the Open Markets Institute. [“American Prosperity Depends on Stopping Mega-Mergers,” *Financial Times,* 4-25-2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/7709cfe4-557e-36c7-9404-11eb4785ba54>] KS

The Sprint/T-Mobile merger would not be an outlier. Economic research overwhelmingly concludes that large corporate mergers and market concentration are harmful to customers and rarely yield the promised improvements in productive efficiencies. In 2015, (now retired) Judge Richard Posner, a longtime supporter of relaxing antitrust rules, mused sceptically, “I wish someone would give me some examples of mergers that have improved efficiency. There must be some.” John Kwoka’s review of dozens of merger studies found that corporate consolidations often lead to higher consumer prices and that the Department of Justice and Federal Trade Commission have been far too tolerant of consolidation.

If large corporations are prohibited from undertaking mergers and acquisitions, would firm stagnation ensue? No, corporations would still be free to grow by reducing prices, improving their own product lines, and investing in new facilities, much like T-Mobile and Sprint have done. Indeed, when it enacted and amended the Clayton Act (the principal federal anti-merger law), Congress aimed to discourage growth through mergers and instead encourage “internal expansion” through product development and investment in new capacity. The Supreme Court once noted that “surely one premise of an antimerger statute . . . is that corporate growth by internal expansion is socially preferable to growth by acquisition.”

Encouraging businesses to grow through product improvement and innovation and new investment instead of mergers would make customers, workers, and society much better off. Instead of the fewer choices and higher prices that often follow a merger, customers would have more options, lower prices, and better service. Instead of losing their jobs or receiving lower wages, workers would have more job opportunities and higher wages. Instead of accepting Wall Street’s endless slicing, dicing, and repackaging of existing business assets, society would have more capacity to produce goods and services.

For too long and across most of the economy, the antitrust agencies and other regulators have uncritically accepted the purported benefits of mergers. They have created a system in which, in the words of economists Walter Adams and James Brock, “managerial energies [are] devoted to sterile paper entrepreneurialism and the quick growth-through-merger game” and “diverted from the critical task of investing in new plants, new products, and state of the art manufacturing techniques.”

While it may not be their first instinct, the Trump administration should recognize the Obama administration’s wisdom on telecom mergers and stop Sprint/T-Mobile. But antitrust enforcers should learn a broader lesson from this recent history: strong merger policy channels corporate executives’ focus away from the next big deal and toward product improvement and investment that deliver more affordable and higher quality goods and services.

#### The plan is the most efficient and effective way to juice the economy

Morton 2020 - Theodore Nierenberg Professor of Economics @ Yale   
Fiona M, "Reforming U.S. antitrust enforcement and competition policy," Feb 18, https://equitablegrowth.org/reforming-u-s-antitrust-enforcement-and-competition-policy/

The evidence for the failure of current U.S. antitrust policy is detailed in my report from May 2019 titled “Modern U.S. antitrust theory and evidence amid rising concerns of market power and its effects,” and its accompanying database.3 Economic evidence of rising market power comes from large samples of firms and industries. One widely discussed study of all publicly traded firms finds that markups (the difference between the price charged to a consumer and the cost to make an additional unit) have risen sharply since 1990 among firms in the top half of the markup distribution.4 Macroeconomists have further documented a declining share of national incoming going to workers and a rising share going to profit.5 New theories whose empirical implications are only now being explored also are possible contributors to rising market power. For instance, the huge growth in overlapping equity ownership of rival firms by diversified financial investors over the past four decades has plausibly led to less aggressive competition in many industries.6 Still more evidence of market power comes from labor markets—in this case monopsony power, which is exercised by a buyer with market power (such as an employer) to pay less for its inputs (such as workers). Because workers have specialized skills and are often geographically constrained, monopsony power is common. Recent studies find that employers have monopsony power over college professors and nurses.7 Wages for nurses may stagnate after hospital mergers for this reason. The extensive use of noncompete agreements in employment contracts involving low-wage fast-food workers and the no-poach agreements between a number of high-tech firms over software engineers and between rail equipment suppliers over their workers, provide additional examples of anticompetitive conduct that harms workers.8 Evidence that antitrust laws are falling short is plentiful. Many cartels go undiscovered, and tacit collusion is probably even more prevalent because it is harder for antitrust enforcers to prosecute and deter.9 Anticompetitive horizontal mergers (between rivals) appear to be underdeterred.10 A variety of clever strategies used by incumbents to exclude entrants, either by purchasing them when they are nascent or using tactics to confine them to a less threatening niche or forcing them to exit have been successfully deployed in recent years, often when antitrust enforcement is late or absent.11 Each of these sources of concern can be critiqued, but together they make a compelling case. Some of the evidence may have benign explanations in part, such as the growing importance of fixed costs, for example, when creating software or pharmaceuticals that leads naturally to higher markups, or the increasing benefit of being on the same platform with other users (known as “network effects” in the case of a social media site). Firms in industries with high fixed costs or large network externalities may exhibit high profits and productivity and low labor shares, and may earn high profits because they had a good idea early and executed well, thereby getting adoption from many consumers.12 Nonetheless, the overall picture is clear that market power has been growing in the United States for decades. Moreover, even where the explanation for growing market power is benign, we must ensure that companies do not use anticompetitive tactics to protect their position. Firms with market power need not compete aggressively to sell their products, so they tend to raise prices, reduce quality, and/or innovate less. Market power can also contribute to slowed economic growth by, for example, suppressing productivity increases.13 Theoretical and empirical economic studies convincingly show that innovation is harmed by anticompetitive conduct.14 This is why antitrust enforcement is such a terrific policy tool to strengthen competition—it does not come with an efficiency downside, as do most policies that redistribute income. Policies that enhance competition are unambiguously beneficial for efficiency, as well as inclusive prosperity, with minor qualifications.15 Other policies for addressing inequality, in particular, such as labor market and tax policies, may create disincentives or allocative efficiency losses that must be weighed against their distributional benefits. Policies to enhance competition, by contrast, offer what is close to a free lunch.16

#### Plan spurs innovation through investments.

Lande & Vaheesan ’20 -- Robert H. Lande, professor of law at the University of Baltimore School of Law. He is the Secretary of the American Antitrust Institute’s Board of Directors. Sandeep Vaheesan, legal director at the Open Markets Institute. [“Preventing the Curse of Bigness Through Conglomerate Merger Legislation,” *Arizona State Law Journal 75,* 2020, <https://scholarworks.law.ubalt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2104&context=all_fac>] KS

V. OUR PROPOSAL WOULD NOT IMPAIR THE ATTAINMENT OF PRODUCTIVE EFFICIENCIES

Even though large mergers do not produce significant efficiencies on average, our specific proposal would be especially unlikely to reduce corporate economic efficiency. Companies seeking to achieve economies of scale and other productive efficiencies could still proceed in one of two ways.

First, the merger could proceed so long as the acquiring company sold or spun off similarly sized assets. Since many or most of the mergers this proposal will affect will encompass a number of industries that are not horizontally or vertically related to one another, the acquiring company typically should be able to identify and spin off or sell assets in a way that would not diminish overall corporate efficiency. Thus, if the legislation contained $10 billion thresholds, the acquiring company would be permitted to keep a net of $9.9 billion in assets from a merger—surely enough to attain almost any conceivable efficiency.

Second, companies would still have the freedom to achieve productive efficiencies through internal growth. Instead of buying their way to possible efficiencies, they would have an incentive to invest in new facilities and improve their own operations. Similarly, rather than enter new markets through acquisitions of existing firms, companies could always enter by setting up and investing in a new line of business. Indeed, strong merger policy can, in general, divert corporate management away from mergers and acquisitions and toward more socially valuable pursuits. The Clayton Act reflects this distinction between growth through merger and growth through internal expansion: it restricts the former and permits the latter.160 At present, under the agencies’ tolerant approach to mergers, “managerial energies [are] devoted to sterile paper entrepreneurialism and the quick growth-through-merger game” and “diverted from the critical task of investing in new plants, new products, and state-of-the-art manufacturing techniques.”161

#### Spin-offs from successful firms are most successful with the greatest link to economic growth.

Dahl and Reichstein 7 [Michael S. Dahl, Professor of Strategy and Organization at the Aalborg University Business School (Denmark) and a Professor II at the Norwegian School of Economics (Bergen, Norway), & Toke Reichstein, Professor of Economics of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the Department of Strategic Management and Globalization (2007) Are You Experienced? Prior Experience and the Survival of New Organizations, Industry and Innovation, 14:5, 497-511, DOI: 10.1080/13662710701711414] //bdom

This study investigates how likely various types of start-ups are to survive. It is based on an unusually comprehensive dataset, which contains very accurate information, and this has important advantages for an investigation of firms’ survival. We find that the effects of prior experience on survival are shown to be rather strong. Spin-offs with surviving parents perform remarkably better than other spin-offs and other start-ups. Comparing the survivalsur chances of spin-offs with surviving parents, with those of spin-offs with exiting parents, shows that source of experience has a remarkable effect. The effects are not so remarkable when we compare spin-offs with surviving parents to other start-ups. Here, the likelihood of survival for spin-offs of surviving parents is twice as high as that of other start-ups. These are very powerful results and illustrate the importance of the right type of experience rather than just experience from the industry generally. Even though survival of the parent is a rather crude measure of the quality of parent, it nevertheless suggests that prior experience in such an organization facilitates access to knowledge and routines, which ultimately will be of significant benefit to the employee(s) involved in a start-up. Distinguishing between progeny of surviving parents and progeny from exiting parents proved valuable and calls for further theoretical work on distinguishing between different types of spin-offs and the differences in the implications for the performance of the individual spin-off. The type of experience that entrepreneurs and initial managers carry from other firms in the industry thus seems to be very important for the likelihood of survival of their own new organization. From an evolutionary perspective, entrepreneurs and initial managers with a history in the industry, but from firms that are not able to continue operations, will carry routines of low fitness, which, according to the theory, will be a disadvantage. Spin-offs from exiting parents may have been pushed out because the parents were facing closure. In our analysis, spin-offs with exiting parents perform significantly worse than any other type of start-up and especially when compared to spin-offs with surviving parents. However, spinoffs with exiting parents also perform worse than other start-ups. In fact, they have only a 54 percent chance of survival compared to other start-ups. Furthermore, it is important to take the history into account when studying spin-offs and to understand that these organizations are rather heterogeneous in this respect. It is also important to recognize that the quality of a parent firm will have a vital influence on the performance prospects of any spin-off. Not only are the spin-offs influenced by the performance of the parent, they will also have a very similar internal structure. This gives us further indication that spin-offs are influenced greatly by the history of the founders.7 the best start-ups come from the best existing firms. As a result of their higher chances of survival, these start-ups bring higher benefits to the economy. They have the appropriate prior experience and industry specific knowledge, which enables them to perform better than other start-ups. Ou r study shows that experience gained in an exiting firm is a direct disadvantage for a new organization. This clearly demonstrates that it is the type of experience and the type of startup, which is at the centre of survival and subsequent long-term economic growth. Many countries and governments focus heavily on entrepreneurship and increased firm founding to promote economic growth. This occurs often with no account being taken of our finding that the background of the start-ups has clear and significant effects on life chances. It would perhaps be more rational for policy makers to focus on specific types of start-up, rather than simply encouraging increased numbers of start-ups.Our findings, and those in numerous other empirical studies, are that organizations, founded by individuals from within the industry, have relatively higher chances of survival. This result clearly directs attention towards the possible negative effect of non-compete covenants in the contracts of employees. If spin-offs are more likely to survive, they will also be socially beneficial and provide the economy with valuable input by promoting growth. In this respect, it would probably be of benefit to the economy if firms could be dissuaded from imposing conditions that prevent former employees from starting up businesses within the same industry. In fact, legislators may want to reduce the stigma often associated with employees that leave a company to start their own firms.

#### American economic growth prevents US-China-Russia war, baby-proofs emerging tech, and brings back international cooperation

Burrows ’16 [Matthew; September 2016; Director of the Atlantic Council’s Strategic Foresight Initiative, PhD in European History from the University of Cambridge; Global Risks 2035, “The Difficult Transition to a Post-Western Order,” Ch. 8, http://espas.eu/orbis/sites/default/files/generated/document/en/Global\_Risks\_2035\_web\_0922.pdf]

The multilateralist global system that the United States and the West built after the end of the Second World War was premised on an economically strong United States and West. In 1945, the United States was the only victor that was not completely devastated. World War II had brought the country out of the Great Depression, and the US GDP constituted more than 50 percent of the world’s total. Into the twenty-first century, the members of the Group of Seven (G7) were the world’s political and economic heavyweights. It has only been in the past several years that the collective GDP of the developing world—led by China—has surpassed the developed world’s. Even as non-Western powers grow, it is psychologically hard for the West to think about relinquishing its reins.

Demographically, the West has, for a long time, been in the minority. What’s more recent is the aging of the Western population (analyzed in chapter 2), which is already occurring in Japan and Europe, beginning to squeeze the availability of resources for anything but health, social security, and interest payments on debt. Unless healthcare becomes far more efficient, the US economy will be overburdened with healthcare and pension costs as the “baby boomer” generation ages. Healthcare constitutes a whopping 18 percent of the US GDP—significantly more than is the case for other industrialized countries—without necessarily providing better results.With more going to health and pensions, there will be less capacity for defense and military spending. The United States is the biggest military spender, but China is increasing its portion of worldwide military spending, while the worldwide share of European NATO members is diminishing. China’s military probably will not rival the United States’ power-projection capabilities even by 2035, but it will have greater anti-access and denial powers. In a military contest, China may never be able to deliver a knockout blow, but it could tarnish the US image of military invincibility in a conventional state-on-state contest held in its region. Equally, a confrontation that results in a Chinese humiliation could set back China’s aspirations for regional leadership, if not trigger a domestic legitimacy crisis for the Communist Party leadership. Biggest Problem Is Domestic The biggest psychological blow to ordinary Western citizens has been their sagging standard of living (more analysis in chapter 1). Despite a much better record of overall growth in the United States since the 2008 financial crisis, those with median incomes have taken a hit. Worrisome for future US growth potential has been the drop in the labor-participation rate, from the 67 percent range before the 2008 financial crisis to 62-63 percent in the years since. The labor-participation rate was destined to drop due to a growing numbers of retirees, but much of the current sharp decrease comes from unskilled males in their prime working years—forties and early fifties—dropping out. Additionally, many younger women are not entering or staying in the job market. Global Trends 2030 looked at two scenarios for future US growth—one in which the United States maintained or slightly increased its average 2.5 percent pre-2008 growth rate, or one in which growth would slow to an average of 1.5 percent a year. In the first, there would still be the global economic shift to China. On the other hand, the 2.5 percent average growth would help boost average living standards, engendering a “feel-good” factor, which would make more Americans interested in reengaging with world issues.91 Given the record of slower growth and labor-force decline since the 2008 financial crisis, the likelihood of the second scenario is increasing. That scenario anticipated lower growth rates—which accelerated declines in average living standards—making it harder to continue trade-liberalization efforts. Indeed, the IMF warned in June 2016 that the United States faces potentially significant longer-term challenges to strong and sustained growth, saying, “concerted policy actions are warranted, sooner rather than later… focusing on the causes and consequences of falling labor force participation, an increasingly polarized income distribution, high levels of poverty, and weak productivity.”92 Moreover, it is not as if traditional US partners—Europe and Japan—are doing much better. Japan and many European countries are aging faster than the United States, eliminating labor-force growth as a driver of future economic growth. Europe’s and Japan’s economic performances have been declining since the 1990s. In Europe, the public discontent with high unemployment and declining incomes has helped to spur the rise of antiestablishment far-right and populist parties that want to weaken the EU and transatlantic ties. Even in richer European countries, such as Germany, a backlash has been growing against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), out of fear that Europe’s rewards would be meager and European standards would be diluted. McKinsey Global Institute, for example, believes a “return to sustained growth of 2-to-3 percent” is possible for Europe, but would require many politically difficult reforms.93 These include: reducing dependence on imports (much coming from Russia) for crude oil and natural gas; fostering a more vibrant digital economy; increasing workforce participation by the elderly, women, and migrants; and promoting flexibility in labor markets. China now spends a greater share of its GDP on research and development than does Europe. The latest OECD figures show that Europe now spends even less than the rest of the OECD.94 In both the United States and Europe, there is increasing anti-immigrant sentiment despite documented economic benefits from immigration. According to EU Commission Employment Analyst Dr. Jorg Peschner, productivity, by itself, will not be enough to reverse the negative employment trend absent more immigration: “EU’s productivity growth would have to double in order to keep the EU’s economy growing at the same pace as it did before the crisis started.” For employment growth to remain positive as long as possible, improving the labor participation of women, low-educated people, and migrants will also have to be a priority. In the United States, many of the new businesses started every year are started by first- or second-generation immigrants.95 Politically, there has been a large rise in support for right-wing and populist parties in the United States and Europe, undermining traditional parties. The gaps, for example, between the leadership and supporters in the US Republican and UK Tory and Labor Parties have been particularly evident in the selection of Donald Trump as presidential candidate and the June 2016 victory of the “Leave” vote in Britain. Unfortunately, there is no end of economic disruption. The job churn will continue as more and more skills and professions are automated, also increasing the potential for more “losers” from globalization, greater political polarization, and inequality. The increased competitiveness of the developing world with the West is a particular morale buster for Western middle classes who got used to ever-increasing prosperity for themselves and succeeding generations. Adapting to a new norm of economic turbulence—more prevalent in other eras—may be one of the biggest mental hurdles for Westerners. The West is used to thinking of the “Third World,” not home, as the place where economic turmoil happens. And a Multipolar Financial Architecture, Too Historically, US and Western power has rested on having a monopoly on reserve currencies and a Western-dominated financial system. In 2035, the dollar will be the biggest reserve currency, but its share of global financial transactions is expected to drop from 60 percent today to 45 percent. The euro will probably remain the second reserve currency, while the Chinese yuan or RMB—which became a part of the IMF benchmark-currency basket in 2015—will become a third reserve currency, accounting for 10 to 15 percent of global finance in two decades’ time.96 The financial architecture will also become more regionalized. The central role played by the financial centers of New York and London will also diminish, and a multitiered financial architecture will develop. Following the UK Brexit, those centers’ share in financial intermediation will decrease, as a second pole of global finance forms in the Eurozone. A third pole will develop in East Asia and Southeast Asia. Gradually, a growing share of global financial resources will be concentrated in those regional clusters. As with the growth of regional trade, the regional clusters will be more self-encapsulated, spurred by rising domestic demand in China and other developing countries with growing middle classes. With the role of electronic money likely to grow, the traditional banking system will probably also undergo major revision, with potential impacts on governmental powers. A more multipolar reserve system and regionalized financial architecture should lessen risks and contribute to greater stability. But the large-scale technological innovations—some of which contributed to the 2008 breakdown—will continue, making global finance still volatile. Emerging-market countries with fragmentary regulatory regimes will be particularly prone to suffering financial crises. The aging-population factor also increases risks to public finances. This report anticipates modestly increased volatility, lower than what occurred in the global economy during the 1890s through the 1940s, but higher than in the 1950s and 1960s—more of a continuation of what has been the trend line since the mid-1980s. Are There Alternative Visions to Western Order? Four years ago, when Global Trends 2030 was published, the answer was largely no.97 Increasingly, the facts on the ground would suggest otherwise. They do not add up to a cohesive plan to substitute wholesale all Western institutions and practices. However, they clearly indicate that there are some no-go areas, particularly those connected to regime change, democracy promotion, state control over NGOs, and maintaining sovereignty. Russia and China, in particular, see themselves as great powers and, as such, believe they have special rights to dominance in their regions. However, as other powers like India develop, it is likely that they will see themselves as regional powers with inherent prerogatives. It is worth recalling the United States’ expansive Manifest Destiny and nineteenth-century Monroe Doctrine, claiming special rights to determine the future of the Western Hemisphere. The Mercator Institute for China Studies (MERICS) has been closely following Beijing’s efforts to build a network of parallel structures to existing international organizations. It has concluded that China “is not seeking to demolish or exit from current international organizations…It is constructing supplementary— in part complementary, in part competitive—channels for shaping the international order beyond Western claims to leadership.”98 As the accompanying chart indicates, China’s shadow network of alternative international structures encompasses everything from financial and economic partnerships (the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank) to full-blown political groupings like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), and the BRICS association of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.99 Moreover, there is increasing cooperation among many of the emerging powers—beyond just authoritarians—to not just limit what they see as Western meddling in domestic affairs, but to go on the attack globally. According to a recent academic study, the “Big Five” authoritarian states of China, Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela “have taken more coordinated and decisive action to contain democracy on the global level.” They have sought to “alter the democracy and human-rights mechanisms of key rulesbased institutions, including the Organization of American States, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and international bodies concerned with the governance of the Internet.”100 How durable are these preferences for nondemocracy and state control? By 2035, if not sooner (in the case of Venezuela), some of the now-authoritarian states could be liberalized, and the perceived threat posed by Western civil-society NGOs may ease. However, China and Russia are more likely than not to want to dominate their regions. Nationalism and democracy have been shown to be highly compatible. It is not clear that an even more powerful China or India would defer to Western leadership of the global order, even if both sides’ values in other areas begin to converge.

What Kind of Post-Western World? Clearly, there is a need to plan for a world that will not have the West as its big economic powerhouse—a prospect hard for Western elites and publics to conceive of, despite a decade or more of publicity about the “rise of the rest.” According to a recent survey, Europeans and Americans are more comfortable with each other than they are with anybody else. Although a majority of Europeans said, in the most recent German Marshall Fund transatlantic-trends polling, that they would like to see their country take an approach more independent from the United States, both Americans and Europeans still prefer each other over more Russian or Chinese leadership in the world.

The Obama administration—considered among the most multilateralist of recent administrations— campaigned hard in 2015 to convince Europeans not to join China’s proposed Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB). It was as if the United States was against any governance structure not “made in the USA,” even when those running the AIIB have made clear their intentions of operating with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

More and more, the talk among Western elites is about locking in as much as possible the status quo, which favors the West, so that it will be harder for the newcomers to overcome. The TPP was sold as a way to set the rules before China gains much more power. A former Obama administration official advised that now might be the best time to undertake UN Security Council reform, before China and other uncooperative powers become more powerful. “A new US administration may be able to advance a proposal to address the Security Council’s anachronistic makeup while perpetuating a council that Washington can work with.”101

For Westerners, the challenge will be to plan for a future that will not be solely run by them, but which they can live with. Handovers have been historically difficult and fraught—more often than not, decided by bloody contests. One could envisage different scenarios, some already described in the earlier chapter on conflict, of military contests between the United States and China, or the United States and China with Russia, or the United States with NATO against Russia. Without delivering a knockout blow by one side or the other, these contests would most likely pit West against East, creating something akin to a new Cold War. Even if there were a knockout blow by the United States against China, it is hard to imagine a defeated China deferring permanently to the West. Its population has been imbued with such a narrative about the injustices by the West against China that any defeat or setback would be confirmation that the United States and West are dead set against a rising China. Perhaps the most harmful effect of such a contest would be to convince both sides that neither is trustworthy. For the non-West, it would confirm the suspicion that the West does not want to relinquish its leadership position. For the West, it would make it harder to ever reach out and help establish a truly global system. Need for a Second-Generation US and Western Leadership Model War is not, and should not be, inevitable as the West struggles with the growing clout of China and other developing states on the world stage. Unlike during other transitions, the tools exist for ensuring more peaceful outcomes. They will require Western acquiescence to greater roles for the developing world to set and implement new rules of the road for the international order. A key feature of the post-1945 US design for the world order is its multilateralist structures. Many of these operate below most people’s radar. This plumbing of the international system has enabled the daily functioning of globalization. To keep it viable, China, as well as other developing countries, must be accorded more representation. There are too many long-term risks involved, for example, in China having only the equivalent of France’s voting rights in the IMF, when it is the first or second economic power in the world. This is how resentments are nurtured—all the more dangerous in China’s case because of its underlying “century of humiliation” mental complex. As emerging technologies come online, the lack of a truly global institutional framework could be particularly dangerous. Assuring the future security of the Internet is particularly important in this regard, because all the new emerging technologies—bio, 3D printing, robotics, big data—take for granted a secure, global Internet. Everyone loses if cyber crime and cyber terrorism undermine the Internet. In the worstcase scenarios, in which cyber crime proliferates or strong national borders fragment the Internet, an Atlantic Council study, as mentioned, found that the economic costs could be as much as $90 trillion out to 2030, in addition to the risk of open conflict.102

Besides bringing the emerging powers into leadership roles in the panoply of multilateral institutions, the United States will need to temper its often “exemptionalist” stance to ensure the survival of the multilateralist order. According to the Council on Foreign Relations’ Patrick Stewart, a prominent scholar of global governance, one of the persistent paradoxes of the post-1945 decades has been that the “United States is at once the world’s most vocal champion of a rules-based international order and the power most insistent on opting out of the constraints that it hopes to see binding on others.”103 No country has the networks and connections that the United States does, but the system is now polycentric, rather than unipolar, and others resent the “exceptional” privileges that the United States claims. The Global Trends works have talked about the need for a new model of US global leadership. The United States needs to be guiding the international system as a “first among equals,” and willing to play by its own rules. Paradoxically, there is likely to be no vibrant global-governance system without US and Western leadership, but too much domineering behavior could doom it. Even if the United States adapted its global role, this is not to say that the tensions and differences with many emerging powers would all disappear, or that the governance system would function seamlessly. In addition to the growing number of new state actors, the increasing importance of nonstate actors adds a new complexity to the functioning of global institutions. Moreover, there are clear-cut differences between the West and emerging powers on values-based issues, such as democracy promotion and the responsibility to protect. Many developing-country publics still resent Western colonialism and equate any intrusion with past historical wrong. They point to the 2011 humanitarian intervention in Libya, for example, as cover for the Western goal of regime change. Hence, the UN Security Council failure to stop the fighting in Syria, with more than two hundred thousand killed and 7.6 million displaced. Russia and China want to make a stand against the United States and the West getting their way and ousting the Assad regime. On the other hand, the lack of a solution smacks more of anarchy than global governance. Certainly, it shows one of the gaps that remains, and likely will remain, limiting global governance because of differences in values. The speed with which new technologies are coming online and becoming an important political, military, and economic tool—for both good and bad—carries big risks for global governance. Stewart Patrick lists four potential new technologies that “cry out for regulation”: geoengineering, drones, synthetic biology, and nanotechnology. Without some setting of rules for their operation, there is the risk of major disruptions, if not catastrophes, stemming from their abuse. The recent advances in synthetic biology lower the bar to abuse by amateurs and terrorists alike, forever affecting human DNA. Geoengineering involves planetary-scale interventions that could interfere with complex climatic systems. However cumbersome, politically unpopular, and ineffective at times, there is little alternative to increased global cooperation if one does not want to see higher risks of conflict and economic degradation. Without some sort of bolstered global governance, the West would end up with less sovereignty in a “dog-eat-dog” world, in which it was increasingly in the minority. But can the United States and the West rise to the challenge of investing in a global-governance system that will not always favor their interests on every issue? Historically, the United States could be especially generous because it was on top of the world in about everything after the Second World War. Europeans came to truly believe in pooling sovereignty and joint governance after centuries of internecine conflict. The tough economic times at home have seen US and European publics become distrustful of overarching multilateral institutions, believing the will of the United States or individual European countries will not be served. It is oftentimes easier for political leaders to fall in with the public mood rather than display leadership that might appear to work against it.

#### Scenario 2 is Pharma:

#### Current M&A regulations are crushing pharma innovation.

Feldman ’21 -- Robin Feldman, Arthur J. Goldberg Distinguished Professor of Law, Albert Abramson ’54 Distinguished Professor of Law Chair, and Director of the Center for Innovation. [“Drug companies keep merging. Why that’s bad for consumers and innovation," *Washington Post,* 4-6-2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/04/06/drug-companies-keep-merging-why-thats-bad-consumers-innovation/>] KS

The Federal Trade Commission’s acting chairwoman, Rebecca Kelly Slaughter, recently announced that the agency would collaborate with regulators in Canada and the European Union to review its guidelines for evaluating drug company mergers. This move may signal more active policing of consolidation in the pharmaceutical industry. For prescription drug users and society at large, this is a welcome — and long overdue — change, one with the potential to spur innovation and offer more treatment options to Americans. In the past few decades, three waves of mergers have substantially increased concentration in the pharmaceutical industry. The first wave occurred from approximately 1988 to 1991, with the second following between approximately 1996 and 2002. The third began in 2010 and remains ongoing. The result of these merger waves has been a dramatically consolidated industry. In 1987, the combined market share of the eight largest drug companies stood at a relatively low 36 percent. By the conclusion of the first merger wave, it had grown to 42 percent; by 2012, in the wake of the second merger wave, the ratio had climbed to 53 percent. All told, between 1995 and 2015, the 60 leading pharmaceutical companies merged to only 10.As a result, now only a handful of manufacturers are responsible for sourcing the vast majority of prescription drugs: Just four companies, for example, produced more than 50 percent of all generic drugs in 2017. This dramatic consolidation has remade the pharmaceutical industry. Before 1988, a robust cohort of drug manufacturers often competed across multiple therapeutic areas. This competition encouraged exploring different possible approaches for treating the same disease state as well as treatments for a wider range of health concerns, increasing the potential for innovations that might improve lives. Although this marketplace was better for innovation, drug companies were drawn to merging because of the lure of increased market power, improved synergies, larger economies of scale and more diverse product portfolios. Abrupt changes to the environment surrounding the pharmaceutical industry also encouraged consolidation. In the late 1980s, widespread deregulation at both the state and federal level may have facilitated an uptick in mergers, particularly as companies with expiring drug patents sought to make up for their revenue losses by acquiring other profitable drugs. The second merger wave beginning around 1996 can be traced in part to another external shock, as globalization spurred firms to join forces to reach more potential markets. Similar to the first merger wave, “patent cliffs,” in which many of a company’s drugs were set to lose their lucrative patent monopoly around the same time, also helped push firms to combine forces. But the newly consolidated pharmaceutical industry actually stifled innovation. In the period following merger waves one and two, the industry generated fewer new molecular entities each year compared to pre-merger levels. Merged drug companies also spent proportionally less on research than their non-merged competitors. Consolidation also enabled drugmakers to directly quell competition through what were known as “killer acquisitions,” in which they acquired innovative peers solely to stop potential competition. Moreover, with the assistance of pharmacy benefits managers, newly giant pharmaceutical firms could leverage their dominant position with one type of drug to suppress competitors for another one of their drugs, or they could use the combined power of multiple drugs to shore up a waning monopoly position. Both of these practices could block cheaper drug competitors from reaching patients, inhibiting access and affordability. In short, consumers were the losers from the two waves of drug company mergers. They confronted higher prices and fewer choices — and saw companies exploring fewer paths that might produce breakthroughs. To make matters worse, around 2010, another wave of mergers began.This wave is ongoing and looks quite different from the previous two, although its causes are familiar. Again, deregulation is a prominent factor: In 2010, the FTC raised the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index thresholds, the index used to trigger antitrust investigations, a move some saw as a mandate for consolidation. Moreover, interest rates have remained at or near 0 percent in the decade since the 2008 financial crisis, providing a favorable environment for the lending that facilitates mergers and acquisitions. As with the earlier waves, giant drug companies have merged. But in a new twist, in recent years, most consolidation has featured bigger players acquiring smaller start-ups. The difference reflects a dramatic shift in the structure of the pharmaceutical industry. Faced with stagnating research productivity, large drugmakers now rely on outsourcing their new drug research to start-ups and other small pharmaceutical firms. Increasingly, these smaller players specialize in high-risk research and early drug development, with larger firms then gobbling them up and navigating the FDA’s regulatory process. For example, 63 percent of all new molecular entities in 2018 came from smaller biopharma firms, compared with just 31 percent in 2009. Unlike its predecessors, the third wave has coincided with an increase in new molecular entities. Yet this isn’t all positive news for consumers. Unfortunately, all new drugs are not created equal. Modern drug innovation has skewed increasingly toward “orphan drugs” and other rare disease treatments intended for diseases affecting fewer than 200,000. For example, nearly 60 percent of new drugs received an orphan drug designation in 2018, compared to a mere 10 percent in 1998. This means that although more drugs may be gaining approval, these new drugs increasingly treat splinter groups, rather than addressing disease states and health concerns that commonly affect large portions of the population, such as heart disease, diabetes, reproductive health and the need for new antibiotics. Rather than offering new hope to the millions of Americans afflicted by these common but sometimes debilitating conditions, the system’s incentives push innovation into the more lucrative market for orphan drugs. Moreover, in the current industry structure, a small clique of powerful drug manufacturers are responsible for shuttling new drugs through late-stage regulatory processes, leaving innovators with little choice other than acquisition by or partnership with an entrenched firm. This, too, can be problematic for consumers. The public regulatory process for drug development is rooted in concerns for patient safety. But when large pharmaceutical companies serve as a secondary gatekeeper to FDA approval, they have every financial incentive to focus on maintaining their market position, not safeguarding the public interest. The end result of now three waves of pharmaceutical consolidation is decreased or diverted new drug innovation, fewer treatment options and higher prices. Consumers have lost as firms fuse together to bolster the bottom line. The recent FTC announcement is an encouraging indication that regulators finally may be considering the repercussions of drug mergers, but the proof will be in the resulting policy. Changes to the review and oversight process can only come if society recognizes that too much consolidation stifles innovation. In addition, more small or midsize companies bringing their drugs to market can offer an inspiring call to action for larger firms to bolster their own efforts. Otherwise, for Big Pharma, the famous expression gets a corollary: Why beat your smaller competitors; they have no choice but to join you.

#### Mergers reduce R&D and patenting

Staton ’16 -- Tracy Staton, editor of FiercePharma and FiercePharmaMarketing. [“It's Official: Pharma Mergers Hurt Innovation, and Not Only for the Dealmakers,” *FiercePharma,* 8-30-2016, <https://www.fiercepharma.com/pharma/it-s-official-pharma-mergers-hurt-innovation-and-not-only-for-dealmakers>] KS

The researchers analyzed 65 pharma deals, comparing the participating companies before and after they combined. They also analyzed companies that were developing drugs in similar therapeutic areas, but hadn’t merged. “Our results very clearly show that R&D and patenting within the merged entity decline substantially after a merger, compared to the same activity in both companies beforehand,” the authors, Justus Haucap and Joel Stiebale, wrote in the HBR. That’s to be expected, the authors posit, because merger-minded companies often target rivals with similar pipeline assets, to gain strength in particular drug markets. But here’s what else the authors found: “On average, patenting and R&D expenditures of non-merging competitors also fell--by more than 20%--within four years after a merger. Therefore, pharmaceutical mergers seem to substantially reduce innovation activities in the relevant market as a whole." Haucap and Stiebale’s paper includes patent counts and R&D spending numbers, and they conclude that “innovation output” by the merged company decreases, on average, by more than 30%. Among the merged company’s competitors, output declined by 7%, on average, they found. The men’s research “is the first to show that there are follow-on effects across the industry,” wrote Derek Lowe at In The Pipeline, which has sliced and diced pharma M&A for years. “Inside the merged companies, there’s a great deal of disruption, as many readers here can testify,” Lowe wrote. “But afcross the industry as a whole, things get less competitive the fewer players there are and the fewer the approaches being tried.” As for the business effects? Profitability increased post-merger, for the merged companies and for their competitors, too. For the merged company, the profits may depend on cost cuts; in integrating, the post-merger company “decreases its scale” compared to the two merger partners, pre-acquisition. For “non-merging rivals,” profits tended to grow on increased sales. “What we have, then, is probably a perverse incentive--companies can improve their numbers by doing mergers and acquisitions, but that very activity hurts their long-term prospects and those of the entire industry,” Lowe observes. McKinsey & Co. analysts emphasized the “shareholder value” effects of megamergers in a 2014 study, and they found that, reductively speaking, the deals worked. Lowe picked apart that research, as did ex-Pfizer R&D chief John LaMattina, who wrote up his own rebuttal in Forbes, enumerating the many ways repeated megamergers sap the life out of research, as focus and energy go into logistical decisions, layoff worries, and the like--and away from science.

#### Increase prices, while wrecking biotech and pharma innovation.

Jarsulic 2016 - Vice President for Economic Policy at the Center for American Progress   
Marc, Ethan Gurwitz, Kate Bahn, & Andy Green, "Reviving Antitrust," https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2016/06/29/140613/reviving-antitrust/

So, how did this happen? Firms can employ many strategies to support and enhance market power, including merging to eliminate competition and raise prices, using their dominance to create barriers to entry, and buying influence to protect rents. The cumulative effect of this exercised market power can mean reduced innovation, poorer product quality, reduced output, and lower wages for those employed by dominant firms. These outcomes contribute to an economy that advantages those with market power, but harms workers, small businesses, and consumers. The following section discusses some of those strategies and the effects that market power has on the operation of the economy. Price increases from increased concentration. When it comes to market consolidation, one of the clearest ways to identify the impact is too look at prices before and after mergers. A growing body of research has looked retrospectively at mergers, finding a fairly consistent relationship between increasing market concentration and increasing prices.13 In Mergers, Merger Control, and Remedies, John Kwoka reviews studies of concentration-increasing mergers, over the past three decades, finding a “clear tendency toward anticompetitive outcome.”14 His review covers 29 retrospective studies, assessing price effects for 42 mergers and 101 products affected by a merger.15 Nearly two-thirds of the products reviewed resulted in price increases, with an average post-merger price increase of more than 9 percent.16 Kwoka analyzes the same set of mergers at the transaction level—the average price outcome across all products produced by the merged entity. Consistent with the product-level analysis, he finds that more than three-quarters of the mergers resulted in price increases, the average of which is more than 10 percent.17 Only a little more than one-third of the mergers reviewed were challenged by the FTC or DOJ.18 Of the mergers that went unchallenged by the FTC or DOJ, the average transaction-level price effect was an increase of nearly 11 percent.19 Finally, Kwoka looks at group merger studies—studies analyzing large sets of concentration-increasing mergers which include some effects beyond price.20 His data include 19 studies, which yield 41 product-level observations. Less than one-third resulted in procompetitive effects. The product-level results show that on average prices increased, research and development, or R&D, declined, and quality decreased.21 In particular, R&D—where observations were limited to the biotech and pharmaceutical industry—decreased on average by just less than 10 percent.22 Moreover, the group mergers resulted on average in cost reductions and efficiencies, indicating, as Kwoka notes, that cost savings were unlikely to be passed onto consumers.23

#### Plan solves

Milani ’19 -- Katy Milani, fellow at the Roosevelt Institute. [“Pharmaceutical Mergers and Megamergers Stifle Innovation,” *STAT,* 7-10-2019, <https://www.statnews.com/2019/07/10/pharmaceutical-mergers-stifle-innovation/>] KS

It isn’t lost on the public that the pharmaceutical industry is putting profits over people. Over 80% of Americans across party lines believe that lowering drug costs should be a “top priority” for lawmakers. Policymakers across the political spectrum have put the industry on notice, holding hearings with pharmaceutical company CEOs and introducing a flurry of policies to rein in high-cost medicines. President Trump also made lowering drug costs a priority, and went as far as accusing drugmakers of “getting away with murder” on the campaign trail. Yet the industry continues to operate as if it’s business as usual, putting profits over people’s health. Case in point: the second-largest pharmaceutical merger this year made headlines in late June with a $63 billion deal between AbbVie and Botox maker Allergan. AbbVie’s CEO, Richard Gonzalez, framed the megadeal as having “a profound impact on AbbVie’s overall growth story while addressing concerns about the company’s reliance on Humira.” While that may seem benign, a closer look exposes a troubling industry-wide trend of billions of dollars of corporate resources going toward acquiring other pharmaceutical corporations with patent-protected blockbuster drugs instead of putting those resources toward “discovering and developing medicines that enable patients to live longer, healthier, and more productive lives” as the industry likes to claim. Antitrust laws and regulations, which ensure competition and protect consumers from predatory business practices, play an important role in structuring the market. In the 1970s, free-market economists laid the intellectual groundwork for what became today’s broad reinterpretation of antitrust law. That resulted in regulators, including the FTC and the Justice Department, to adopt a hands-off approach to antitrust enforcement and apply less scrutiny to mergers of giant corporations. This lax approach to enforcement plays a role in structuring today’s increasingly concentrated pharmaceutical industry. Megamergers, like the AbbVie and Allergan deal, deserve greater scrutiny not just from politicians but from the regulators who have the tools to do something about today’s increasingly concentrated, high-cost pharmaceutical industry. The FTC can self-correct by applying tougher scrutiny on these mergers. Humira is the top-selling drug globally, and generates 61% of AbbVie’s total revenue off of patients reportedly paying close to $60,000 a year for the drug. AbbVie’s patent protections for Humira expire in 2023 when a cheaper version legally comes to market. As the only seller since 2003, AbbVie has market power — meaning the ability to skew market outcomes in the firm’s own interest without creating value or serving the public good — enabling the firm to hike prices and do whatever it takes to extend market exclusivity for Humira for as long as possible. AbbVie’s aim in purchasing Allergan is to remain profitable by acquiring Allergan’s products, including Botox and the blockbuster eye treatment for dry eye, Restasis. In other words, instead of putting profit toward productive activities like research and development toward new blockbuster drugs to replace Humira or lowering drug costs, AbbVie will acquire its competition in order to diversify and remain profitable.Consolidation in the pharmaceutical industry has troubling consequences. The number of mergers and acquisitions involving one of the top 25 firms more than doubled from 29 in 2006 to 61 in 2015, in part due to lax merger review. Between 1995 and 2015, 60 pharmaceutical companies merged into 10. There is little sign that the rise of mergers slowed in recent years.Such consolidation has downstream effects on patients. Because internal research and development is expensive, yields inconsistent returns, and is often time-consuming, the biggest pharmaceutical firms are increasingly electing to access R&D by acquiring smaller firms. According to a recent study, “killer acquisitions,” in which one company purchases another to suppress research and the development of rival drugs, account for approximately 6% of all the mergers and acquisitions in the pharmaceutical industry. The same study found that eliminating killer acquisitions would raise the industry’s aggregate drug development by 4% a year. While these trends in pharma may not be surprising, they should be alarming. AbbVie will spend $67 billion “to bypass the risky process of research and development by buying a portfolio of popular products as it faces the loss of patent protection for Humira,” as the New York Times astutely notes. This spending comes with a trade-off, since corporate resources could be used toward innovation, research and development, or lowering drug costs. As regulators review the AbbVie-Allergan merger and continue to scrutinize Bristol-Myers Squibb’s $74 billion acquisition of Celgene, policymakers and candidates for office should put pressure on the FTC to reject these mergers. They should also remind regulators of the impact that consolidation has on patients and access to affordable and innovative medicines. More stringent merger reviews can and should play a role in tackling the trend toward concentration in the pharmaceutical industry. While this is not a silver bullet to rein in high-cost medicines, it is a step in the right direction and a tool policymakers can use now. As candidates for office in 2020, lawmakers, policymakers, and the public debate reining in high-cost medicines, they should put pressure on regulators like the FTC to act. They should encourage the FTC to apply more scrutiny — or better yet, not approve — multibillion-dollar mergers in the pharmaceutical industry. The American public deserves to hear more from the candidates and lawmakers on their plans to take on the pharmaceutical industry and the drug affordability crisis.

#### The plan is necessary to spark biotech and pharma innovation.

Jarsulic 2016 - Vice President for Economic Policy at the Center for American Progress   
Marc, Ethan Gurwitz, Kate Bahn, & Andy Green, "Reviving Antitrust," https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/reports/2016/06/29/140613/reviving-antitrust/

Depressed innovation

Intuition suggests that market power is likely to limit innovation and investment. After all, when reduced competition allows a firm to earn supra-competitive returns, there is less incentive to introduce new products or find ways to reduce costs. This intuition is borne out by evidence from the pharmaceutical industry. The pharmaceutical industry is highly dependent on the discovery of new chemical entities that can provide safe and effective treatment for disease. Over the past three decades, the industry has seen a merger wave among large companies producing patented drugs. 48 A 2009 study of the post-merger innovation inputs and outputs of merged firms between 1988 and 2004, as measured by R&D expenditure, patents, and research productivity, shows statistically significant declines relative to a control group of similar firms. 49 These empirical results cast doubt on the view that mergers in pharmaceuticals produce significant increases in innovation, and on the possibility that large dynamic efficiencies can offset possible anticompetitive effects.

#### Biotech innovation is key to resolve a laundry list of societal threats

ICAF, 2010 (Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University, Authors include many US military colonels and faculty of the National Defense University, “Biotechnology 2010”, Spring 2010, http://es.ndu.edu/Portals/75/Documents/industry-study/reports/2010/icaf-is-report-biotechnology-2010.pdf)

Biotechnology has the potential to solve some of the most complex problems of the 21st century. As an industry, biotechnology is unparalleled in its potential to impact global health, food and water security, energy security, and the environment. This innovation-based industry is strategically significant because it impacts both national security and the sustained growth of the domestic economy. For the United States to maintain its current competitive advantage in the industry, it must focus on policy and investments which strengthen the industry’s ability to rapidly innovate and to transform innovative ideas into products and services for the global market. The purpose of this report is to conduct a strategic level examination of the biotechnology industry – an industry vital to the nation’s security and economic welfare. The study includes over fifty activities spanning lectures by leading biotechnology experts and field visits to important government and corporate organizations. The industry study program includes travel to key domestic and international biotechnology centers such as Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan. The study methodology uses critical thinking to analyze the structure, conduct and performance of the biotechnology industry and market sectors. This includes using the five forces of competition (new entrants, supplier power, buyer power, substitutes and the degree of rivalry) to assess the capacity and capability of U.S. biotechnology firms to deliver globally competitive products and services. Additionally, the methodology evaluates the biotechnology industry’s performance in meeting national security interest and promoting economic growth.

#### Pharma innovation is key to prevent extinction

Engelhardt, 2008 (H. Tristam Jr., Professor of Philosophy at Rice University, Professor emeritus at the Baylor College of Medicine, Ph.D. in Philosophy from the University of Texas at Austin, M.D. from Tulane University, “The Unavoidable Goodness of Profit: The Cunning of Reason and the Realization of Human Well-Being”, Innovation and the Pharmaceutical Industry: Critical Reflections on the Virtues of Profit, edited by H. Tristam Engelhardt Jr. and Jeremy R. Garrett, M & M Scrivener Press, pp. 29-30)

These points display the intractable bond among profit, innovation, and a philanthropic commitment to aid humans in need. The profit motive in the market, insofar as it is positively associated with the pos-sibility of lowering morbidity and mortality risks should be seen as inte-gral to the project of bettering the human condition. This state of affairs does not foreclose pursuing goals other than the development of innovative pharmaceuticals and medical devices. Some may in fact value aiding patients in the present more than aiding patients in the future. Others may value the pursuit of equality over decreasing human suffering, that is, over decreasing morbidity and mortality risks. They may support making all worse off in material wealth and in protection against morbidity and mortality risks, as long as people are made more equal. Such views are unlikely, however, to be the settled, informed view of most people, given the disinclination of most to early death and greater suffering, and given the threats posed to human well-being in the absence of continued innovation in pharmaceuticals and medical devices. That is, the inclination against the pursuit of profit generated by various forms of jealousy is likely to be counter-balanced by a fear of suffering and death. A better appreciation of the contributions made by the pharmaceuti-cal and medical-device industries is likely to be gained through better knowledge of the dependence of humans on pharmaceutical innovation for their very existence. In order to maintain the status quo of current morbidity and mortality risks, one needs ever new ways of controlling threatening microbial agents. This is the case because ever new risks are always emerging to threaten the survival of humans, as through micro-bial antibiotic resistance and the threat of new pathogens (e.g., human immunodeficiency virus and avian flu). The history of mankind until recently has been the history of recurrent devastating plagues with espe-cially dramatic adverse impacts on urban populations. Pharmaceutical advance is necessary to protect against what have up until recently been natural, predictable occurrences. There is also a wide spectrum of sources of human morbidity and mortality, ranging from cancer to Alzheimer’s, that is likely to be ameliorated over time through medical-technological developments. How long it will take to achieve those developments will depend on the resources and energies invested. The pharmaceutical and medical-device industries, supported and driven by the profit motive, are core to the project of decreasing human suffering and premature death.

#### Scenario three is space.

#### Preventing consolidation in the commercial space sector through merger review is critical to space innovation

Daley ‘19 [Gabrielle; 2019; J.D., University of Colorado, Class of 2018; Colorado Technology Law Journal; “Building a Ladder to the Stars: a Competition Policy for the New Space Race,” vol. 17.2, p. 339-368]

As the commercial sector of the space industry continues to grow, competition is lauded as playing a positive role in its development. However, recommendations for ensuring competition in the future are absent. Having recognized the value of competition for this sector, we should continue to foster it. Outlined below are suggestions for instating a competition policy for the space industry.

1. Competition as a Goal

The first and most aspirational of these policy recommendations is to recognize the inherent value of competition as an industry goal and to shape policy accordingly.206 National space policy is shaped by various goals like ensuring national security and safety, and fostering economic growth. As the language of the FTC’s ruling in the ULA case makes clear,207 if competition in the space industry is not seen as having inherent value in and of itself, these competing claims will win out to the detriment of the space industry as a whole. This will require a change of mindset that takes in the broader context of space, and recognizes that competition for military and civilian contracts, and well as in the purely commercial sector, can have benefits across the industry as a whole.208

In 2010 President Obama issued a National Space Policy Directive (“the Policy”) to establish and guide all governmental activities with relation to space.209 The Policy contains five overarching principles.210 The second principle addresses the commercial space sector:

A robust and competitive commercial space sector is vital to continued progress in space. The United States is committed to encouraging and facilitating the growth of a U.S. commercial space sector that supports U.S. needs, is globally competitive, and advances U.S. leadership in the generation of new markets and innovation-driven entrepreneurship.211

This kind of aspirational message acknowledging the importance of competition for the commercial space sector to prosper is the kind of message that needs to continue to be a core part of our discussions of space policy. The recommendation can be even more explicit than the one above, where competitiveness could be read to pertain only to competition the global stage, rather than the competition of commercial players with each other.212 As the current Presidential administration considers the development of their national space policy, and various regulator, and agencies grapple with the burgeoning NewSpace race, they should ensure that competition remains a central ideal of their policies.

2. Merger Review

Merger review is an important legal area where civilian and military agencies can play a role in fostering competition in the industry.213 The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and Department of Justice (DOJ) in the course of merger review should seek comment from NASA and DoD on mergers that have the potential to decrease competition in services they purchase. These agencies should encourage the FTC or DOJ not to approve mergers that harm competition. A recent whitepaper on national space policy from the Aerospace Corporation’s Center for Space Policy and Strategy noted that “future consolidation or contraction of domestic industry could put the U.S. government back into a monopoly provider situation, increasing risks. . . .”214 A merger policy informed by the heightened risks of consolidation in the space industry can stop this kind of consolidation ex ante, preventing harmful industry concentration from taking hold.

An example of the kind of merger that regulators should take a hard look at is the pending merge between space launch company Orbital ATK and Northrop Grumman, a security and aerospace firm. At the end of November 2017, Orbital ATK’s shareholders voted to approve a merger with Northrop Grumman.215 Orbital ATK has expanded its aircraft, defense, and rocket component business to enter the commercial launch service sector and now offers “small- and medium-class space launch vehicles for civil, military, and commercial missions.”216 Northrop Grumman is an aerospace and defense contractor.217

Industry analysts speculate that the proposed merger would create a “more vertically integrated company [that] would leave the military with fewer choices in certain sectors of the market.”218 Analysts are unsure what regulators in the Trump administration would make of the merge.219 In December of 2017 the FTC issued a second request for information in the merger review process, a sign that the agency is undertaking an extensive review of the competitive issues.220 As of March of 2018, the FTC in consultation with the DoD is still in the process of reviewing the merger.221 Regulators have an important role to play in preventing undesirable industry consolidation while permitting mergers that are not anticompetitive to come to fruition. Should the FTC find that the proposed consolidation of these two companies would harm competition in the growing space industry, a consent decree should not be entered allowing the merger to proceed and the merger should not be approved. Instead the agency should deny the transaction completely, the better to allow innovation and competition on the merits.

#### Commercial space innovation stops extinction

Beames ‘18 [Charles; 8/8/18; Chairman of the SmallSat Alliance, Executive Chairman of York Space Systems, former Principal Director of Space and Intelligence in the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (OUSD(AT&L)), Col. (ret.) in the USAF where he served 23 years in space & intelligence leadership positions around the world; Space News; “Op-ed | SmallSat Alliance is on a path toward a new space horizon,” <https://spacenews.com/op-ed-smallsat-alliance-is-on-a-path-toward-a-new-space-horizon/>]

We find ourselves still at the dawn of a new space century, mindful of the victories and setbacks of our past, eager to pass the torch to the next generation of space visionaries, scientists, engineers, and enthusiasts. We look to the future not just to see how much bigger, faster, or higher we can reach, but also how the United States, and specifically the U.S. space community, can again inspire the nations of the world to align with us, as it did in the 20th century.

The SmallSat Alliance is an alliance of companies developing, producing, and operating in all segments of the ‘next generation’ space economy; championing renewed U.S. leadership in the burgeoning commercial space economy, and advocating for the transformation of government-led space capabilities. We are experienced space professionals who have chosen to join with others leveraging our decades of hard-won experience, to develop smarter ways to explore space in the 21st century.

A wonderful outgrowth of the legacy space program is the commercial, entrepreneurial, and job-creating commercial space business that it bequeathed. These next-generation enterprises range from multi-million-dollar startups providing rideshare opportunities or components for small satellites to multi-billion-dollar space data-analytic platforms reinventing urban car service and agricultural production. The early returns of this economic revolution are already on our doorstep: space data capabilities are exponentially growing elements of the 21st century world economy.

Beginning with the dreams and funding by successful tech entrepreneurs, enormous venture investments are already delivering wondrous benefits to the world.

Commercial Space – Profit and Non-Profit

There are really two major categories in the commercial sector, the profit driven and the non-profit. The classic for-profit companies include not only those designing, building, launching, and operating satellites but also the tech sector that is turning that raw space data into gold through machine-learning analytics. Since for-profit companies are no longer dependent upon the revenues generated by the Cold War space race culture of a bygone era, this new generation of space companies is able to more efficiently capitalize on Moore’s Law, the nonstop exponential growth in chip density, and the associated networking technology co-evolving with it. This new generation is building profitable businesses helping to clean up our oceans of garbage and debris with satellite surveillance, reconnoitering to assist in enforcing laws that protect our oceans from illegal, unregulated, unlicensed fishing, something that is rapidly depleting the world’s most valuable and essential lifeforms. It’s leading in the innovative use of low-cost satellite constellations to produce ubiquitous remote-sensing data, enabling small business owners to be more profitable and less wasteful. For example, precise timing signals from space are already optimizing transportation of people, goods, and services, with even further gains anticipated with the introduction of artificial intelligence to assist drivers, perhaps even someday replacing them entirely.

The non-profit sector is the other side of commercial space, concerned more for the general welfare of society, but every bit as integral to this new space enterprise. Much like every century before it in human history, ours is not without its unique challenges, some of which have been a consequence of the last, and all of which the space data domain can be leveraged to help solve. Examples are endless, but one challenge that this new space community is uniquely well-adapted for is to further inform worldwide resource allocation for the 21st century and beyond. These two primary resources are sustainable water and the materials needed for adequate housing for an ever-increasing human population. As cities and urbanization continue to expand, governmental planning challenges such as transportation design optimization for goods and services are only the beginning. Additionally, through using inexpensive remote sensing technologies, some members are designing space data analytics to mitigate human suffering from plagues, contain outbreaks, and combating illegal poaching. Some are connecting with other non-profits to curtail human trafficking for the sex trade or forced labor for migrant debt repayment. Still others are helping non-governmental organizations in their work to expose the use of children as soldiers. Addressing these challenges has little to do with resuscitating dreams conceived by long deceased science-fiction writers and much more to do with turning “swords back into plowshares” to solve real threats to humanity.

Other non-profit initiatives include pursuing an even more foundational understanding of who we are and how to be the best custodians of our environment. Much as exploring and monitoring the world’s oceans has advanced civilization through a better understanding of human life and the planet, so too does exploring and monitoring from space. Low Earth orbit (LEO) provides a unique vantage point to look back on the planet and understand what is happening, anticipate what might happen and prepare for the future. In addition to better understanding Earth, responsible and rapid exploitation of the low Earth orbit domain will enhance the understanding of the solar system and the rest of the universe. Small satellites already offer low-cost platforms to study and explore what lies beyond the Earth. Other members are pioneering the use of zero-carbon, hydrogen-based reusable propulsion systems to ensure we don’t worsen our atmosphere using kerosene-fueled rockets for the coming tsunami of satellite launches. Finally, a mission ensuring the general welfare and planet survival for the next thousand years is finally confronting the existential threat that asteroids and comets pose to humanity. These extra-terrestrial, deep-space threats are passing dangerously close to our planet, and today we have no solar map of them and no defense.

#### And its key to solve space colonization---extinction.

Kovic '19 [Marko; March 2019; co-founder president of the Zurich Institute of Public Affairs Research; "The future of energy," https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/aswz9/download]

Ideally, the mitigation of climate risks will coincide with and contribute to the development of improved or even entirely novel sources of energy that will increase the long-term chances of humankind’s survival by means of space colonization. This is not an unrealistic expectation, given that the mitigation of climate risks consists, to a large degree, of replacing fossil fuels with other, less harmful sources of energy. However, some climate change mitigation strategies might actually harm the long-term prospects of humankind.

First, it is possible that dominant climate change mitigation strategies will actively exclude any form of nuclear energy from the repertoire of climate-friendly energy sources. Existing and experimental (molten salt) fission reactors could play a significant role in replacing carbon-heavy energy sources, but pro-environmental attitudes often overlap with anti-nuclear sentiments [65]. As a result, and in combination with other problems such as large-scale market failures of existing fission reactors (one of the reasons being that generating electricity from fossil fuels is cheaper) [66], nuclear fission does not currently have significant standing as a “cleantech” contribution to climate change mitigation. From a long-term perspective, an unfavorable view of nuclear energy in the context of climate change might mean that technological progress in the areas of nuclear fission and fusion might come to a halt (for example, due to explicit bans or implicit disincentives). If such a scenario came to be, our attempts at colonizing space would almost certainly fail: There are currently no alternatives to fission and fusion, and it is highly improbable that Solar power alone could suffice for sustaining extraterrestrial habitats.

Second, there is some probability that climate change mitigation strategies will change the social order towards a degrowth philosophy. Degrowth is a vague socio-economic concept and social movement that, in general, calls for a contraction of the global and national economies by means of lower production and consumption rates, and, to some degree, to more profound changes to the “capitalist” system of economic production [67]. Degrowth or degrowth-like approaches are being actively considered as climate risk mitigation strategies [68, 69], and degrowth would almost certainly be a highly effective measure for mitigating climate change. After all, if we were to drastically reduce or even completely eliminate the (industrial) sources of greenhouse gases, the amount of greenhouse gases that are being emitted would accordingly drastically sink. From the long-term perspective of humankind’s survival, degrowth is problematic in at least two ways. First, there is a risk that the general contraction of economic activity would also slow or eliminate progress in the domain of energy, which would, in turn, reduce the probability of successful space colonization due to an absence of suitable energy sources. Second, and more fundamental: If degrowth were to become a dominant societal paradigm, it is uncertain whether the long-term survival of humankind by means of space colonization would be regarded a desirable goal. In a literal sense, establishing extraterrestrial colonies would mean growth; the size of the total human population would grow, and the area of space-time that humans occupy would grow.

In a more philosophical sense, degrowth might even be antithetical to space colonization. Even though both degrowth and space colonization have a similar moral goal – increasing wellbeing – , the ends to that goal are very different. Within degrowth philosophy, the goal is, metaphorically speaking, not to “live beyond our means”: We should strive for “ecological balance”, and such a state should increase the average wellbeing. But the frame of reference is the status quo; Earth and humankind as we know it today. Space colonization, on the other hand, operates with a much larger frame of reference: All the future generations of humans (and other sentient beings) who could enjoy wellbeing if we succeed in colonizing space – and who will categorically be denied that wellbeing if we fail to colonize space [70]. The goal of space colonization as a moral project is not to live beyond our means, but to actively redefine and expand what our means are through scientific and technological progress.

### Plan

#### The United States Federal Government should substantially increase prohibitions on anticompetitive business practices by the private sector by blocking mega-mergers.

### Solvency

#### Advantage two is solvency:

#### Cap key.

Lande ’19 -- Robert H. Lande, professor of law at the University of Baltimore School of Law. He is the Secretary of the American Antitrust Institute’s Board of Directors. [“The U.S. Needs Conglomerate Merger Legislation,” *Take Care Blog,* 1-1-2019, <https://takecareblog.com/blog/the-u-s-needs-conglomerate-merger-legislation>] KS

A Landmark Proposal. Recently Senator Klobuchar and other senators took a step in the direction of incorporating, for the first time, absolute size into antitrust analysis. She introduced legislation that would tighten the merger laws in a number of ways. In particular, her bill would mandate a more skeptical review of any acquisition of $5 billion or more by a firm with assets exceeding $100 billion. For these transactions, the legislation would switch the burden of proof and require the merging firms to prove that the acquisition would not reasonably be likely to lessen competition or tend to create a monopoly. Sandeep and I would go further. We’re proposing model legislation that would completely block the very largest mergers, as measured by specified dollar amounts. If Congress wanted to be especially cautious, it could add an exception when firms could clearly prove the merger was highly likely to generate significant efficiencies that will be passed to consumers. This proposal would not violate either of the two concerns noted earlier. The first objection to incorporating absolute size or political factors into merger policy is easy to deal with. Instead of the amorphous idea that large size is suspect, our legislation would clearly specify dollar limits defining which mergers would be too large. Indeed, by doing this our proposal would enhance the clarity and predictability of merger law. In contrast to the open-ended rule of reason approach used today to evaluate mergers, such as the AT&T/Time Warner merger, our legislation would have clear lines—thus enhancing the rule of law and aiding business planning. Second, the economics and business literature shows that the claimed efficiencies from large mergers are rarely achieved. On average, large mergers do not produce lower costs or increased innovation. Efficiencies from large mergers in the same industry are generally unpredictable, and are not at all common. Efficiencies from the merger of firms in unrelated industries are truly rare. Nevertheless, if Congress wanted to avoid the tiny risk of blocking merger-related efficiencies, it could give merging parties the defense of demonstrating their merger is highly likely to lead to significant efficiencies that will be passed to consumers. Possible Conglomerate Merger Legislation Almost regardless of which specific dollar thresholds Congress might choose, our proposal would block only a tiny number of large transactions each year. For example, suppose an ultra- cautious Congress decided to presumptively ban only those mergers in which both corporations had assets exceeding $100 billion. If such a law had been in effect in recent years, it would at most have prevented two mergers each year. A still-very-cautious approach would employ a $50 billion threshold for both companies. This would have meant that 2 to 7 mergers would have been presumptively banned in each recent year. Alternatively, suppose Congress instead chose a relatively “low” $10 billion threshold for both merging firms. This law would have presumptively prevented only 11 to 23 mergers each year. Even five years ago, very few people would have advocated that Congress pass an antitrust law to block a hypothetical merger between Apple, Amazon, Exxon/Mobil, etc. But today, given heightened and bipartisan concern about the political power of the largest corporations, we hope to start a discussion of conglomerate merger legislation.

#### Plan creates clear, predictable anti-merger legislation -- it’s politically popular -- decreases corporate power and produces no losses in corporate efficiency.

Lande & Vaheesan ’20 -- Robert H. Lande, professor of law at the University of Baltimore School of Law. He is the Secretary of the American Antitrust Institute’s Board of Directors. Sandeep Vaheesan, legal director at the Open Markets Institute. [“Preventing the Curse of Bigness Through Conglomerate Merger Legislation,” *Arizona State Law Journal 75,* 2020, <https://scholarworks.law.ubalt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2104&context=all_fac>] KS

The antitrust laws, as they are presently interpreted, are incapable of blocking most of the very largest corporate mergers. They successfully blocked only three of the seventy-eight largest finalized mergers and acquisitions (defined as the acquired firm being valued at more than $10 billion) that occurred between 2015 and 2019. The antitrust laws also would permit the first trillion-dollar corporation, Apple, to merge with the previously third largest corporation, Exxon/Mobil. In fact, today every U.S. corporation could merge until just ten were left—so long as each owned only 10% of every relevant market. Even though the Congresses that enacted the anti-merger laws did so, among other aims, to limit the political power of corporations, today the federal antitrust agencies and courts interpret these laws only in terms of price and other economic effects within discrete markets. Under current merger practice, the enhanced political power of corporations is irrelevant. However, from Senators Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders on the left, to President Trump and many others on the right, there is a renewed interest in using antitrust to control corporate size, structure, and practices. There is popular desire both to prevent large mergers and to break up existing companies, such as Facebook and Google, that achieved their dominant positions in part due to acquisitions. In light of recent developments within most of the political spectrum, this Article proposes model conglomerate merger legislation suitable for our era. This legislation would target every merger that exceeds clearly specified asset thresholds. We are proposing a law that would block every merger in which both firms have assets exceeding $10 billion, unless they spin-off assets so that their increase in size falls below this figure. This threshold would block at most approximately fifteen to twenty-five of the largest mergers each year. This Article undertakes a legal, economic, and political analysis of conglomerate merger legislation. This demonstrates that our proposed legislation would: (1) Produce no significant losses in corporate efficiency; (2) Be clearer and more predictable than the existing anti-merger laws and thus would enhance the rule of law; and (3) Help prevent significant increases in corporate political power and other forms of non-economic power caused by the largest mergers.

#### No mega-mergers.

Lande & Vaheesan ’21 -- Robert H. Lande, professor of law at the University of Baltimore School of Law. He is the Secretary of the American Antitrust Institute’s Board of Directors. Sandeep Vaheesan, legal director at the Open Markets Institute. [“Ban All Big Mergers. Period.,” The Atlantic, 2-25-2021, <https://www-theatlantic-com.proxy.lib.umich.edu/ideas/archive/2021/02/ban-all-big-mergers/618131/>] KS

The tolerance of mergers has spread corporate concentration and its attendant inequality into virtually every corner of the economy: health care, airlines, cable TV, and now the internet, where Amazon, Facebook, and other sprawling new monopolists reign. A small clique of executives and financiers makes key decisions in our economy. Many figures across the political spectrum are now urging a return to the kind of antitrust enforcement that once helped preserve a variety of independent businesses in every community. Among these voices, for example, is Senator Elizabeth Warren, who called for tight merger restrictions for companies that have more than $40 billion in annual revenues. In a fall 2019 presidential-candidate debate, she said: “We need to enforce our antitrust laws, break up these giant companies that are dominating Big Tech, Big Pharma, Big Oil, all of them.” Earlier this month, Senator Amy Klobuchar, together with four co-sponsors, proposed including a corporation’s absolute size in merger analysis. In October 2018, Senator Bernie Sanders introduced a bill that would break up the largest financial institutions in the United States and establish a cap on size going forward. Although conservatives in the United States have generally supported Big Business interests, more voices on the right are grafting concerns about corporate power, particularly in digital markets, onto an otherwise standard right-wing agenda. Although former President Donald Trump’s administration had a poor antitrust record against large corporations and supported pro-monopoly reinterpretations of the law, it did file landmark suits against Google and Facebook in the closing months of 2020. Embracing some forms of economic populism, media outlets such as The American Conservative have also become supporters of renewed antitrust enforcement. Building on ideologically diverse opposition to corporate consolidation, Congress should pass legislation that strikes at mergers, a major contributor to the curse of corporate bigness. A ban on mergers involving companies that have more than $10 billion in assets might be a somewhat arbitrary line to draw—Congress could reasonably choose a higher or lower threshold—but the formulation and administration of law, which establishes the rules of a market, requires a degree of line-drawing. Anyway, the status quo, in which virtually every merger goes forward, almost regardless of the potential damage to customers, suppliers, rivals, workers, and even democracy, is arbitrary in its own way and runs contrary to the public interest. Under the legislation we propose, a future merger between Chevron and ExxonMobil would be plainly illegal. Even if they agreed to sell some assets to a third party—as many merging companies do—the two oil titans would not be able to get their transaction past the antitrust authorities. The companies probably would not even contemplate such a combination in the boardroom. By establishing a bright line, an outright ban on the largest mergers would reduce the role of contending lobbyists, lawyers, and rented economists in merger cases, thereby making the whole process clearer, faster, more predictable, less expensive, and less subjective, as we explain at greater length in a recent law-review article. A ban on megamergers would reduce the amount of money and human energy currently wasted in putting together unproductive consolidations. It would help end the arms race of consolidation, in which mergers beget mergers as firms try to keep up with ever larger and more powerful corporate rivals, suppliers, and customers. By potentially channeling these resources into new productive capacity and technologies, the law could result in a real increase in society’s overall wealth and pace of progress.

# 2ac

## innovation

#### China is seeking global leadership --- official documents prove and technological leadership is critical

Heath, 18 --- Senior International Defense Research Analyst with the nonprofit, nonpartisan RAND Corporation (1/5/18, Timothy R., “China’s Endgame: The Path Towards Global Leadership,” <https://lawfareblog.com/chinas-endgame-path-towards-global-leadership>, accessed on 6/4/18, JMP)

Dueling high level strategy documents in both the United States and China portend an intensifying competition for leadership and influence at the global systemic level. The coming years are likely to see a deepening contest in the diplomatic, economic, cyber, and information domains, even as the risks of major war remain low. Although the U.S. strategy has garnered considerable scrutiny, less attention has been paid to the directives outlined in key official Chinese strategy documents. The National Security Strategy recently released by the Trump administration surprised many in its stark depiction of China as a “revisionist power” that seeks to “displace the United States in the Indo-Pacific region.” The strategy’s striking tone has drawn widespread commentary, but in many ways it reflects a grim, but realistic recognition of the realities of a deepening rivalry. Indeed, a closer look at authoritative Chinese documents suggests that preparations are well underway in that country to compete with the United States at the global level. In the 19th Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress report, China’s most authoritative strategy document, Beijing articulated for the first time an ambition to contend for global leadership. It stated that by mid-century, China seeks to have “become a global leader in terms of composite national strength and international influence.” Given that China already has the second largest economy and one of the largest militaries in the world, this phrasing strongly suggests that, over the long term, China is mulling competition with the United States for the status of global leader. Beyond reasons of prestige, global leadership affords a country the opportunity to reap considerable economic and security benefits by shaping international norms, rules, and institutions, as the United States has done since World War II. And if trends that narrow the gap in national power continue, global competition between the two giants could become unavoidable in any case. To be sure, the future remains undetermined and there are many reasons why China may never succeed in mounting such a challenge, but the report’s contents suggest China’s leaders are positioning the country to seize such an incredible opportunity should it present itself. China’s interest in global leadership Clues as to the sort of preparations underway can be seen in the sections of the 19th Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress report that outline policy objectives for 2035, a new category designed to serve as an intermediary point between the two well-known centenaries of 2021 (centenary of the founding of the CCP) and 2049 (centenary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China). The objectives reflect a much stronger awareness of the need to compete globally than was the case in previous CCP Congress reports. The shifting emphasis reflects the reality that China has grown into a great power with global interests, and that consequently elements of domestic and international policy increasingly overlap. Underscoring this point, the 19th CCP Congress report describes China’s ambitions as interlinked with the world. It observed, “The dream of the Chinese people is closely connected with the dreams of the peoples of other countries.” Not coincidentally, the 19th CCP Congress elevated the role of the Foreign Ministry in policy making. The goals outlined for 2035 hint at the need for global competition. But as a public document, the report unsurprisingly features diplomatic and elusive terms on sensitive topics, such as foreign policy. Some clues about Beijing’s intentions can nevertheless be deduced through careful study of the report’s entire contents, however. For example, the report directs officials to avoid war and maintain peaceful, cooperative relations with the United States and other great powers. It also highlights the need to safeguard core interests of sovereignty and territory, as well as protect the resources, markets, and citizens abroad needed for national development. These imperatives are not new, but they will probably remain essential for years to come. The report does introduces new requirements, however, such as the need to achieve technological leadership, build a network of strategic partnerships, and expand China’s international influence and involvement in global governance. Technological leadership The 19th CCP Congress report stated that by 2035, China seeks to have “become a global leader in innovation.” This ambition is important for three reasons. First, leadership in technological innovation increases the likelihood that a country will enjoy higher productivity and wealth than its peers. Second, the transferability of military and civilian technology means that a technologically advanced country is better positioned to build a premier military – an idea captured in the report’s directives for “military-civilian fusion.” Third, technological leadership enhances a country’s international influence, or “soft power,” because others tend to emulate the world’s technological leader and the lifestyle changes it affords. Indeed, some experts regard the contest for technological leadership as among the most consequential for deciding global leadership.

#### We’re alone --- studies prove.

Sandberg et al 18 [Andres Sandberg, Future of Humanity Institute researcher, PhD in computational neuroscience from Stockholm University.] “Dissolving the Fermi Paradox” 6 June 2018 (<https://arxiv.org/abs/1806.02404>) – MZhu

Our argument so far is related to a recent argument sketched by Max Tegmark [34]. Like us, he suggests that we should have great uncertainty about f\_l and f\_i, making us very uncertain about the probability of intelligent life arising around a given star. He thus models our uncertainty over the average distance between two independently arising intelligent civilizations as log-uniform. That is, we should be no more surprised if this average distance were at one order of magnitude rather than another. Thus, when we gain some evidence that there is no other civilization within our galaxy, we update this prior by greatly lowering our credence in the average distance being less than this (≈10^21 m). Since there are only six orders of magnitude from the radius of our galaxy to the radius of the observable universe (≈10^27 m) and infinitely many beyond that, he reaches a conclusion that it is unlikely for two civilizations to arise within the same observable universe. Brian Lacki has suggested an improvement to Tegmark’s model, in which the log-uniform prior is replaced with a bounded log-log-uniform prior [35].

Our argument shares the same broad outline. But rather than starting with a very abstract prior representing initial radical uncertainty over more than 10^100 orders of magnitude, we used two different methods to provide a prior that captured the existing scientific uncertainties of tens or hundreds of orders of magnitude. We have seen how this is more than enough make an empty observable universe plausible ex ante (dissolving the Fermi paradox), and quite likely once we account for the Fermi observation.

5 Updating the factors

So far we have looked at how the Fermi observation affects our credence in N. We can go further than this and examine how it affects our credence in each of the Drake parameters. Updating on the Fermi observation reduces the expectation of all the parameters. However, parameters with broad distributions (those with the most uncertainty) tend to have their expectation reduced far more than parameters with tight distributions (see Supplement IV).

All the observations we consider have a strong effect on our estimates for f\_l , a substantially weaker effect on our estimates for L, and almost no effect on our estimates of the more certain astrophysical factors. As we can see in Table 2, the observations reduce the median for fl by between a factor of 7 and factor of 10^37, while the median for L is only reduced by a factor between 1 and 2.

Given the state of scientific uncertainty about the Drake parameters and the Fermi observation, the default guess should hence be that the low-probability term is likely in the past (fl) rather than the future (fc, L). The Fermi observation thus provides only very weak evidence about whether we will soon go extinct or whether interstellar communication or travel is impossible. Instead, the observation mainly just increases our credence that life is rare.

This conclusion is quite robust to changing the log-uncertainties of the factors (it remains as long as most uncertainty is in the past factors) or their distribution shape (using log-normals instead of log-uniform distribution has no effect). The conclusion can be changed if we reduce the uncertainty of past terms to less than just 7 orders of magnitude, or if the f\_c factor turns out to be radically uncertain.

6 Conclusion

We have seen that a Fermi paradox arises if we combine a high and extremely confident prior for the number of civilizations in our galaxy with the absence of evidence for their existence. The high confidence that causes this clash typically results from applying a Drake-like model using point estimates for the parameters. These estimates, however, make implicit knowledge claims about processes (especially those connected with the origin of life) which are untenable given the current state of scientific knowledge.

When we take account of realistic uncertainty, replacing point estimates by probability distributions that reflect current scientific understanding, we find no reason to be highly confident that the galaxy (or observable universe) contains other civilizations, and thus no longer find our observations in conflict with our prior probabilities. We found qualitatively similar results through two different methods: using the authors’ assessments of current scientific knowledge bearing on key parameters, and using the divergent estimates of these parameters in the astrobiology literature as a proxy for current scientific uncertainty.

When we update this prior in light of the Fermi observation, we find a substantial probability that we are alone in our galaxy, and perhaps even in our observable universe (53%–99.6% and 39%–85% respectively). ’Where are they?’ — probably extremely far away, and quite possibly beyond the cosmological horizon and forever unreachable.

## k

#### 4---VTL is subjective---life is a prerequisite

Lisa Schwartz 2, Chair at the Centre for Health Economics and Policy Analysis, 2002, “Medical Ethic: A Case Based Approach,” Chapter 6, www.fleshandbones.com/readingroom/pdf/399.pdf

The second assertion made by supporters of the quality of life as a criterion for decisionmaking is closely related to the first, but with an added dimension. This assertion suggests that the determination of the value of the quality of a given life is a subjective determination to be made by the person experiencing that life. The important addition here is that the decision is a personal one that, ideally, ought not to be made externally by another person but internally by the individual involved. Katherine Lewis made this decision for herself based on a comparison between two stages of her life. So did James Brady. Without this element, decisions based on quality of life criteria lack salient information and the patients concerned cannot give informed consent. Patients must be given the opportunity to decide for themselves whether they think their lives are worth living or not. To ignore or overlook patients’ judgement in this matter is to violate their autonomy and their freedom to decide for themselves on the basis of relevant information about their future, and comparative consideration of their past. As the deontological position puts it so well, to do so is to violate the imperative that we must treat persons as rational and as ends in themselves.

#### Long term trends are driving decoupling---growth is sustainable and self correcting

Brook et al. 15—professor of environmental sustainability at the University of Tasmania (Barry, with John Asafu-Adjaye, University of Queensland, Linus Blomqvist, Breakthrough Institute, Stewart Brand, Long Now Foundation, Ruth DeFries, Columbia Univeristy, Erle Ellis, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Christopher Foreman, University of Maryland School of Public Policy, David Keith, Harvard University School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Martin Lewis, Stanford University, Mark Lynas, Cornell University, Ted Nordhaus, Breakthrough Institute, Roger Pielke, Jr., University of Colorado, Boulder, Rachel Pritzker, Pritzker Innovation Fund, Joyashree Roy, Jadavpur University, Mark Sagoff, George Mason University, Michael Shellenberger, Breakthrough Institute, Robert Stone, Filmmaker, and Peter Teague, Breakthrough Institute, “AN ECOMODERNIST MANIFESTO,” [http://www.ecomodernism.org/manifesto/](about:blank), dml)

Intensifying many human activities — particularly farming, energy extraction, forestry, and settlement — so that they use less land and interfere less with the natural world is the key to decoupling human development from environmental impacts. These socioeconomic and technological processes are central to economic modernization and environmental protection. Together they allow people to mitigate climate change, to spare nature, and to alleviate global poverty. Although we have to date written separately, our views are increasingly discussed as a whole. We call ourselves ecopragmatists and ecomodernists. We offer this statement to affirm and to clarify our views and to describe our vision for putting humankind’s extraordinary powers in the service of creating a good Anthropocene. 1. Humanity has flourished over the past two centuries. Average life expectancy has increased from 30 to 70 years, resulting in a large and growing population able to live in many different environments. Humanity has made extraordinary progress in reducing the incidence and impacts of infectious diseases, and it has become more resilient to extreme weather and other natural disasters. Violence in all forms has declined significantly and is probably at the lowest per capita level ever experienced by the human species, the horrors of the 20th century and present-day terrorism notwithstanding. Globally, human beings have moved from autocratic government toward liberal democracy characterized by the rule of law and increased freedom. Personal, economic, and political liberties have spread worldwide and are today largely accepted as universal values. Modernization liberates women from traditional gender roles, increasing their control of their fertility. Historically large numbers of humans — both in percentage and in absolute terms — are free from insecurity, penury, and servitude. At the same time, human flourishing has taken a serious toll on natural, nonhuman environments and wildlife. Humans use about half of the planet’s ice-free land, mostly for pasture, crops, and production forestry. Of the land once covered by forests, 20 percent has been converted to human use. Populations of many mammals, amphibians, and birds have declined by more than 50 percent in the past 40 years alone. More than 100 species from those groups went extinct in the 20th century, and about 785 since 1500. As we write, only four northern white rhinos are confirmed to exist. Given that humans are completely dependent on the living biosphere, how is it possible that people are doing so much damage to natural systems without doing more harm to themselves? The role that technology plays in reducing humanity’s dependence on nature explains this paradox. Human technologies, from those that first enabled agriculture to replace hunting and gathering, to those that drive today’s globalized economy, have made humans less reliant upon the many ecosystems that once provided their only sustenance, even as those same ecosystems have often been left deeply damaged. Despite frequent assertions starting in the 1970s of fundamental “limits to growth,” there is still remarkably little evidence that human population and economic expansion will outstrip the capacity to grow food or procure critical material resources in the foreseeable future. To the degree to which there are fixed physical boundaries to human consumption, they are so theoretical as to be functionally irrelevant. The amount of solar radiation that hits the Earth, for instance, is ultimately finite but represents no meaningful constraint upon human endeavors. Human civilization can flourish for centuries and millennia on energy delivered from a closed uranium or thorium fuel cycle, or from hydrogen-deuterium fusion. With proper management, humans are at no risk of lacking sufficient agricultural land for food. Given plentiful land and unlimited energy, substitutes for other material inputs to human well-being can easily be found if those inputs become scarce or expensive. There remain, however, serious long-term environmental threats to human well-being, such as anthropogenic climate change, stratospheric ozone depletion, and ocean acidification. While these risks are difficult to quantify, the evidence is clear today that they could cause significant risk of catastrophic impacts on societies and ecosystems. Even gradual, non-catastrophic outcomes associated with these threats are likely to result in significant human and economic costs as well as rising ecological losses. Much of the world’s population still suffers from more-immediate local environmental health risks. Indoor and outdoor air pollution continue to bring premature death and illness to millions annually. Water pollution and water-borne illness due to pollution and degradation of watersheds cause similar suffering. 2. Even as human environmental impacts continue to grow in the aggregate, a range of long-term trends are today driving significant decoupling of human well-being from environmental impacts. Decoupling occurs in both relative and absolute terms. Relative decoupling means that human environmental impacts rise at a slower rate than overall economic growth. Thus, for each unit of economic output, less environmental impact (e.g., deforestation, defaunation, pollution) results. Overall impacts may still increase, just at a slower rate than would otherwise be the case. Absolute decoupling occurs when total environmental impacts — impacts in the aggregate — peak and begin to decline, even as the economy continues to grow. Decoupling can be driven by both technological and demographic trends and usually results from a combination of the two. The growth rate of the human population has already peaked. Today’s population growth rate is one percent per year, down from its high point of 2.1 percent in the 1970s. Fertility rates in countries containing more than half of the global population are now below replacement level. Population growth today is primarily driven by longer life spans and lower infant mortality, not by rising fertility rates. Given current trends, it is very possible that the size of the human population will peak this century and then start to decline. Trends in population are inextricably linked to other demographic and economic dynamics. For the first time in human history, over half the global population lives in cities. By 2050, 70 percent are expected to dwell in cities, a number that could rise to 80 percent or more by the century’s end. Cities are characterized by both dense populations and low fertility rates. Cities occupy just 1 to 3 percent of the Earth’s surface and yet are home to nearly four billion people. As such, cities both drive and symbolize the decoupling of humanity from nature, performing far better than rural economies in providing efficiently for material needs while reducing environmental impacts. The growth of cities along with the economic and ecological benefits that come with them are inseparable from improvements in agricultural productivity. As agriculture has become more land and labor efficient, rural populations have left the countryside for the cities. Roughly half the US population worked the land in 1880. Today, less than 2 percent does. As human lives have been liberated from hard agricultural labor, enormous human resources have been freed up for other endeavors. Cities, as people know them today, could not exist without radical changes in farming. In contrast, modernization is not possible in a subsistence agrarian economy. These improvements have resulted not only in lower labor requirements per unit of agricultural output but also in lower land requirements. This is not a new trend: rising harvest yields have for millennia reduced the amount of land required to feed the average person. The average per-capita use of land today is vastly lower than it was 5,000 years ago, despite the fact that modern people enjoy a far richer diet. Thanks to technological improvements in agriculture, during the half-century starting in the mid-1960s, the amount of land required for growing crops and animal feed for the average person declined by one-half. Agricultural intensification, along with the move away from the use of wood as fuel, has allowed many parts of the world to experience net reforestation. About 80 percent of New England is today forested, compared with about 50 percent at the end of the 19th century. Over the past 20 years, the amount of land dedicated to production forest worldwide declined by 50 million hectares, an area the size of France. The “forest transition” from net deforestation to net reforestation seems to be as resilient a feature of development as the demographic transition that reduces human birth rates as poverty declines. Human use of many other resources is similarly peaking. The amount of water needed for the average diet has declined by nearly 25 percent over the past half-century. Nitrogen pollution continues to cause eutrophication and large dead zones in places like the Gulf of Mexico. While the total amount of nitrogen pollution is rising, the amount used per unit of production has declined significantly in developed nations. Indeed, in contradiction to the often-expressed fear of infinite growth colliding with a finite planet, demand for many material goods may be saturating as societies grow wealthier. Meat consumption, for instance, has peaked in many wealthy nations and has shifted away from beef toward protein sources that are less land intensive. As demand for material goods is met, developed economies see higher levels of spending directed to materially less-intensive service and knowledge sectors, which account for an increasing share of economic activity. This dynamic might be even more pronounced in today’s developing economies, which may benefit from being late adopters of resource-efficient technologies. Taken together, these trends mean that the total human impact on the environment, including land-use change, overexploitation, and pollution, can peak and decline this century. By understanding and promoting these emergent processes, humans have the opportunity to re-wild and re-green the Earth — even as developing countries achieve modern living standards, and material poverty ends. 3. The processes of decoupling described above challenge the idea that early human societies lived more lightly on the land than do modern societies. Insofar as past societies had less impact upon the environment, it was because those societies supported vastly smaller populations. In fact, early human populations with much less advanced technologies had far larger individual land footprints than societies have today. Consider that a population of no more than one or two million North Americans hunted most of the continent’s large mammals into extinction in the late Pleistocene, while burning and clearing forests across the continent in the process. Extensive human transformations of the environment continued throughout the Holocene period: as much as three-quarters of all deforestation globally occurred before the Industrial Revolution. The technologies that humankind’s ancestors used to meet their needs supported much lower living standards with much higher per-capita impacts on the environment. Absent a massive human die-off, any large-scale attempt at recoupling human societies to nature using these technologies would result in an unmitigated ecological and human disaster. Ecosystems around the world are threatened today because people over-rely on them: people who depend on firewood and charcoal for fuel cut down and degrade forests; people who eat bush meat for food hunt mammal species to local extirpation. Whether it’s a local indigenous community or a foreign corporation that benefits, it is the continued dependence of humans on natural environments that is the problem for the conservation of nature. Conversely, modern technologies, by using natural ecosystem flows and services more efficiently, offer a real chance of reducing the totality of human impacts on the biosphere. To embrace these technologies is to find paths to a good Anthropocene. The modernization processes that have increasingly liberated humanity from nature are, of course, double-edged, since they have also degraded the natural environment. Fossil fuels, mechanization and manufacturing, synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, electrification and modern transportation and communication technologies, have made larger human populations and greater consumption possible in the first place. Had technologies not improved since the Dark Ages, no doubt the human population would not have grown much either. It is also true that large, increasingly affluent urban populations have placed greater demands upon ecosystems in distant places –– the extraction of natural resources has been globalized. But those same technologies have also made it possible for people to secure food, shelter, heat, light, and mobility through means that are vastly more resource- and land-efficient than at any previous time in human history. Decoupling human well-being from the destruction of nature requires the conscious acceleration of emergent decoupling processes. In some cases, the objective is the development of technological substitutes. Reducing deforestation and indoor air pollution requires the substitution of wood and charcoal with modern energy. In other cases, humanity’s goal should be to use resources more productively. For example, increasing agricultural yields can reduce the conversion of forests and grasslands to farms. Humans should seek to liberate the environment from the economy. Urbanization, agricultural intensification, nuclear power, aquaculture, and desalination are all processes with a demonstrated potential to reduce human demands on the environment, allowing more room for non-human species. Suburbanization, low-yield farming, and many forms of renewable energy production, in contrast, generally require more land and resources and leave less room for nature. These patterns suggest that humans are as likely to spare nature because it is not needed to meet their needs as they are to spare it for explicit aesthetic and spiritual reasons. The parts of the planet that people have not yet profoundly transformed have mostly been spared because they have not yet found an economic use for them — mountains, deserts, boreal forests, and other “marginal” lands. Decoupling raises the possibility that societies might achieve peak human impact without intruding much further on relatively untouched areas. Nature unused is nature spared. 4. Plentiful access to modern energy is an essential prerequisite for human development and for decoupling development from nature. The availability of inexpensive energy allows poor people around the world to stop using forests for fuel. It allows humans to grow more food on less land, thanks to energy-heavy inputs such as fertilizer and tractors. Energy allows humans to recycle waste water and desalinate sea water in order to spare rivers and aquifers. It allows humans to cheaply recycle metal and plastic rather than to mine and refine these minerals. Looking forward, modern energy may allow the capture of carbon from the atmosphere to reduce the accumulated carbon that drives global warming. However, for at least the past three centuries, rising energy production globally has been matched by rising atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide. Nations have also been slowly decarbonizing — that is, reducing the carbon intensity of their economies — over that same time period. But they have not been doing so at a rate consistent with keeping cumulative carbon emissions low enough to reliably stay below the international target of less than 2 degrees Centigrade of global warming. Significant climate mitigation, therefore, will require that humans rapidly accelerate existing processes of decarbonization. There remains much confusion, however, as to how this might be accomplished. In developing countries, rising energy consumption is tightly correlated with rising incomes and improving living standards. Although the use of many other material resource inputs such as nitrogen, timber, and land are beginning to peak, the centrality of energy in human development and its many uses as a substitute for material and human resources suggest that energy consumption will continue to rise through much if not all of the 21st century. For that reason, any conflict between climate mitigation and the continuing development process through which billions of people around the world are achieving modern living standards will continue to be resolved resoundingly in favor of the latter. Climate change and other global ecological challenges are not the most important immediate concerns for the majority of the world's people. Nor should they be. A new coal-fired power station in Bangladesh may bring air pollution and rising carbon dioxide emissions but will also save lives. For millions living without light and forced to burn dung to cook their food, electricity and modern fuels, no matter the source, offer a pathway to a better life, even as they also bring new environmental challenges. Meaningful climate mitigation is fundamentally a technological challenge. By this we mean that even dramatic limits to per capita global consumption would be insufficient to achieve significant climate mitigation. Absent profound technological change **there is no credible path to meaningful climate mitigation**. While advocates differ in the particular mix of technologies they favor, we are aware of no quantified climate mitigation scenario in which technological change is not responsible for the vast majority of emissions cuts. The specific technological paths that people might take toward climate mitigation remain deeply contested. Theoretical scenarios for climate mitigation typically reflect their creators’ technological preferences and analytical assumptions while all too often failing to account for the cost, rate, and scale at which low-carbon energy technologies can be deployed. The history of energy transitions, however, suggests that there have been consistent patterns associated with the ways that societies move toward cleaner sources of energy. Substituting higher-quality (i.e., less carbon-intensive, higher-density) fuels for lower-quality (i.e., more carbon-intensive, lower-density) ones is how virtually all societies have decarbonized, and points the way toward accelerated decarbonization in the future. Transitioning to a world powered by zero-carbon energy sources will require energy technologies that are power dense and capable of scaling to many tens of terawatts to power a growing human economy. Most forms of renewable energy are, unfortunately, incapable of doing so. The scale of land use and other environmental impacts necessary to power the world on biofuels or many other renewables are such that we doubt they provide a sound pathway to a zero-carbon low-footprint future. High-efficiency solar cells produced from earth-abundant materials are an exception and have the potential to provide many tens of terawatts on a few percent of the Earth’s surface. Present-day solar technologies will require substantial innovation to meet this standard and the development of cheap energy storage technologies that are capable of dealing with highly variable energy generation at large scales. Nuclear fission today represents the only present-day zero-carbon technology with the demonstrated ability to meet most, if not all, of the energy demands of a modern economy. However, a variety of social, economic, and institutional challenges make deployment of present-day nuclear technologies at scales necessary to achieve significant climate mitigation unlikely. A new generation of nuclear technologies that are safer and cheaper will likely be necessary for nuclear energy to meet its full potential as a critical climate mitigation technology. In the long run, next-generation solar, advanced nuclear fission, and nuclear fusion represent the most plausible pathways toward the joint goals of climate stabilization and radical decoupling of humans from nature. If the history of energy transitions is any guide, however, that transition will take time. During that transition, other energy technologies can provide important social and environmental benefits. Hydroelectric dams, for example, may be a cheap source of low-carbon power for poor nations even though their land and water footprint is relatively large. Fossil fuels with carbon capture and storage can likewise provide substantial environmental benefits over current fossil or biomass energies. The ethical and pragmatic path toward a just and sustainable global energy economy requires that human beings transition as rapidly as possible to energy sources that are cheap, clean, dense, and abundant. Such a path will require sustained public support for the development and deployment of clean energy technologies, both within nations and between them, though international collaboration and competition, and within a broader framework for global modernization and development. 5. We write this document out of deep love and emotional connection to the natural world. By appreciating, exploring, seeking to understand, and cultivating nature, many people get outside themselves. They connect with their deep evolutionary history. Even when people never experience these wild natures directly, they affirm their existence as important for their psychological and spiritual well-being. Humans will always materially depend on nature to some degree. Even if a fully synthetic world were possible, many of us might still choose to continue to live more coupled with nature than human sustenance and technologies require. What decoupling offers is the possibility that humanity’s material dependence upon nature might be less destructive. The case for a more active, conscious, and accelerated decoupling to spare nature draws more on spiritual or aesthetic than on material or utilitarian arguments. Current and future generations could survive and prosper materially on a planet with much less biodiversity and wild nature. But this is not a world we want nor, if humans embrace decoupling processes, need to accept. What we are here calling nature, or even wild nature, encompasses landscapes, seascapes, biomes and ecosystems that have, in more cases than not, been regularly altered by human influences over centuries and millennia. Conservation science, and the concepts of biodiversity, complexity, and indigeneity are useful, but alone cannot determine which landscapes to preserve, or how. In most cases, there is no single baseline prior to human modification to which nature might be returned. For example, efforts to restore landscapes to more closely resemble earlier states (“indigeneity”) may involve removing recently arrived species (“invasives”) and thus require a net reduction in local biodiversity. In other circumstances, communities may decide to sacrifice indigeneity for novelty and biodiversity. Explicit efforts to preserve landscapes for their non-utilitarian value are inevitably anthropogenic choices. For this reason, all conservation efforts are fundamentally anthropogenic. The setting aside of wild nature is no less a human choice, in service of human preferences, than bulldozing it. Humans will save wild places and landscapes by convincing our fellow citizens that these places, and the creatures that occupy them, are worth protecting. People may choose to have some services — like water purification and flood protection — provided for by natural systems, such as forested watersheds, reefs, marshes, and wetlands, even if those natural systems are more expensive than simply building water treatment plants, seawalls, and levees. There will be no one-size-fits-all solution. Environments will be shaped by different local, historical, and cultural preferences. While we believe that agricultural intensification for land-sparing is key to protecting wild nature, we recognize that many communities will continue to opt for land-sharing, seeking to conserve wildlife within agricultural landscapes, for example, rather than allowing it to revert to wild nature in the form of grasslands, scrub, and forests. Where decoupling reduces pressure on landscapes and ecosystems to meet basic human needs, landowners, communities, and governments still must decide to what aesthetic or economic purpose they wish to dedicate those lands. Accelerated decoupling alone will not be enough to ensure more wild nature. There must still be a conservation politics and a wilderness movement to demand more wild nature for aesthetic and spiritual reasons. Along with decoupling humankind’s material needs from nature, establishing an enduring commitment to preserve wilderness, biodiversity, and a mosaic of beautiful landscapes will require a deeper emotional connection to them. 6. We affirm the need and human capacity for accelerated, active, and conscious decoupling. Technological progress is not inevitable. Decoupling environmental impacts from economic outputs is not simply a function of market-driven innovation and efficient response to scarcity. The long arc of human transformation of natural environments through technologies began well before there existed anything resembling a market or a price signal. Thanks to rising demand, scarcity, inspiration, and serendipity, humans have remade the world for millennia. Technological solutions to environmental problems must also be considered within a broader social, economic, and political context. We think it is counterproductive for nations like Germany and Japan, and states like California, to shutter nuclear power plants, recarbonize their energy sectors, and recouple their economies to fossil fuels and biomass. However, such examples underscore clearly that technological choices will not be determined by remote international bodies but rather by national and local institutions and cultures. Too often, modernization is conflated, both by its defenders and critics, with capitalism, corporate power, and laissez-faire economic policies. We reject such reductions. What we refer to when we speak of modernization is the long-term evolution of social, economic, political, and technological arrangements in human societies toward vastly improved material well-being, public health, resource productivity, economic integration, shared infrastructure, and personal freedom. Modernization has liberated ever more people from lives of poverty and hard agricultural labor, women from chattel status, children and ethnic minorities from oppression, and societies from capricious and arbitrary governance. Greater resource productivity associated with modern socio-technological systems has allowed human societies to meet human needs with fewer resource inputs and less impact on the environment. More-productive economies are wealthier economies, capable of better meeting human needs while committing more of their economic surplus to non-economic amenities, including better human health, greater human freedom and opportunity, arts, culture, and the conservation of nature. Modernizing processes are far from complete, even in advanced developed economies. Material consumption has only just begun to peak in the wealthiest societies. Decoupling of human welfare from environmental impacts will require a sustained commitment to technological progress and the continuing evolution of social, economic, and political institutions alongside those changes. Accelerated technological progress will require the active, assertive, and aggressive participation of private sector entrepreneurs, markets, civil society, and the state. While we reject the planning fallacy of the 1950s, we continue to embrace a strong public role in addressing environmental problems and accelerating technological innovation, including research to develop better technologies, subsidies, and other measures to help bring them to market, and regulations to mitigate environmental hazards. And international collaboration on technological innovation and technology transfer is essential in the areas of agriculture and energy.

#### Alt fails and growth is sustainable.

Piper '21 [Kelsey; 8/2/21; staff writer at Vox; "Can we save the planet by shrinking the economy?" https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/22408556/save-planet-shrink-economy-degrowth/]

Most of the world is very poor. Billions of people go hungry, can’t afford a doctor when they get sick, don’t have adequate shelter and sanitation, and struggle to exercise the freedoms essential to a good life because of material deprivation.

But for all the immiseration around us, one thing is undeniable: For the past several centuries — and especially for the past 70 years, since the end of World War II — the world has been getting much richer.

That economic boom means a lot of things. It means cancer treatments and neonatal intensive care units and smallpox vaccines and insulin.

It means, in many parts of the world, houses have indoor plumbing and gas heating and electricity.

It means that infant mortality is down and life expectancies are longer.

But an increasingly wealthy world also means we eat more meat, mostly from factory-farmed animals. It means we emit lots more greenhouse gases. It means that consumers in developed countries buy a lot and throw away a lot.

In other words, it means a lot of good things and certainly some bad things as well.

Mainstream climate and environmental policy has developed over the years with a certain assumption — that we can get rid of the bad things while still preserving the good things. That is, it’s sought to figure out how to reduce carbon emissions, preserve ecosystems, and save endangered species while continuing to improve material living conditions for everyone in the world.

But to a vocal slice of climate activists, that approach seems increasingly doomed. The degrowth movement, as it’s called, argues that humanity can’t keep growing without driving humanity into climate catastrophe. The only solution, the argument goes, is an extreme transformation of our way of life — a transition away from treating economic growth as a policy priority to an acceptance of shrinking GDP as a prerequisite to saving the planet.

At the core of degrowth is the climate crisis. Degrowth’s proponents argue that to save Earth, humans need to shrink global economic activity, because at our current levels of consumption, the world won’t hit the IPCC target of stabilizing global temperatures at no more than 1.5 degrees of warming. The degrowth movement argues that climate change should prompt a radical rethinking of economic growth, and policymakers serious about climate change should try to build a livable world without economic growth fueling it.

It’s a bold, even romantic vision. But there are two problems with it: It doesn’t add up — and it would be nearly impossible to implement.

Addressing climate change will take genuinely radical changes to how our society works. Stirring as it might be to some, though, degrowth’s radicalism won’t fix the climate. Degrowth is most compelling as a personal ethos, a lens on your consumption habits, a way of life. What it’s not is a serious policy program to solve climate change, especially in a world where billions still live in poverty.

The basics of degrowth

Pinning down what degrowth means can be tricky because degrowthers often differ on details. But there are some common threads to their thought.

In general, degrowthers believe that in the modern world, economic growth has become unmoored from improvements in the human condition.

Jason Hickel, an anthropologist at the London School of Economics and the author of Less Is More: How Degrowth Will Save the World, has emerged as one of the leading spokespeople for the movement. To Hickel, the case for degrowth goes like this: The world is producing too much greenhouse gases. It is also overfishing, is overpolluting, is unsustainable in a dozen ways, from deforestation to plastic accumulating in the oceans.

Scientists have made impressive progress on technologies that, he argues, should have been sufficient to address the climate crisis — think solar panels, meat alternatives, eco-friendly houses. But because wealthy societies are so focused on growing the economy, those gains have been immediately plowed back into the economy, producing more stuff for the same ecological footprint, yes, but not actually shrinking the ecological footprint.

Hickel argues that this problem is unsolvable within our current framework. “In a growth-oriented economy,” he writes in Less Is More, “efficiency improvements that could help us reduce our impact are harnessed instead to advance the objectives of growth — to pull ever-larger swaths of nature into circuits of extraction and production. It’s not our technology that’s the problem. It’s growth.”

His solution? To abandon the lodestar of economic policy in nearly every country, which is to aim for economic growth over time, increasing wealth per person and expanding the ability of their citizens to purchase the things they want and need. Instead, Hickel argues, rich countries should focus on getting emissions to zero — even if the result is a much-contracted economy.

If that sounds unappealing, he devoted much of the book — and much of our interview — to arguing that it wouldn’t be. He points out that some countries, like the United States, are rich but get very little for their spending, in terms of national well-being; poorer countries like Spain have better health care systems. He argues that current levels of well-being could be maintained at a tenth of Finland’s current GDP — assuming that society also adopted wide-scale redistribution and socialist labor policies.

At the heart of Hickel’s argument is an idea that divides degrowthers and their critics: the concept of “decoupling” growth from environmental impact. Hickel and his fellow degrowthers are skeptical that economic growth as we know it can ever truly be achieved without accompanying growth in emissions.

But critics argue that not only is it possible — it’s already been happening. For the past decade, as many countries have transitioned to green energy, they have successfully seen their emissions shrink while their GDP has grown.

“There have been really big changes since 2005,” when people were debating whether decoupling was even possible, Zeke Hausfather, a climate scientist at the Breakthrough Institute, told me. “Green energy has gotten cheap. Solar power is the cheapest energy at the margins in every country today. Global coal use has peaked.” His research finds evidence of “absolute decoupling” — emissions shrinking while GDP grows — in 32 countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany.

Degrowthers I spoke to don’t dispute that decoupling is possible. But they argue it won’t be enough to shrink emissions as rapidly as they need to. And there’s a compelling bit of evidence for that view: Even as some countries have decoupled, others have increased emissions, and overall atmospheric carbon is at its highest level ever recorded.

Where an optimist might see, in the decoupling of the past few decades, signs that growth and climate solutions can coexist, a pessimist might find the degrowth diagnosis more persuasive: that our growth-focused society clearly isn’t up to the task of solving climate change.

The pessimists have picked up momentum of late. It’s true, in one sense, that degrowth is a somewhat fringe idea: No politician has endorsed it, and no serious policy proposals based on it have been put forth. But degrowth has nonetheless drawn sympathy in some quarters — including among prominent climate thinkers.

Steven Chu, who served as secretary of energy under President Obama, has endorsed it, arguing, “You have to design an economy based on no growth or even shrinking growth.”

More than 11,000 scientists signed William Ripple’s 2019 letter “World Scientists’ Warning of a Climate Emergency,” which argues “our goals need to shift from GDP growth and the pursuit of affluence toward sustaining ecosystems and improving human well-being by prioritizing basic needs and reducing inequality.”

And a recent paper in Nature explored how a “degrowth” of 0.5 percent of GDP per year might interact with climate and emissions targets, arguing that while “substantial challenges remain regarding political feasibility,” such approaches should be “thoroughly considered.”

The tension at the heart of degrowth: Can we fix global poverty without economic growth?

One big problem with degrowth is this simple fact: In the coming decades, most carbon emissions won’t be coming from rich countries like the US — they’ll be happening in newly middle-income countries, like India, China, or Indonesia. Already, developing nations account for 63 percent of emissions, and they’re expected to account for even more as they develop further and as the rich world decarbonizes.

Even if emissions in rich countries go to zero very soon, climate change is set to worsen as poorer countries increase their own emissions.

That will, of course, have deeply negative climate impacts. But the alternative is a nonstarter — should the world really prioritize curbing emissions and economic growth if it meant suppressing the growth of those countries?

Degrowthers see no dilemma here. What Hickel envisions is global movement in two directions: Poor countries could develop up to a certain level of prosperity and then stop; rich countries could develop down to that level and then stop. Thus, climate catastrophe could be averted, all while making the world’s poor more prosperous.

“Rich countries urgently need to reduce their excess energy and resource use to sustainable levels so our sisters and brothers in the global South can live well too,” Hickel put it. “We live on an abundant planet and we can all flourish on it together, but to do so we have to share it more fairly, and build economies that are designed around meeting human needs rather than around perpetual growth.”

From a climate change perspective, though, there’s a problem. First, it means that degrowth would do nothing about the bulk of emissions, which are occurring in developing countries.

Second, the global economy is more interconnected than Hickel implies. When Covid-19 hit, poor countries were devastated not just by the virus but by the aftershocks of virus-induced slowdowns in consumption in rich countries.

There’s some genuine appeal to the idea of an end to “consumerism,” but the pandemic offered a taste of how a sudden drop in rich-world consumption would actually affect the developing world. Covid-19 dramatically curtailed Western imports and tourism for a time. The consequences in poor countries were devastating. Hunger rose, and child mortality followed.

Covid-19, of course, wreaked direct economic havoc at the same time, with lockdowns having an especially negative impact on some poor countries; the effects of the pandemic and international demand shock were combined, and in some cases they’re hard to separate. But the United Nations, the World Bank, and expert analyses point to the decline in global consumption as a significant part of the picture.

Degrowthers reject this concern on two fronts: First, they argue that a sustained, deliberate reduction in consumption wouldn’t be anything like a recession. Recessions, they agree, are really bad, but that’s because consumption falls in affected sectors, instead of being targeted at things that don’t improve well-being. Degrowth, they say, would be different.

Second, they contend that there is some path to economic growth in poor countries that doesn’t rely on trade with rich ones — certainly some countries managed economic growth when the whole world was poor, after all.

Hickel’s perspective is that most trade between rich and poor countries is extractive, not mutually beneficial — and that maybe when that dynamic ceases, poor countries will have the chance for the catch-up growth they merit. That’s one take. But it means that degrowth’s case for not crushing the poor world is predicated on a speculative take on how those countries can grow — one that democratically elected leaders in those countries largely don’t share.

What GDP doesn’t capture — and what it can tell us

In a way, the debate over degrowth is a debate over the meaning of one economic indicator: gross domestic product (GDP).

GDP measures the transactions within an economy — all the occasions when money changes hands in exchange for goods and services. It’s not wealth, but it’s one of the primary ways we measure wealth.

It certainly doesn’t capture everything of value. When parents spend a quiet weekend at home teaching their children to read, for example, nothing GDP-generating has happened — but value has certainly been created.

Degrowth articles burst with such examples. GDP, they love to point out, includes the production of things like nerve gas, even though that has no social value. And it doesn’t include storytelling, singing, gardening, and other simple human pleasures.

“If our washing machines, fridges, and phones lasted twice as long, we would consume half as many (thus the output of those industries would decline), but with zero reduction in our access to those goods,” Hickel told me. If everyone worked half the hours they currently do, and made half the income, they might mostly be better off — at least, assuming that their basic needs were still met.

“We propose policies like a living wage, a maximum income ratio, wealth taxes, etc. to accomplish this,” Hickel told me. “Given all of this, the language of poverty really gets it wrong: longer-lasting products, living wages, shorter working weeks, better access to public services and affordable housing — we are calling for the opposite of poverty. Yes, industries like SUVs and fast fashion would decline, but that doesn’t mean poverty. We can replace them with public transportation and longer-lasting fashion, thus meeting everyone’s needs.”

There’s a lot of speculation here, and a lot of what degrowth’s critics would call hand-waving. Degrowth is fundamentally premised on the claim that we can cease to focus on growth while getting better than ever at addressing human needs. If that’s true, then that would certainly be great news.

But in many ways, it’s a vision more wildly optimistic — disconnected from actual policy results — than any of the more standard “sustainable development” models degrowthers criticize for being out of touch.

First, in the world today, there’s an extremely strong association between growth and welfare outcomes of every kind. GDP, while imperfect, is a better predictor of a country’s welfare state, outcomes for poor citizens in that country, and well-being measures like leisure time and life expectancy than any other measure.

“GDP does leave out non-commercialized activities that are welfare-enhancing,” economist Branko Milanovic writes in a rebuttal of degrowth:

It is, like every other measure, imperfect and one-dimensional. But ... it is imperfect at the edges while fairly accurate overall. Richer countries are countries that are generally better-off in almost all metrics, from education, life expectancy, child mortality to women’s employment etc. Not only that: richer people are also on average healthier, better educated, and happier. Income indeed buys you health and happiness. (It does not guarantee that you are a better person; but that’s a different topic.) The metric of income or GDP is strongly associated with positive outcomes, whether we compare countries to each other, or people (within a country) to each other.

The things degrowthers care about — leisure time, health care, life expectancy — are strongly correlated with societal wealth. The generosity of a welfare state and the availability of transfers to a state’s poorest people are also strongly correlated with societal wealth. Innovation, discovery, invention, and medical technology improvements are also strongly correlated with societal wealth.

The strong correlation between child mortality and GDP per capita is apparent on the above graph. There are some outliers — some countries outperform or underperform their GDP somewhat, in terms of preventing child deaths — but in general, wealth strongly predicts child survival. No single, simple medical intervention causes the difference. Wealthier societies on average get better health outcomes across the board.

This graph looks at child mortality not just by comparing rich countries to poor ones but also by comparing countries over time, as they get richer: Getting richer improves outcomes for children.

Leisure time, too, has increased — and hours worked have declined — as the world has gotten wealthier.

It might be possible in principle to do better — to decouple, if you will, health and well-being from access to material resources, so that everyone is well-off with many fewer resources.

But the examples degrowthers point to remain speculative ones; if we ought to be skeptical, as degrowthers argue we should be, about the decoupling of wealth from ecological impact, we ought to be at least as skeptical about the prospects of decoupling wealth from living standards.

“In the end, economic growth is about the production of stuff that people need and then the consumption of those things by the people who need it,” Max Roser at Our World in Data, a research institute focused on finding, visualizing, and communicating historical economic and health data, told me. He added:

The money aspect, and the abstract concept of GDP, distract us and make it less obvious what it’s actually about. People want to have enough food, they need to go to the doctor, they need childcare, they want a good education. People need lots of stuff, and one thing that people care about are goods and services,

and they need to be produced, and economic growth is about an increase in the quality and quantity of the goods and services that people need.

There’s also the knotty problem of who gets to decide which goods and services people choose to spend their money on. Many of the climate scientists I spoke to shared Hickel’s impatience for many specific carbon-intensive modern industries. “I’m not going to defend bitcoin,” the Breakthrough Institute’s Hausfather told me. (The cryptocurrency has attracted intense criticism for being astoundingly carbon-intensive.)

But there is a lot in between bitcoin and basic subsistence needs. And “enough for everyone who needs it” inherently requires value judgments about what people really need, and what things they value that are frivolous luxuries. That’s why so many anti-poverty programs have moved away from giving people “what they need” toward just giving them cash — that is, giving them wealth, which they can choose to spend however they please.

“Even poor people have so many needs for goods and services that you can’t possibly put them on a list and say, ‘Now we’re done here,’” Roser told me. “That’s the beauty of money, that you can just go out there and get what you need rather than what some researcher determines are your needs.”

Degrowth is unrealistic — and gaining traction

As a policy program, degrowth suffers from being both too radical and not radical enough.

There’s a lot of broad-brush policy prescriptions in the degrowth lit, but those details never really add up.

While it’s not a short book, Less Is More feels surprisingly sparse when it comes to envisioning how the changes it recommends could be brought about. The chapter on solutions recommends cutting the workweek and changing tax policy — two solid proposals — but then rounds that out by recommending ending technological obsolescence, advertising, food waste, and student debt.

I’m not particularly opposed to those policies. But they seem laughably inadequate for the magnitude of the task at hand: confronting the climate crisis. Degrowth successfully persuades that guiding humanity and our planet through the 21st century will be really, really hard — but not in a way degrowth particularly solves.

Where degrowth literature is relentlessly pessimistic about the prospect of our problems being solved under our current economic system, it turns oddly optimistic about the prospect that they’ll be solved once we embrace a different way of viewing wealth and progress. If cutting carbon emissions fast enough to matter requires shrinking the global economy by 0.5 percent a year indefinitely, starting right now, as the Nature paper estimates, that’ll take policy measures much larger and more ambitious than any proposed in Less Is More.

“If we are to avert catastrophic warming, we have to lower carbon emissions by a factor of two within the next 10 years. I find it highly implausible that capitalism/market economics will be abandoned by the world on that time frame,” Pennsylvania State University climatologist Michael Mann told me. “That means we have to act on the climate crisis within the framework of the current system.”

In that sense, there’s actually something anti-radical about any climate plan so radical that it can’t be concretely brought about in the next decade.

And yet, implausible as it is, degrowth is gaining a foothold in intellectual and policy circles. What accounts for its seemingly growing popularity? This was a question that puzzled me until I heard the same answer from one degrowth advocate and one opponent: that it’s not, really, exactly about climate.

“It started in the 1990s in France, picking up on radical European politics in the 1970s,” Giorgos Kallis, a researcher studying degrowth at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, told me. “There was an in-between political space there — radical greens, putting much more emphasis on localized production, emphasis on conviviality and autonomy. This is a discourse that comes from them. It wasn’t just about avoiding a particular environmental problem. It was a holistic proposal.”

That was also the diagnosis of Zion Lights, a former spokesperson for Extinction Rebellion, who has become one of the climate movement’s internal critics, arguing that the movement focuses too much on environmentalist-friendly proposals that have nothing to do with climate.

“It has become difficult to talk about making energy policies for combating climate change, for example, without being told that such thinking is actually irrelevant because it doesn’t involve system change,” she recently argued. “We need cheap, clean energy at scale and we need it now.”

In that sense, a good analogy for degrowth might actually be locavorism — the movement that focuses on eating food grown locally. It’s popular with environmentalists, both those whose convictions are about climate change and those who long for a return to the land. Its actual climate impacts are limited or even negative — for some products, it’s better for them to be grown in their optimal environment even with carbon-intensive shipping — and it definitely does less for the climate than, for example, going vegan. But it retains its allure.

How to fight climate change while building good human societies

Degrowth’s radicalism isn’t where I part ways with it: The future will almost certainly require us to eat much less meat, dramatically change land use, and potentially invest a significant chunk of society’s resources in mitigation indefinitely.

But I don’t tend to see such efforts as fundamentally futile. Degrowthers do — even when there have been significant successes.

Climate scientists have spent a long time warning the world about climate change, but they nonetheless tend to sound a more optimistic note than degrowthers like Hickel. “It’s undoubtedly a monumental challenge,” Mann told me. “We have the technology to solve the problem — renewable energy, smart grid technology, and existing energy storage. We just need the political will to act.”

Take solar panels. Two decades ago, cheap solar panels were just a dream. Now they’re everywhere and have become a crucial tool in the fight against climate change.

Not only that, solar panels have democratized electricity. Just one small-scale instance: In rural Kenya, you can see donkeys saddled with solar panels so that farmers can charge their phones. And there are many such examples that count as a win for both human progress and our fight against climate change.

It should go without saying that since rich governments got us into this climate mess, they should be at the forefront of getting us out of it. We need massive investments in carbon capture, green energy, plant-based meat, mitigation, and straight-up cash transfers to poor countries disproportionately affected by the climate crisis.

Many of the researchers I spoke to were open to the idea that in the long run, humanity would need to rethink many of our cherished assumptions about how economies work, in order to build a civilization that can flourish for thousands or millions of years. They didn’t reject degrowth as a philosophical contribution to the question of what future human civilizations should care about.

But such articulations of different philosophies of human flourishing should not be mistaken for public policy.

We don’t have very long, and we need to decarbonize quickly. We have technologies that have made a big difference already, and they must be made available on an unprecedented scale. We have more speculative solutions, technological and societal, and we should be prepared to try those, too. The scale of the problem is such that we need to act now — and we need to be clear-eyed about which ideas truly move the needle.

#### Growth is sustainable, physical limits aren’t absolute, AND resource use is declining now---the alt unleashes global disaster

Bailey 18 [Ronald; February 16; B.A. in Economics from the University of Virginia, member of the Society of Environmental Journalists and the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities, citing a compilation of interdisciplinary research; Reason, “Is Degrowth the Only Way to Save the World?” https://reason.com/2018/02/16/is-degrowth-the-only-way-to-save-the-wor; RP]

Unless us folks in rich countries drastically reduce our material living standards and distribute most of what we have to people living in poor countries, the world will come to an end. Or at least that's the stark conclusion of a study published earlier this month in the journal Nature Sustainability. The researchers who wrote it, led by the Leeds University ecological economist Dan O'Neill, think the way to prevent the apocalypse is "degrowth."

Vice, pestilence, war, and "gigantic inevitable famine" were the planetary boundaries set on human population by the 18th-century economist Robert Thomas Malthus. The new study gussies up old-fashioned Malthusianism by devising a set of seven biophysical indicators of national environmental pressure, which they then link to 11 indicators of social outcomes. The aim of the exercise is to concoct a "safe and just space" for humanity.

Using data from 2011, the researchers calculate that the annual per capita boundaries for the world's 7 billion people consist of the emission of 1.6 tons of carbon dioxide per year and the annual consumption of 0.9 kilograms of phosphorus, 8.9 kilograms of nitrogen, 574 cubic meters of water, 2.6 tons of biomass (crops and wood), plus the ecological services of 1.7 hectares of land and 7.2 tons of material per person.

On the social side, meanwhile, the researchers say that life satisfaction in each country should exceed 6.5 on the 10-point Cantril scale, that healthy life expectancy should average at least 65 years, and that nutrition should be over 2,700 calories per day. At least 95 percent of each country's citizens must have access to good sanitation, earn more than $1.90 per day, and pass through secondary school. Ninety percent of citizens must have friends and family they can depend on. The threshold for democratic quality must exceed 0.8 on an index scale stretching from -1 to +1, while the threshold for equality is set at no higher than 70 on a Gini Index where 0 represents perfect equality and 100 implies perfect inequality. They set the threshold for percent of labor force employed at 94 percent.

So how does the U.S. do with regard to their biophysical boundaries and social outcomes measures? We Americans transgress all seven of the biophysical boundaries. Carbon dioxide emissions stand at 21.2 tons per person; we each use an average of 7 kilograms of phosphorus, 59.1 kilograms of nitrogen, 611 cubic meters of water, and 3.7 tons of biomass; we rely on the ecological services of 6.8 hectares of land and 27.2 tons of material. Although the researchers urge us to move "beyond the pursuit of GDP growth to embrace new measures of progress," it is worth noting that U.S. GDP is $59,609 per capita.

On the other hand, those transgressions have provided a pretty good life for Americans. For example, life satisfaction is 7.1; healthy life expectancy is 69.7 years; and democratic quality stands at 0.8 points. The only two social indicators we just missed on were employment (91 percent) and secondary education (94.7 percent).

On the other hand, our hemisphere is home to one paragon of sustainability—Haiti. Haitians breach none of the researchers' biophysical boundaries. But the Caribbean country performs abysmally on all 11 social indicators. Life satisfaction scores at 4.8; healthy life expectancy is 52.3 years; and Haitians average 2,105 calories per day. The country tallies -0.9 on the democratic quality index. Haiti's GDP is $719 per capita.

Other near-sustainability champions include Malawi, Nepal, Myanmar, and Nicaragua. All of them score dismally on the social indicators, and their GDPs per capita are $322, $799, $1,375, and $2,208, respectively.

The country that currently comes closest to the researchers' ideal of remaining within its biophysical boundaries while sufficient social indicators is…Vietnam. For the record, Vietnam's per capita GDP is $2,306.

"Countries with higher levels of life satisfaction and healthy life expectancy also tend to transgress more biophysical boundaries," the researchers note. A better way to put this relationship is that more wealth and technology tend to make people happier, healthier, and freer.

O'Neill and his unhappy team fail drastically to understand how human ingenuity unleashed in markets is already well on the way toward making their supposed planetary boundaries irrelevant. Take carbon dioxide emissions: Supporters of renewable energy technologies say that their costs are already or will soon be lower than those of fossil fuels. Boosters of advanced nuclear reactors similarly argue that they can supply all of the carbon-free energy the world will need. There's a good chance that fleets of battery-powered self-driving vehicles will largely replace private cars and mass transit later in this century.

Are we about to run out of phosphorous to fertilize our crops? Peak phosphorus is not at hand. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) reports that at current rates of mining, the world's known reserves will last 266 years. The estimated total resources of phosphate rock would last over 1,140 years. "There are no imminent shortages of phosphate rock," notes the USGS. With respect to the deleterious effects that using phosphorus to fertilize crops might have outside of farm fields, researchers are working on ways to endow crops with traits that enable them to use less while maintaining yields.

O'Neill and his colleagues are also concerned that farmers are using too much nitrogen fertilizer, which runs off fields into the natural environment and contributes to deoxygenated dead zones in the oceans, among other ill effects. This is a problem, but one that plant breeders are already working to solve. For example, researchers at Arcadia Biosciences have used biotechnology to create nitrogen-efficient varieties of staples like rice and wheat that enable farmers to increase yields while significantly reducing fertilizer use. Meanwhile, other researchers are moving on projects to engineer the nitrogen fixation trait from legumes into cereal crops. In other words, the crops would make their own fertilizer from air.

Water? Most water is devoted to the irrigation of crops; the ongoing development of drought-resistant and saline-tolerant crops will help with that. Hectares per capita? Humanity has probably already reached peak farmland, and nearly 400 million hectares will be restored to nature by 2060—an area almost double the size of the United States east of the Mississippi River. In fact, it is entirely possible that most animal farming will be replaced by resource-sparing lab-grown steaks, chops, and milk. Such developments in food production undermine the researchers' worries about overconsumption of biomass.

And humanity's material footprint is likely to get smaller too as trends toward further dematerialization take hold. The price system is a superb mechanism for encouraging innovators to find ways to wring ever more value out less and less stuff. Rockefeller University researcher Jesse Ausubel has shown that this process of absolute dematerialization has already taken off for many commodities.

After cranking their way through their models of doom, O'Neill and his colleagues lugubriously conclude: "If all people are to lead a good life within planetary boundaries, then the level of resource use associated with meeting basic needs must be dramatically reduced." They are right, but they are entirely backward with regard to how to achieve those goals. Economic growth provides the wealth and technologies needed to lift people from poverty while simultaneously lightening humanity's footprint on the natural world. Rather than degrowth, the planet—and especially its poor people—need more and faster economic growth.

#### Cap net reduces war

Mousseau, 19—Professor in the School of Politics, Security, and International Affairs at the University of Central Florida (Michael, “The End of War: How a Robust Marketplace and Liberal Hegemony Are Leading to Perpetual World Peace,” International Security, Volume 44, Issue 1, Summer 2019, p.160-196, dml)

Is war becoming obsolete? There is wide agreement among scholars that war has been in sharp decline since the defeat of the Axis powers in 1945, even as there is little agreement as to its cause.1 Realists reject the idea that this trend will continue, citing states' concerns with the “security dilemma”: that is, in anarchy states must assume that any state that can attack will; therefore, power equals threat, and changes in relative power result in conflict and war.2 Discussing the rise of China, Graham Allison calls this condition “Thucydides's Trap,” a reference to the ancient Greek's claim that Sparta's fear of Athens' growing power led to the Peloponnesian War.3

This article argues that there is no Thucydides Trap in international politics. Rather, the world is moving rapidly toward permanent peace, possibly in our lifetime. Drawing on economic norms theory,4 I show that what sometimes appears to be a Thucydides Trap may instead be a function of factors strictly internal to states and that these factors vary among them. In brief, leaders of states with advanced market-oriented economies have foremost interests in the principle of self-determination for all states, large and small, as the foundation for a robust global marketplace. War among these states, even making preparations for war, is not possible, because they are in a natural alliance to preserve and protect the global order. In contrast, leaders of states with weak internal markets have little interest in the global marketplace; they pursue wealth not through commerce, but through wars of expansion and demands for tribute. For these states, power equals threat, and therefore they tend to balance against the power of all states. Fearing stronger states, however, minor powers with weak internal markets tend to constrain their expansionist inclinations and, for security reasons, bandwagon with the relatively benign market-oriented powers.

I argue that this liberal global hierarchy is unwittingly but systematically buttressing states' embrace of market norms and values that, if left uninterrupted, is likely to culminate in permanent world peace, perhaps even something close to harmony. My argument challenges the realist assertion that great powers are engaged in a timeless competition over global leadership, because hegemony cannot exist among great powers with weak markets; these inherently expansionist states live in constant fear and therefore normally balance against the strongest state and its allies.5 Hegemony can exist only among market-oriented powers, because only they care about global order. Yet, there can be no competition for leadership among market powers, because they always agree with the goal of their strongest member (currently the United States) to preserve and protect the global order based on the principle of self-determination. If another commercial power, such as a rising China, were to overtake the United States, the world would take little notice, because the new leading power would largely agree with the global rules promoted and enforced by its predecessor. Vladimir Putin's Russia, on the other hand, seeks to create chaos around the world. Most other powers, having market-oriented economies, continue to abide by the hegemony of the United States despite its relative economic decline since the end of World War II.6

To support my theory that domestic factors determine states' alignment decisions, I analyze the voting preferences of members of the United Nations General Assembly from 1946 to 2010. I find that states with weak internal markets tend to disagree with the foreign policy preferences of the largest market power (i.e., the United States), but more so if they are major powers or have stronger rather than weaker military and economic capabilities. The power of states with robust internal markets, in contrast, appears to have no effect on their foreign policy preferences, as market-oriented states align with the market leader regardless of their power status or capabilities. I corroborate that this pattern may be a consequence of states' interest in the global market order by finding that states with higher levels of exports per capita are more likely than other states to have preferences aligned with those of the United States; those with lower levels of exports are more likely to have interests that do not align with the United States, but again more so if they are stronger rather than weaker.

Liberal scholars of international politics have long offered explanations for why the incidence of war may decline, generally beginning with the assumption that although the security dilemma exists, it can be overcome with the help of factors external to states.7 Neoliberal institutionalists treat states as like units and international organization as an external condition.8 Trade interdependence is dyadic and thus an external condition.9 Democracy is an internal factor, but theories of democratic peace have an external dimension: peace is the result of the expectations of states' behavior informed by the images that leaders create of each other's regime types.10 In contrast, I show that the security dilemma may not exist at all and how peace can emerge in anarchy with states pursuing their interests determined entirely by internal factors.11

#### Cap solves poverty

Teixeira and Judis, 17—senior fellow at both The Century Foundation and American Progress AND editor-at-large at Talking Points Memo, former senior writer at The National Journal and a former senior editor at The New Republic (Ruy and John, “Why The Left Will (Eventually) Triumph: An Interview With Ruy Teixeira,” <http://talkingpointsmemo.com/cafe/why-left-will-eventually-win-ruy-teixeira>, dml)

Judis: In your book, you explain at several points that you are no longer a socialist and instead support a reformed capitalism. When we met many years ago, we were in a socialist organization. When did this transformation occur? Teixeira: What happened is that I began to think a lot about how economies actually work. When I was a socialist, I **didn’t think very carefully** and **long** about what **actually** a socialist economy would look like. I had this **general idea** that the capitalist system was **inefficient** and **prone to crisis** and that one should **somehow tamp down the profit motive** and limit the freedom of action of capitalists. But **the more I thought** about how economies worked, it was **hard to gainsay** that the market was **absolutely essential** for the efficient delivery of goods and services. And the more I read, the more I realized my viewpoint was closer to social democrats than to socialists. Capitalism needs to be **regulated**, it needs to be **pointed in the right direction**, you **need to have a big safety net**, but you **can’t replace it**. Judis: Was there something that happened, a book you read, that changed your mind? Teixeira: I would say it was an obscure book by Alec Nove called “The Economics of Feasible Socialism.” Judis: That’s amazing. I was deeply influenced by the same book. Teixeira: Nove was a historian of the Soviet Union. He came from a Menshevik family, and he basically laid out the way the standard conceptions of socialism that a lot of people on the left had couldn’t work. If you wanted to **think rationally about what’s feasible**, the way economies and people tend to work, you **had to have a market**. The goal as I see it is a mixed economy that works as well as possible, and of course you have not gotten that in the West for the last several decades. The mixed economy just needs improvement and modification. Judis: And what kind of improvements would that be? Teixeira; I favor what economists are calling a model of **equitable growth**. It would mean **substantial government investment** in creating new opportunities for the middle and aspirational classes. It could include a dramatic expansion of the educational system and a Manhattan-style investment in bringing down the price of clean energy and building the infrastructure to match. Granted, these kind of proposals would not get through Congress now, but it is the kind of agenda that I am optimistic that the Democrats will endorse and that the country will **eventually embrace**. The Left Prospers in Prosperity Judis: Your book is titled “The Optimistic Leftist,” but if you look at the terrain of politics today, the center-left or left of center parties are decimated. The Democrats haven’t been in such bad shape nationally and in the states since the 1920s. The Dutch Labor Party got less than 10 percent in the recent election. Jeremy Corbyn and British Labor may be routed in June. The French Socialist candidate came in fifth with 6 percent. Why is this happening? And given that this is happening, what grounds do you have for thinking that the left will suddenly find itself on top? Teixeira: The way I look at it we are going through a **long transition** from an industrial capitalist system to a **post-industrial services-based capitalist system**. So far this transition has **not gone well**. It hasn’t had the outcomes that people want. We have **slow productivity growth** and **rising inequality**. The central point I’d make is that **by and large**, **poor economic times** are **not good for the left**. They **make people reactive**, **pessimistic**, **trying to hold onto their own**, and **not supportive of collective endeavors** to help the way society functions. And we’ve seen all that in spades in the last decade. Really that kind of situation is **best for the right**, and the left has had a very difficult time figuring out a way forward. The Democrats have their problems, but in Europe, you see the problems crystallized. Europe’s mainstream left was based in the industrial working class and has had a terrible time adjusting to the transition to post-industrial capitalism and figuring out what a new model of capitalism and capitalist growth would look like. They have thrown in their lot with a much more right-wing approach, beginning with the Third Way in the ’90s. The idea behind it was that capitalism can pretty well function on its own and we just have to let it rip. We’re still coming out of that phase, and I think the mainstream social democrats with their collaboration with austerity in places like France and the Netherlands are reaping the whirlwind. But if you look at other parts of the left, they are actually doing relatively well. If you look at the Netherlands election, the green left did very well, and if you add up the votes of the Socialist Party (a left-socialist party), the greens, Democrats 66 (a left social-liberal party) and the social democrats, the left **hasn’t been totally decimated**. What has really been decimated is the Party of Labor, as the social democrats in the Netherlands are called. We are seeing the same thing in France where the Socialist Party (the French social democrats) candidate did terribly, but [independent socialist Jean-Luc] Melenchon did quite well. The left **still has strength**, but it is **divided up among different political tendencies**. It is going to have to **reorganize itself around an economic program** that is going to deliver what people want, which is **better growth** and **better distribution**. Until that happens, the left will be **in a quagmire**. Judis: I want to look more closely at your argument that the left does better in good times and the right in bad times. Bill Clinton got elected in the wake of a recession in 1992, Barack Obama might not have won the presidency in 2008 if the financial crash hadn’t happened that September. The Populists came out of the farm crisis in 1880s and early 1890s; the New Deal out of the Great Depression. I am not saying that bad times is better for the left, but only that there isn’t a necessary connection in either case and that you are making too facile an assumption about which times promote which politics. Teixeira: Bad times do propel people into motion and produce protest and reaction, but looked at from when you can accomplish the goals of the left of **making society better** and **implementing important reforms**, I think it is **typically easier** when the economy is **expanding fairly rapidly** and **living standards are going up** than when the reverse is true. It is **not a perfect relationship**, but **by and large** I think it’s true. So yeah, Obama can get elected in a situation where he was aided by an economic downturn, but his ability to **put together a progressive coalition** that could **stick together for a long time** and continue to implement reforms was **very much undermined by the economic situation**. Judis: Let’s turn it around and look at the connection between the right and good and bad times. In America, the 1920s were relatively good times, and the Republicans controlled the government the whole decade. Teixeira: The 1920s were not nearly as good a time people think it was. It was a time of relatively slow per capita income growth. It was very unequally distributed, the industrial working class did somewhat well, but the rural areas did poorly, and there were four recessions between 1918 and 1929. It was not such a great time. It was relatively poor compared to the Progressive Era. Judis: So the Republicans did well in the 1920s because they were really bad times? Teixeira: There was a sense of real uncertainty, real economic paranoia. Judis: I don’t think you could call the 1920s bad times. You could call it uneven times. “Bad times” is stretching it. In addition, you have the real bad times of the Depression staring you in your face which is the time of the greatest advance in terms of a left and social democracy in our history. Teixeira: Desperate times make for desperate measure sometimes. There is **no guarantee they will help the left rather than the right**. I think that’s what we saw in the U.S. Obviously it didn’t work out so well in Europe. When I make the general analysis that the left is better off in a period of economic expansion and rising living standards, it doesn’t correspond exactly to the political outcomes you’ll have in those different periods. I am saying that **in a general sense**, the left has the **easiest time making advances** and **improving society** when things are going well **rather than when are going poorly**. Judis: Let’s look at Europe. In some of the countries in Northern Europe that are doing well, the center-right parties are in charge. Teixeira: Yes, but I think you can make the case the center-right parties aren’t exactly in charge in Europe. They also have their problems. The rise of populism in Europe is blowing apart the party system. Judis: You have got Holland, Denmark, Germany, and Austria. Those are all countries that are doing pretty well compared to the rest of the EU and that have center-right governments. Teixeira: The Netherlands is not doing that well. It’s all relative. Their recovery has been somewhat better. Their employment level has been high compared to other European countries, but there are a number of cuts in social services, wages haven’t been going up much, there is a lot more insecurity. Judis: Isn’t Germany doing well? Teixeira:. Germany is doing relatively well, but it hasn’t been a period of expansive growth for them either. There is a lot of wage stagnation and compression there. I **never meant to imply** that you can **perfectly predict social reform from economic outcomes**. But I think it **provides an important lens** on when the left does well and when the left does poorly. By and large when you look at Europe, you see the ~~straitjacket~~ [**dilemma**] that the Eurozone has created in the economies. People are **fearful**, they are **pessimistic**, they are **passive**. This is **very bad for the left**. Until you **break out** of that [dilemma] ~~straitjacket~~, the left is **not going to be able to do that well**, and the right is **going to continue to do relatively well** compared to them, and you’ll see the **continued rise in populism** because people have no faith in the system. So what I am trying to do is to get the left to focus on **getting to a new stage of capitalist growth** and **being able actually to deliver rising incomes**. There is No Alternative to the Left Judis: So let’s talk about how this political change will come about. What I took from your book is that we are currently suffering from secular stagnation, and that to get to a new stage of growth, we will have to implement the kind of left program that you describe. I worry that this argument contains a contradiction. On the one hand, the left can’t get its program enacted as long as times are bad. On the other hand, the only way to get out of bad times is for the left to get its program enacted. Teixeira: I see what you are asking. I think it is going to be **two steps forward**, **one step back**. We are sort of **slouching** toward the next stage of capitalism. I **don’t think it’s going to be pretty**. Political and economic factors are going to propel us in that direction. Ultimately, people want things to work better, they want their problems to be solved. And the **only way** we are going to get there is along the road I have described. I think this **equitable growth** approach that the Democrats united around is the future. The level of growth is going to vary over time, but I think the Democrats are the ones who are going to put us there and I think they are going to be rewarded for it. Judis:. But how does that happen? Isn’t there a crisis scenario implicit in your account? At some time, the current Third Way or neoliberal approach results in another Great Recession and at that point people will buy into a left-wing approach, the left-wing approach will create prosperity and at that time we will have an enduring left-wing or Democratic majority. Isn’t a step like this missing from your argument? Teixeira:. That certainly could be the way it goes down, but it’s **not clear we are required to have a recession** on the level we did in 2007 and 2008, or whether this sort of rolling crisis we have combined with other political events might do it. I don’t know, it’s hard to predict, but I think the great economist Herbert Stein said, if something cannot go on forever, it will stop. Judis: The great socialist Rosa Luxembourg said the choice was socialism or barbarism. I am not saying we are heading toward barbarism, but I think there is a determinism in your argument. I think you are saying that people will eventually choose a politics that will best help them. Reason will prevail. And I am not sure if that holds up historically. When you talk about the EU, you say eventually they will consolidate into a fiscal monetary union. I am not sure that is going to happen. It’s also possible that the Eurozone could break up and that there could be a lot of chaos. We have periods in history where things don’t happen in the best of all possible ways. Teixeira: The trajectory is **ultimately going to take us** to a **different** and **better place**. I think **eventually we will adapt** and we will **get something better** than we have because it is the **only solution to the ongoing problems**. **There is no alternative**. Judis: Countries are sometime structurally unable to do what is in their best interest. In the U.S., we have this strong anti-statist tradition going back to the revolution that seems to get in the way every time we want to do something like what you are proposing. It is possible that contrary to Hegel, the rational won’t turn out to be the real. Teixeira: Of course it is possible, but if you look at the history of the United States, **despite the anti-statist bias** and **despite all the other political problems**, the way the country has evolved over time is toward a **larger government** that **does more** and **provides more for people**. And we **obviously have evolved tremendously** in the social realm as well. Governments don’t do what is rational in the short term, at least rational in the sense you are describing it, but political systems **evolve over time** in a way that is consistent with the values and priorities of the left, and I expect that to continue over time. The 2016 Election Judis: Let’s talk about the 2016 election. Why did Clinton lose to such a weak opponent? Teixeira: The Democrats have an evolving majority that consists of groups like minorities, professionals, young people, single women and what have you, and that’s a true fact. It’s growing over time and it will continue to grow, but it was always mathematically true that if you take the declining group, the white non-college voters, and they move sufficiently in the direction of the other party, that will be enough to undermine your coalition. You won’t win. That’s exactly what happened in 2016. These voters moved rapidly away from the Democrats both in local and state races and in the presidential election. Judis: Why did they move? Teixeira: They do not have any faith that the Democrats share their values and are going to deliver a better life for them and their kids, and I think Hillary Clinton was a very efficient bearer of that meme. Whether she wanted to or not, the message she sent to these voters is that you are really not that important and I don’t take your problems seriously, and frankly I don’t have much to offer you. And that’s despite the fact that her economic program and policies would have actually been very good for these people. There was a study of campaign advertising in 2016 that showed Hillary outspent Trump significantly and that almost none of her advertising was about what she would actually do. Almost all of it was about how he was a bad dude. Voters were **fed up with stagnation** and with the Democrats and they **turned to someone who thought could blow up the system**. The way the Democrats and the left could **mitigate that problem** is to show these voters that they **take their problems seriously** and have their interests in mind, and could improve their lives. I **don’t think there is any way of doing that** without a **new model of economic growth**.

#### Logistical sabotage causes extinction and turns all their impacts—Wayne HR shouldn’t be in charge of a nuclear silo.

Milne and Kinsella, 17—Faculty of English, University of Cambridge AND School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts, Faculty of Humanities, Curtin University (Drew and John, “NUCLEAR THEORY DEGREE ZERO, WITH TWO CHEERS FOR DERRIDA,” Angelaki, 22:3, 1-16, dml) [language modifications denoted by brackets]

A further line of political deflection is the accelerationist strategy. There are quasi-leftist accelerationists (Mackay and Avanessian). We should take seriously the proposition that the only way to save the planet is to accelerate the pace of technological innovation. On one view, the only way to save the planet from global warming is by developing nuclear fusion technology. This points down the pathway of the Hadron collider and big science. But there is another acceleration that would decommission all forms of nuclear technology, and rather than imitating the sun, seek renewable forms of symbiosis with solar energy. A global diversion of military and industrial resources into renewable and sustainable energy forms would constitute a technological acceleration coupled with a radical deceleration in fossil fuel consumption, perhaps even putting the brakes on the fallacy of economic growth. What quickly emerges is that there are choices to be made across contested terrains. The forms of acceleration are political choices, choices of great urgency, but to thematise “acceleration” as such provides scant critical purchase on different forms of acceleration. What is needed are nuanced mediations of the science and technology currently available, along with global democratic decision making on those technologies we choose to accelerate or slow down.

Another version of the “accelerationist” argument captures some of the ideological workings of the term. In Marxist circles, an “accelerationist” is someone who thinks that the collapse of capitalism will be hastened by allowing reactionary forces to speed up capitalism’s self-destruction. There are occasions when such an argument has validity: nothing about the form of the argument makes it inherently or structurally wrong. There are revolutionary moments when allowing capitalism to collapse in order to rebuild a socialist society is a better path than propping up a failing capitalist regime. The judgement is political rather than philosophical. In most contexts, however, the accelerationist argument, especially as a political principle, is deeply dangerous. It would be better, for example, to preserve a failing US capitalist regime while building social forces to take it over, than to allow the nuclear weapons of the United States to fall into the hands of a suicidal [self-destructive] military rearguard or some counter-revolutionary terrorist organisation. Preserving the possibility of human life might involve propping up collapsing capitalist institutions, not least the nuclear safety inspectorate, rather than allowing humanity to be swallowed up by some death spiral of presidential dictators in fear of being toppled. These are critical judgements that could arise at any moment, with real risks that poor judgements will hasten a nuclear confrontation that leads to mutually assured annihilation. The formal shape of an accelerationist argument needs to be understood strategically and politically if it is to address nuclear questions.

The accelerationist view that the deepening of capitalism could hasten its self-destructive tendencies and lead to its collapse is not inherently suicidal, but consideration of what the collapse of capitalism might mean for the global stock of nuclear weapons and nuclear power stations indicates dangers. Amid the collapse of capitalism, securing the safety of nuclear resources is a fundamental priority, and preparing a decelerationist strategy is an essential political position for any radical formation serious about nuclear safety. Against the horizon of nuclear crisis, we rely on workers to know how to manage and decommission nuclear weapons, silos and power stations. This requires “good” science and ongoing struggles to control the decision making around weapons and energy systems. Concrete consideration of what happens to ageing nuclear systems in an imploding political system has been tested in the fall of the Soviet Union. Imagine the retrenchment of reactionary forces around nuclear installations threatening suicidal political terrorism on a global scale. The risks of a collapsing capitalist system taking the world down with it are clear. Chernobyl and Fukushima, moreover, stand as metonyms of the risks involved in systems that were apparently functional and yet spiralled out of control even in what might be called peacetime. The risks of the US or the Chinese nuclear androids imploding involve different decisions. Again, the need is for nuanced political judgements and strategies, involving scientific expertise along with solidarity between scientists, workers and new social formations.

The need for nuanced political engagement with “good” science suggests some of the risks in any thematisation of science within archaic philosophical paradigms. One form of nuclear denial is the reluctance to engage with the concrete consequences of scientific knowledge, preferring to retreat behind the limited competence of the humanities scholar. It takes some hubris of philosophical interpretation to suggest that literary studies can offer to understand the fictional heart of the nuclear threat despite knowing very little about the science and tech

nology involved. There will, doubtless, be philosophical, ontological and metaphysical questions that science and technology cannot answer. Nuclear arguments may carry within their forms and conditions of possibility the illusions of Western metaphysics, and decommissioning nuclear metaphors could turn out to be as significant as criticising the public lies of nuclear policy: but the nuclear android also imposes less philosophical imperatives to engage with science, from medical science to nuclear waste disposal, and through the critique of the political economy of the nuclear android. None of this suggests that metaphysics should or could be deleted. To deflect engagement with the existing mess of the nuclear android back into metaphysical and literary questions nevertheless threatens to evade the existing threats, not just of nuclear annihilation but of Indigenous rights, environmental politics, and the raft of mediations and regulative practices on which any amelioration of nuclear damage depends. Nuclear war remains an imminent threat, but so does the persistence of practices and strategies that contribute to maintenance of the spectacle of the nuclear rather than its disarmament and decommissioning. To reduce the problem to the “threat” of nuclear war is to imagine that the actually existing industrial behemoth of nuclear production is a fiction. It isn’t. Nuclear weapons testing and the history of nuclear accidents were not just fables, and nor was the arms race a war of sophistry and rhetoric, however much sophistry and rhetoric were deployed to disguise the ecocidal tendencies of the nuclear android.

#### No mindset shift and backlash turns solvency.

Buch-Hansen, 18—Department of Business and Politics, Copenhagen Business School (Hubert, “The Prerequisites for a Degrowth Paradigm Shift: Insights from Critical Political Economy,” Ecological Economics Volume 146, April 2018, Pages 157-163, dml)

Political projects do not become hegemonic just because they embody good ideas. For a project to become hegemonic, (organic) intellectuals first need to develop the project and a constellation of social forces with sufficient power and resources to implement it then needs to find it appealing and struggle for it. In this context, it is worth noting that degrowth, as a social movement, has been gaining momentum for some time, not least in Southern Europe. Countless grassroots' initiatives (e.g., D'Alisa et al., 2013) are the most visible manifestations that degrowth is on the rise. Intellectuals – including founders of ecological economics such as Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen and Herman Daly, and more recently degrowth scholars such as Serge Latouche and Giorgos Kallis – have played a major role in developing and disseminating the ideas underpinning the project. A growing interest in degrowth in academia, as well as well-attended biennial international degrowth conferences, also indicate that an increasing number of people embrace such ideas. Still, the degrowth project is nowhere near enjoying the degree and type of support it needs if its policies are to be implemented through democratic processes. The number of political parties, labour unions, business associations and international organisations that have so far embraced degrowth is modest to say the least. Economic and political elites, including social democratic parties and most of the trade union movement, are united in the belief that economic growth is necessary and desirable. This consensus finds support in the prevailing type of economic theory and underpins the main contenders in the neoliberal project, such as centre-left and nationalist projects. In spite of the world's multidimensional crisis, a pro-growth discourse in other words continues to be hegemonic: it is widely considered a matter of common sense that continued economic growth is required. It is also noteworthy that economic and political elites, to a large extent, continue to support the neoliberal project, even in the face of its evident shortcomings. Indeed, the 2008 financial crisis did not result in the weakening of transnational financial capital that could have paved the way for a paradigm shift. Instead of coming to an end, neoliberal capitalism has arguably entered a more authoritarian phase (Bruff, 2014). The main reason the power of the pre-crisis coalition remains intact is that governments stepped in and saved the dominant fraction by means of massive bailouts. It is a foregone conclusion that this fraction and the wider coalition behind the neoliberal paradigm (transnational industrial capital, the middle classes and segments of organized labour) will consider the degrowth paradigm unattractive and that such social forces will vehemently oppose the implementation of degrowth policies (see also Rees, 2014: 97). While degrowth advocates envision a future in which market forces play a less prominent role than they do today, degrowth is not an anti-market project. As such, it can attract support from certain types of market actors. In particular, it is worth noting that social enterprises, such as cooperatives (Restakis, 2010), play a major role in the degrowth vision. Such enterprises are defined by being ‘organisations involved at least to some extent in the market, with a clear social, cultural and/or environmental purpose, rooted in and serving primarily the local community and ideally having a local and/or democratic ownership structure’ (Johanisova et al., 2013: 11). Social enterprises currently exist at the margins of a system, in which the dominant type of business entity is profit-oriented, shareholder-owned corporations. The further dissemination of social enterprises, which is crucial to the transitions to degrowth societies, is – in many cases – blocked or delayed as a result of the centrifugal forces of global competition (Wigger and Buch-Hansen, 2013). Overall, social enterprises thus (still) constitute a social force with modest power. Ougaard (2016: 467) notes that one of the major dividing lines in the contemporary transnational capitalist class is between capitalists who have a material interest in the carbon-based economy and capitalists who have a material interest in decarbonisation. The latter group, for instance, includes manufacturers of equipment for the production of renewable energy (ibid.: 467). As mentioned above, degrowth advocates have singled out renewable energy as one of the sectors that needs to grow in the future. As such, it seems likely that the owners of national and transnational companies operating in this sector would be more positively inclined towards the degrowth project than would capitalists with a stake in the carbon-based economy. Still, the prospect of the “green sector” emerging as a driving force behind degrowth currently appears meagre. Being under the control of transnational capital (Harris, 2010), such companies generally embrace the “green growth” discourse, which ‘is deeply embedded in neoliberal capitalism’ and indeed serves to adjust this form of capitalism ‘to crises arising from contradictions within itself’ (Wanner, 2015: 23). In addition to support from the social forces engendered by the production process, a political project ‘also needs the political ability to mobilize majorities in parliamentary democracies, and a sufficient measure of at least passive consent’ (van Apeldoorn and Overbeek, 2012: 5–6) if it is to become hegemonic. As mentioned, degrowth enjoys little support in parliaments, and certainly the pro-growth discourse is hegemonic among parties in government.5 With capital accumulation being the most important driving force in capitalist societies, political decision-makers are generally eager to create conditions conducive to production

and the accumulation of capital (Lindblom, 1977: 172). Capitalist states and international organisations are thus “programmed” to facilitate capital accumulation, and do as such constitute a strategically selective terrain that works to the disadvantage of the degrowth project.

#### Logistical sabotage is utopian, empirically impotent, and gets 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 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.