## 2AC

### 2AC — Capitalism Critique

#### 1. Framework — the role of the ballot is to determine whether the topical plan is superior to the status quo or a competitive policy alternative. This is best because the resolution is a question of public policy—in order to meet the burden of rejoinder, they need to disprove the desirability of the plan.

#### 2. Perm: Do both. Macro and micro politics are necessary to create alliances and avoid reductionism.

Marsh 95 [James L., Professor of Philosophy, Fordham University, “Critique, Action, and Liberation”, p. 282-283]

What seems to be called for and to be more likely with the greater possibility and actuality' of economic and rationality' crisis is a union of workers and citizens groups, economic and cultural movements, purposive rational-action and symbolic interaction, macro- and micropolitics. Links with workers can remind citizen groups of the relationship of their own goals and movements to economic class domination and help supply a unity' to these various groups. On the other hand, movements centered around quality' of life remind workers that mere economic reforms and revolution are not enough either, transformation of quality' of life is essential. Moreover, movements centered on the problems of racism, sexism, and the devastation of the environment remind us of a legitimate specificity, plurality', and irreducibility within social movements. Even though racism, sexism, heterosexism. and environmental pollution are ultimately related to capitalism, they are not reducible to capitalist class domination. A legitimate *differance* exists among social movements that must be respected. In contrast to postmodernists. I would insist on a legitimate unity' or identity' that should be articulated, an identity-in-difference. Such a politics disavows either a one-sided unity' present in some traditional Marxism or a one-sided pluralism present in liberal or postmodern theories. Such a politics would be aesthetic as well as political, cultural as well as economic, micro as well as macro, but in contrast to many postmodern theories the aesthetic and cultural are linked to the critical and reflective. Rationality' is not simply or primarily instrumental or scientific as some traditional Marxism would have it or simply libidinal and aesthetic as some post-modem theory would have it. but a unity' of political, aesthetic, and scientific. Thus the aesthetic politics of Act-Up. an organization of AIDS activists, breaking into Dan Rather's newscast on CBS during the Gulf War has its legitimate place as do marches protesting the war or worker resistance on the shop floor. The symbolic protest of a Dan Berrigan at the King of Prussia nuclear facility in Pennsylvania has its place as well as political organizing in the Bronx around the issues of health care, housing, and food. Many legitimate struggles, kinds of struggle, and sites of struggle exist, none of which is reducible to the other, but which are or can be linked to one another in different alliances against a common enemy, a racist, sexist, heterosexist capitalism. Linking and alliance are not the same as subsumption and reduction, a common mistake. Such struggles have a common enemy, are subject to common norms of right, morality', and justice, and have a common goal of liberation taking the form of full economic, cultural, and political democracy. In contrast to a politics of assimilation that denies differences or a politics of rigid identity' that becomes separatist, my recommended politics is one of inclusion and alliance. Such a politics flows from the argument of the whole book. On a phenomenological level, cognitional-transcendental structure and the validity' claims of the ideal speech situation are shared by everyone equally, white or African-American, capitalist or laborer, woman or man. heterosexual or homosexual. No person or group of persons is privileged in the ideal speech situation, and each has an equal right to express her needs and desires and claims. Ethically the principles of right, morality, and justice forbid classism. racism, sexism, and heterosexism. Hermeneutically. these forms of domination are distinct but related and are not reducible to one another. Critically, the task of social theory is to criticize these forms of domination with the aim of overcoming them. Finally, on the level of praxis itself, each kind of group subject to its own distinct kind of exploitation can give rise to its own legitimate kind of social movement. It is true that on a hermeneutic-explanatory level class domination is more fundamental and definitive of our social situation than other kinds, but even here one form is not reducible to the other. Also, it is mistaken to infer from such privileging to a privileging on other levels. Ethically, for example, it is not clear that exploitation of labor by capital is worse than that exerted by white over Latino or Indian, heterosexual over homosexual, or man over woman. Here, we note again the advantage of methodologically distinguishing different stages, aspects, and levels in critical theory. Even if I privilege class domination over other forms on a hermeneutic-explanatory level, it may be that social movements arising from racism, sexism, and heterosexism have to be privileged at times in the late capitalist context. Which of these social movements takes the lead depends very much on different local, regional, and national situations. In addition to other kinds of indeterminacy and ambiguity, social theory has to own up to a certain indeterminacy on the level of praxis.

#### 3. And, the perm solves: reformism can challenge the state and capitalism.

Dixon 5 (Chris, Activist and founding member of Direct Action Network, “Reflections on Privilege, Reformism, and Activism,” www.geocities.com/kk\_abacus/ioaa/dixon2.html)

Evidently sasha doesn't grasp my argument in "Finding Hope." Or else he disagrees. It's difficult to tell because, while skillfully sidestepping engagement with my discussion of privilege, he also sidesteps the main thrust of my essay: rethinking radicalism, particularly in the context of privilege. As I wrote, "**we have to move beyond the myopic view**--often endemic among anarchists--that the most 'important' **activism only** or mainly **happens in the streets,** enmeshed in police confrontations." In other words, spheres of traditional 'radical action' are limited and limiting. And though I don't believe that sasha fundamentally disagrees with this criticism, he refuses to accept its broader consequences. For instance, where I question the bounds of 'radicalism' with examples of struggles like opposing prison construction and establishing community and cultural centers, he conclusively points to "a set of demands and goals of which none suggest any serious critique of capitalism and the state in their totality." **There is** much **more to the "totality**" that **we** all **confront than capitalism and the state**. That's unequivocal. Furthermore, a "totality" has an undeniable physical presence, and **people** do in fact contest and **resist it every day through a variety of** struggles using a variety of **means--not all** containing the **"serious critique**" necessary to satisfy sasha. J. Kellstadt nicely observes this, noting that an 'activist' perspective (not unlike sasha's) overlooks a whole layer of more "everyday" forms of resistance - from slacking off, absenteeism, and sabotage, to shopfloor "counter-planning" and other forms of autonomous and "unofficial" organizing - which conventional activists and leftists (including most anarchists) have a bad track record of acknowledging. And this still leaves out all of those modes of struggle which take place beyond the shopfloor, such as various forms of cultural and sexual revolution. Unfortunately, sasha doesn't deign to discuss these all-too-pedestrian realities, many of which potentially embrace the very anarchist ethics he touts. They certainly have bearing on the lives of many folks and speak to a breadth of social struggle, but they apparently don't constitute a sufficient "critique." Even if sasha were to acknowledge their importance, my sense is that he would erect a rationalized theoretical division between Kellstadt's "everyday forms of resistance" and 'reformism.' No doubt, he would use a rhetorical sleight of hand on par with the "simple fact of language that those who want to reform the present system are called reformists." A seemingly irrefutable, self- apparent statement, this actually glosses over legitimate questions: Are 'reformists' so easily discernable and cleanly categorized? Are all 'reforms' equal? Can they be part of a long-term revolutionary strategy? So let's talk plainly about reformism. No matter how much some might wish otherwise, it simply isn't a cut-and-dry issue. And while it actually deserves a book-length examination, here I'll sketch some general considerations. Principally, I ask, **assuming** that **we share the goal of dismantling** systems of **power and restructuring our** entire **society** in nonhierarchical ways, **what role does reform play?** Must we eschew it, unconditionally embrace it, or is there another approach? sasha steadfastly represents one rather limited 'radical' view. To bolster his critique of 'reformism,' for instance, he critically cites one of the examples in my essay: demanding authentic public oversight of police. "[This] might be a small step for social change in some general sense," he argues, "but ultimately it is a step backwards as it strengthens the legitimacy of the police and of imposed decision." **I respect the** intent of this **critique;** it makes sense if one is privileged enough to engage with the police on terms of one's own choosing. Yet **in real life, it's** both **simplistic and insulated**. Look at it this way: accepting sasha's argument, are we to wait until the coming insurrectionary upheaval before enjoying an end to police brutality? More specifically, are African-American men to patiently endure the continued targeting of "driving while Black"? Should they hold off their demands for police accountability so as to avoid strengthening "the legitimacy of the police and of imposed decision"? And if they don't, are they 'reformists'? Many folks who experience daily police occupation understand that ending the "imposed decision" (often epitomized by police) will require radical change, and they work toward it. At the same time, they demand authentic public oversight of police forces. The two don't have to be mutually exclusive. I'll even suggest that they can be complementary, especially if we acknowledge the legacies of white supremacy and class stratification embedded in policing. Ultimately, we need a lucid conception of social change that articulates this kind of complementarity. That is, **we need** revolutionary **strategy that links diverse,** everyday struggles and **demands to long-term** radical **objectives**, without sacrificing either. Of course, this isn't to say that every so-called 'progressive' ballot initiative or organizing campaign is necessarily radical or strategic. **Reforms** are not all created equal. But some **can fundamentally shake systems of power, leading to** enlarged gains and greater space for **further advances**. Andre Gorz, in his seminal book Strategy for Labor, refers to these as "non-reformist" or "structural" reforms. He contends, "a struggle for non-reformist reforms--for anti-capitalist reforms--is one which does not base its validity and its right to exist on capitalist needs, criteria, and rationales. A non-reformist reform is determined not in terms of what can be, but what should be." Look to history for examples: **the end of slavery**, the eight-hour workday, **desegregation.** All **were born from** long, hard **struggles, and none were endpoints. Yet they** all **struck at the foundations of power** (in these cases, the state, white supremacy, and capitalism), **and** in the process, they **created** new **prospects for revolutionary change.** Now consider contemporary struggles: amnesty for undocumented immigrants, socialized health care, expansive environmental protections, indigenous sovereignty. These and many more are arguably non-reformist reforms as well. **None will single-handedly dismantle capitalism or other systems of power, but each has the potential to escalate struggles** and sharpen social contradictions. And w**e shouldn't misinterpret** these **efforts as** simply meliorative incrementalism, **making 'adjustments' to a fundamentally flawed system**. Certainly that tendency exists, but there are plenty of other folks working very consciously within a far more radical strategy, pushing for a qualitative shift in struggle. "**To fight for** alternative solutions," Gorz writes, "and for structural **reforms** (that is to say, for intermediate objectives) **is not to fight for improvements in the** **capitalist system; it is** rather **to break it up**, to restrict it, **to create counter-powers which,** instead of creating a new equilibrium, **undermine its** very **foundations**." Thankfully, this is one approach among a diverse array of strategies, all of which encompass a breadth of struggles and movements. Altogether, they give me hope.

#### 4. The alternative fails: total rejection of capitalism fragments resistance.

Gibson-Graham 96 (Katharine, human geography@ Australian National University, Julie, geography@U of Massachusetts, The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It), p. 245)

One of our goals as Marxists has been to produce a knowledge of capitalism. Yet as “that which is known,” Capitalism has become the intimate enemy. We have uncloaked the ideologically-clothed, obscure monster, but we have installed a naked and visible monster in its place. In return for our labors of creation, the monster has robbed us of all force. We hear – and find it easy to believe – that the left is in disarray. Part of what produces the disarray of the left is the vision of what the left is arrayed against. When capitalism is represented as a unified system coextensive with the nation or even the world, when it is portrayed as crowding out all other economic forms, when it is allowed to define entire societies, it becomes something that can only be defeated and replaced by a mass collective movement (or by a process of systemic dissolution that such a movement might assist). The revolutionary task of replacing capitalism now seems outmoded and unrealistic, yet we do not seem to have an alternative conception of class transformation to take its place. The old political economic “systems” and “structures” that call forth a vision of revolution as systemic replacement still seem to be dominant in the Marxist political imagination. The New World Order is often represented as political fragmentation founded upon economic unification. In this vision the economy appears as the last stronghold of unity and singularity in a world of diversity and plurality. But why can’t the economy be fragmented too? If we theorized it as fragmented in the United States, we could being to see a huge state sector (incorporating a variety of forms of appropriation of surplus labor), a very large sector of self-employed and family-based producers (most noncapitalist), a huge household sector (again, quite various in terms of forms of exploitation, with some households moving towards communal or collective appropriation and others operating in a traditional mode in which one adult appropriates surplus labor from another). None of these things is easy to see. If capitalism takes up the available social space, there’s no room for anything else. If capitalism cannot coexist, there’s no possibility of anything else. If capitalism functions as a unity, it cannot be partially or locally replaced. My intent is to help create the discursive conception under which socialist or other noncapitalist construction becomes “realistic” present activity rather than a ludicrous or utopian goal. To achieve this I must smash Capitalism and see it in a thousand pieces. I must make its unity a fantasy, visible as a denial of diversity and change.

#### 5. Cap is inevitable — evolution proves.

Wilkinson 5 (Will, policy analyst @CATO, “Capitalism and Human Nature”, CATO Policy Report, XXVII(1), January/February, <http://www.cato.org/research/articles/wilkinson-050201.html>)

Perhaps the most depressing lesson of evolutionary psychology for politics is found in its account of the deep-seated human capacity for envy and, related, of our difficulty in understanding the idea of gains from trade and increases in productivity—the idea of an ever-expanding "pie" of wealth. There is evidence that greater skill and initiative could lead to higher status and bigger shares of resources for an individual in the EEA. But because of the social nature of hunting and gathering, the fact that food spoiled quickly, and the utter absence of privacy, the benefits of individual success in hunting or foraging could not be easily internalized by the individual, and were expected to be shared. The EEA was for the most part a zero-sum world, where increases in total wealth through invention, investment, and extended economic exchange were totally unknown. More for you was less for me. Therefore, if anyone managed to acquire a great deal more than anyone else, that was pretty good evidence that theirs was a stash of ill-gotten gains, acquired by cheating, stealing, raw force, or, at best, sheer luck. Envy of the disproportionately wealthy may have helped to reinforce generally adaptive norms of sharing and to help those of lower status on the dominance hierarchy guard against further predation by those able to amass power. Our zero-sum mentality makes it hard for us to understand how trade and investment can increase the amount of total wealth. We are thus ill-equipped to easily understand our own economic system. These features of human nature—that we are coalitional, hierarchical, and envious zero-sum thinkers—would seem to make liberal capitalism extremely unlikely. And it is. However, the benefits of a liberal market order can be seen in a few further features of the human mind and social organization in the EEA. Property Rights are Natural The problem of distributing scarce resources can be handled in part by implicitly coercive allocative hierarchies. An alternative solution to the problem of distribution is the recognition and enforcement of property rights. Property rights are prefigured in nature by the way animals mark out territories for their exclusive use in foraging, hunting, and mating. Recognition of such rudimentary claims to control and exclude minimizes costly conflict, which by itself provides a strong evolutionary reason to look for innate tendencies to recognize and respect norms of property. New scientific research provides even stronger evidence for the existence of such property "instincts." For example, recent experimental work by Oliver Goodenough, a legal theorist, and Christine Prehn, a neuroscientist, suggests that the human mind evolved specialized modules for making judgments about moral transgressions, and transgressions against property in particular. Evolutionary psychology can help us to understand that property rights are not created simply by strokes of the legislator's pen. Mutually Beneficial Exchange is Natural Trade and mutually beneficial exchange are human universals, as is the division of labor. In their groundbreaking paper, "Cognitive Adaptations for Social Exchange," Cosmides and Tooby point out that, contrary to widespread belief, hunter-gatherer life is not "a kind of retro-utopia" of "indiscriminate, egalitarian cooperation and sharing." The archeological and ethnographic evidence shows that hunter-gatherers were involved in numerous forms of trade and exchange. Some forms of hunter-gatherer trading can involve quite complex specialization and the interaction of supply and demand. Most impressive, Cosmides and Tooby have shown through a series of experiments that human beings are able easily to solve complex logical puzzles involving reciprocity, the accounting of costs and benefits, and the detection of people who have cheated on agreements. However, we are unable to solve formally identical puzzles that do not deal with questions of social exchange. That, they argue, points to the existence of "functionally specialized, content-dependent cognitive adaptations for social exchange."

#### 6. Capitalism is sustainable — empirics prove that markets adapt.

Ashworth 10 (Stephen, Fellow of the British Interplanetary Society, Dec 18, [www.astronist.demon.co.uk/space-age/essays/Sociology1.html]

For example, the authors are happy to talk about the crises and contradictions which sadly afflict capitalism and imperialism (e.g. p.63, 67, 77, 179), but are silent on the crises and contradictions of, say, socialism (which on p.6 was implicitly linked with the Soviet Union). Since what they call capitalism is alive and well (and in fact so dynamic that it has created all the problems lamented in this book), while countries founded on socialist principles have either collapsed (the Soviet Union) or abandoned them for capitalist ones (China, Eastern Europe), perhaps they thought the crises of capitalism were so little-known that they would be of more interest? Meanwhile, the question whether a social system can exist which is not subject to what “critical realists” call crises and contradictions is again left unspoken (argument by implication). The reader is clearly being invited to believe that there is, even though our authors cannot tell them anything more about it, for it is purely hypothetical. One tantalising hint appears during a discussion of science fiction, in which sometimes “Travel into outer space therefore represents an opportunity to start a socially just, perhaps even socialist, society” (p.159). Would such a utopian state emulate socialist societies on Earth – with a secret police, forced labour camps for dissidents, shortages of consumer products, and compulsory political meetings? Dickens and Ormrod’s otherwise incisive analysis fails to address this highly relevant question. A variation of this stylistic technique is a deliberately misleading choice of words. Continuing with the example just given, if capitalism suffers repeated crises, or if it contains internal contradictions, how can it have survived to the present day in such rude health? The answer seems to be that when Dickens and Ormrod (basing their discussion on Marx and Engels, p.50) use the word “crisis”, they actually mean no more than change, and when they speak of capitalism having “contradictions”, they mean no more than that our economic system is subject to the sorts of pressures which drive change. Thus: “The global market is proving increasingly unable to contain the many contradictions of capitalism” (p.179) actually means: the global market is developing in response to pressures for change. While the use of words such as “crisis” and “contradiction” may not help in elucidating economics, it does surround the economic system with a superficial aura of unsustainability and illegitimacy, which perfectly suits the authors’ polemical purpose. Thus an adaptable system which is responsive to changing circumstances is made to sound as if it were on the brink of collapse, without the inconvenience of actually having to produce arguments in support of such a dubious hypothesis. Similarly, slipping in the term “late capitalism” (meaning modern democratic capitalism, p.127) supplies the implication that the authors know how soon capitalism will be superseded by a different economic system, when in reality clearly they do not.

#### 7. The alternative causes transition wars, totalitarianism, and poverty.

Aligica 3 (Paul, 4/21, fellow at the Mercatus Center, Hudson Insitute, “The Great Transition and the Social Limits to Growth: Herman Kahn on Social Change and Global Economic Development”, April 21, <http://www.hudson.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=publication_details&id=2827>)

Stopping things would mean if not to engage in an experiment to change the human nature, at least in an equally difficult experiment in altering powerful cultural forces: "We firmly believe that despite the arguments put forward by people who would like to 'stop the earth and get off,' it is simply impractical to do so. Propensity to change may not be inherent in human nature, but it is firmly embedded in most contemporary cultures. People have almost everywhere become curious, future oriented, and dissatisfied with their conditions. They want more material goods and covet higher status and greater control of nature. Despite much propaganda to the contrary, they believe in progress and future" (Kahn, 1976, 164). As regarding the critics of growth that stressed the issue of the gap between rich and poor countries and the issue of redistribution, Kahn noted that what most people everywhere want was visible, rapid improvement in their economic status and living standards, and not a closing of the gap (Kahn, 1976, 165). The people from poor countries have as a basic goal the transition from poor to middle class. The other implications of social change are secondary for them. Thus a crucial factor to be taken into account is that while the zero-growth advocates and their followers may be satisfied to stop at the present point, most others are not. Any serious attempt to frustrate these expectations or desires of that majority is likely to fail and/or create disastrous counter reactions. Kahn was convinced that "any concerted attempt to stop or even slow 'progress' appreciably (that is, to be satisfied with the moment) is catastrophe-prone". At the minimum, "it would probably require the creation of extraordinarily repressive governments or movements-and probably a repressive international system" (Kahn, 1976, 165; 1979, 140-153). The pressures of overpopulation, national security challenges and poverty as well as the revolution of rising expectations could be solved only in a continuing growth environment. Kahn rejected the idea that continuous growth would generate political repression and absolute poverty. On the contrary, it is the limits-to-growth position "which creates low morale, destroys assurance, undermines the legitimacy of governments everywhere, erodes personal and group commitment to constructive activities and encourages obstructiveness to reasonable policies and hopes". Hence this position "increases enormously the costs of creating the resources needed for expansion, makes more likely misleading debate and misformulation of the issues, and make less likely constructive and creative lives". Ultimately "it is precisely this position the one that increases the potential for the kinds of disasters which most at its advocates are trying to avoid" (Kahn, 1976, 210; 1984).

## 2AC — Impact Turns (Optional)

### Turn — Cap Solves War

#### Capitalism reduces war.

Bandow 5 (Senior Fellow at the CATO Institute, (Doug, CATO Institute, “Spreading Capitalism is Good for Peace,” http://www.cato.org/pub\_display.php?pub\_id=5193)

In a world that seems constantly aflame, one naturally asks: What causes peace? Many people, including U.S. President George W. Bush, hope that spreading democracy will discourage war. But new research suggests that expanding free markets is a far more important factor, leading to what Columbia University's Erik Gartzke calls a "capitalist peace." It's a reason for even the left to support free markets. The capitalist peace theory isn't new: Montesquieu and Adam Smith believed in it. Many of Britain's classical liberals, such as Richard Cobden, pushed free markets while opposing imperialism. But World War I demonstrated that increased trade was not enough. The prospect of economic ruin did not prevent rampant nationalism, ethnic hatred, and security fears from trumping the power of markets. An even greater conflict followed a generation later. Thankfully, World War II left war essentially unthinkable among leading industrialized - and democratic - states. Support grew for the argument, going back to Immanual Kant, that republics are less warlike than other systems. Today's corollary is that creating democracies out of dictatorships will reduce conflict. This contention animated some support outside as well as inside the United States for the invasion of Iraq. But Gartzke argues that "the 'democratic peace' is a mirage created by the overlap between economic and political freedom." That is, democracies typically have freer economies than do authoritarian states. Thus, while "democracy is desirable for many reasons," he notes in a chapter in the latest volume of Economic Freedom in the World, created by the Fraser Institute, "representative governments are unlikely to contribute directly to international peace." Capitalism is by far the more important factor. The shift from statist mercantilism to high-tech capitalism has transformed the economics behind war. Markets generate economic opportunities that make war less desirable. Territorial aggrandizement no longer provides the best path to riches. Free-flowing capital markets and other aspects of globalization simultaneously draw nations together and raise the economic price of military conflict. Moreover, sanctions, which interfere with economic prosperity, provides a coercive step short of war to achieve foreign policy ends. Positive economic trends are not enough to prevent war, but then, neither is democracy. It long has been obvious that democracies are willing to fight, just usually not each other. Contends Gartzke, "liberal political systems, in and of themselves, have no impact on whether states fight." In particular, poorer democracies perform like non-democracies. He explains: "Democracy does not have a measurable impact, while nations with very low levels of economic freedom are 14 times more prone to conflict than those with very high levels." Gartzke considers other variables, including alliance memberships, nuclear deterrence, and regional differences. Although the causes of conflict vary, the relationship between economic liberty and peace remains. His conclusion hasn't gone unchallenged. Author R.J. Rummel, an avid proponent of the democratic peace theory, challenges Gartzke's methodology and worries that it "may well lead intelligent and policy-wise analysts and commentators to draw the wrong conclusions about the importance of democratization." Gartzke responds in detail, noting that he relied on the same data as most democratic peace theorists. If it is true that democratic states don't go to war, then it also is true that "states with advanced free market economies never go to war with each other, either."The point is not that democracy is valueless. Free political systems naturally entail free elections and are more likely to protect other forms of liberty - civil and economic, for instance.However, democracy alone doesn't yield peace. To believe is does is dangerous: There's no panacea for creating a conflict-free world. That doesn't mean that nothing can be done. But promoting open international markets - that is, spreading capitalism - is the best means to encourage peace as well as prosperity. Notes Gartzke: "Warfare among developing nations will remain unaffected by the capitalist peace as long as the economies of many developing countries remain fettered by governmental control." Freeing those economies is critical. It's a particularly important lesson for the anti-capitalist left. For the most part, the enemies of economic liberty also most stridently denounce war, often in near-pacifist terms. Yet they oppose the very economic policies most likely to encourage peace. If market critics don't realize the obvious economic and philosophical value of markets - prosperity and freedom - they should appreciate the unintended peace dividend. Trade encourages prosperity and stability; technological innovation reduces the financial value of conquest; globalization creates economic interdependence, increasing the cost of war. Nothing is certain in life, and people are motivated by far more than economics. But it turns out that peace is good business. And capitalism is good for peace.

#### War down because of capitalism.

Ferguson 5 (Niall, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and Professor of History at Harvard, “Giving Peace a Chance”, LA Times, Sept 19)

Is the world becoming a more peaceful place? Given the continuing high level of terrorism in Iraq, now verging on civil war, that may seem a rather idiotic question. And yet **there is strong evidence that the amount of conflict in the world as a whole is going down. According to the University of Maryland’s Center for International Development and Conflict Management, “global warfare has decreased by over 60 percent since peaking in the mid-1980s, falling . . . to its lowest level since the late 1950**s**.**” In the last three years alone, 11 wars have ended, in countries ranging from Indonesia and Sri Lanka in Asia to Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Angola, and Liberia in sub-Saharan Africa. The two most striking features of war in our time have been the decline of traditional interstate warfare and the rise and fall of civil war. **Since the end of the Cold War there have been just a handful of wars between separate states, and most of these were very short**. Far more common in recent decades have been civil wars; they increased yearly from the early 1960s to reach a bloody peak in the early 1990s. But **in the last 10 years there has been a sharp decline**. The University of Maryland center lists only eight “societal wars” as ongoing.

### Turn — Cap Solves Environment

#### Capitalism solves enviro – Prosperity key to motive.

Taylor 3 (Director of Natural Resource Studies at the CATO Institute, 03 (Jerry, CATO Institute, “Happy Earth Day? Thank Capitalism,” April 23, http://www.cato.org/pub\_display.php?pub\_id=3073)

Indeed, we wouldn't even have environmentalists in our midst were it not for capitalism. Environmental

**amenities**, after all, **are luxury goods.** America -- like much of the Third World today -- had no environmental movement to speak of until living standards rose sufficiently so that we could turn our attention from simply providing for food, shelter, and a reasonable education to higher "quality of life" issues. **The richer you are, the more likely you are to be an environmentalist. And people wouldn't be rich without capitalism. Wealth not only breeds environmentalists, it begets environmental quality. There are dozens of studies showing that, as per capita income initially rises** from subsistence levels**, air and water pollution increases** correspondingly. **But once per capita income hits** between $**3,500** and $15,000 (dependent upon the pollutant**), the ambient concentration of pollutants begins to decline just as rapidly as it had previously increased. This relationship is found for virtually every significant pollutant in every single region of the planet**. It is an iron law. Given that wealthier societies use more resources than poorer societies, such findings are indeed counterintuitive. But the data don't lie. How do we explain this? The obvious answer -- that wealthier societies are willing to trade-off the economic costs of government regulation for environmental improvements and that poorer societies are not -- is only partially correct. In the United States, pollution declines generally predated the passage of laws mandating pollution controls. In fact, for most pollutants, declines were greater before the federal government passed its panoply of environmental regulations than after the EPA came upon the scene. Much of this had to do with individual demands for environmental quality. People who could afford cleaner-burning furnaces, for instance, bought them. People who wanted recreational services spent their money accordingly, creating profit opportunities for the provision of untrammeled nature. Property values rose in cleaner areas and declined in more polluted areas, shifting capital from Brown to Green investments. Market agents will supply whatever it is that people are willing to spend money on. And when people are willing to spend money on environmental quality, the market will provide it. Meanwhile, **capitalism rewards efficiency and punishes waste. Profit-hungry companies found ingenious ways to reduce the natural resource inputs necessary to produce all kinds of goods, which in turn reduced environmental demands on the land and the amount of waste that flowed through smokestacks and water pipes. As we learned to do more and more with a given unit of resources, the waste involved** (which manifests itself in the form of pollution) **shrank.**

#### Cap solves enviro – Tech, property incentives.

Capitalism Magazine 98 (“Environmentalism and capitalism, http://www.capitalism.org/faq/environment.htm)

Doesn't capitalism destroy the environment? No**. Capitalism** is the system of individual rights. It **is the greatest protector of man's environment**' (as opposed to the protection of the environment at the expense of man's wellbeing).How is this possible**? Under capitalism all property is privately owned. If you pollute your own property that is your business (but in doing so you reduce the property value which would not be in your selfinterest).** However, **the minute your pollution spreads to another person's property, and causes** objectively **provable damage, the owners of that property can sue you as a matter of right. The right to property is not the privilege to damage or pollute the property of others. Witness that the privately owned locks and streams of Scotland are far cleaner than the government owned cesspools of socialist India. What is the solution to pollution?** As for the disposing of the pollution of factories, this is **a technological solution -- and capitalism, as the system of technological progress, is the only system that can provide such a solution.**

#### Enviro up – Trends on our side.

Walberg & Bast 3 (Herbert J. Walberg, distinguished visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution, and Joseph L. Bast, C.E.O. of the Heartland Institute, October 23, 2003, “Education and Capitalism: How Overcoming Our Fear of Markets and Economics Can Improve America's Schools”, page X)

CAPITALISM HARMS THE ENVIRONMENT Today most of us are environmentalists, so the environmental effects of capitalism concern us greatly. If we believe capitalism allows greedy business owners to pollute the air and rivers without concern for the future or the health of others, we are unlikely to entrust capitalism with the education of future generations. **One way to judge the impact of capitalism on the environment is to compare the environmental records of capitalist countries with those of countries with precapitalist, socialist, or communist economies**.35 **The record clearly shows environmental conditions are improving in every capitalist country in the world and deteriorating only in noncapitalist countries**.36 **Environmental conditions in the former Soviet Union prior to that communist nation’s collapse, for example, were devastating and getting worse**.37 Untreated sewage was routinely dumped in the country’s rivers, workers were exposed to high levels of toxic chemicals in their workplaces, and air quality was so poor in many major cities that children suffered asthma and other breathing disorders at epidemic levels. Some environmentalists say it is unfair to compare environmental progress in a very affluent nation, such as the United States, to conditions in very poor nations, such as those in Africa. But it was the latter’s rejection of capitalism that made those countries poor in the first place. Moreover, **comparing the United States to developed countries with mixed or socialist economies also reveals a considerable gap on a wide range of environmental indicators. Comparing urban air quality and water quality in the largest rivers in the United States, France, Germany, and England, for example, reveals better conditions in the United States**.38 Emerging capitalist countries experience rising levels of pollution attributable to rapid industrialization, but history reveals this to be a transitional period followed by declining emissions and rising environmental quality.39 There is no evidence, prior to its economic collapse, that conditions in the former Soviet Union were improving or ever would improve. There is no evidence today that many of the nations of Africa are creating the institutions necessary to stop the destruction of their natural resources or lower the alarming mortality and morbidity rates of their people.

#### Capitalism encourages efficiency and waste reduction – Helps the environment.

Walberg & Bast 3 (Herbert J. Walberg, distinguished visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution, and Joseph L. Bast, C.E.O. of the Heartland Institute, October 23, 2003, “Education and Capitalism: How Overcoming Our Fear of Markets and Economics Can Improve America's Schools”, page X)

WHY CAPITALISM PROTECTS THE ENVIRONMENT What has made this vast improvement in environmental quality possible in the United States? Why have countries without capitalist institutions made less progress? The security of personal possessions made possible by the capitalist institution of private-property rights is a key reason why capitalism protects the environment. **Where property rights are secure, the owners of property** (land as well as other physical assets) **are more likely to invest in improvements that increase the property’s long-term value**.Why plant trees if your right to eventually harvest them is at risk? Why manage a forest for sustained yields in the future if someone else will capture the profit of their eventual harvest? **Evidence that secure property rights are the key to good stewardship of assets is all around us. Privately owned houses are better maintained than rental units. Privately owned cars and trucks are better maintained than fleet vehicles** (owned by an employer) and leased vehicles. In the former Soviet Union, privately owned gardens—representing only a small share of the land devoted to agriculture—produced as much as half of the fruits and vegetables produced by the entire country. In virtually every neighborhood in the United States, most front yards are neatly groomed and often elaborately landscaped, whereas the strip of public land between the sidewalk and the street is often weedy, poorly trimmed, and neglected. **Markets, the second capitalist institution, tend to increase efficiency and reduce waste by putting resources under the control of those who value them most highly. This tends to ratchet downward the amount of any resource that is not used or consumed during production, a practice that produces cleaner-burning fuels and machines, lower-emission manufacturing processes, fewer byproducts shipped to landfills, and so on**. A good example of this is the fact that the amount of energy required to produce a dollar of goods and services in the United States fell 1.3 percent a year from 1985 to 2000 and is expected to fall 1.6 percent per year from 2000 to 2020.48 Finally, **the wealth created by the institutions of capitalism makes it possible to invest more resources to protect the environment**. Once again, the United States is the best example of this tendency. The cost of complying with environmental regulations in 2000 was approximately $267 billion, or nearly $2,000 for every household.49 Only a capitalist society can afford to spend so much.

### Turn — Cap Solves Famine

#### Only capitalism can respond fast enough to prevent famines.

Lockitch 9 (Keith, fellow@ Ayn Rand Center for Individual Rights, Energy & Environment, 20(5), <http://www.heartland.org/custom/semod_policybot/pdf/25905.pdf>)

Despite drought conditions severe enough to rate comparison with the 1930s Dust Bowl, Americans saw only minor economic losses and fluctuations in food prices. It is telling that the most that Weart could find to say was that the Midwest droughts showed up on “the front pages of newspapers and on television news programs.” Observe that they specifically did not “show up” at all on people’s waistlines and barely registered on their pocketbooks. Such resilience is testament to the adaptive flexibility of an industrialized economy and a (relatively) free market—to industrial capitalism’s ability to respond quickly when normal conditions are disrupted. While the other regions mentioned suffered a total failure of their food production and distribution systems, the United States donated surplus food supplies to Africa, sold food grains to India, and arranged a massive sale of wheat to the Soviet Union in late 1972. Contrast this to the helplessness before nature of India’s peasant farmers or the Sahel’s nomadic tribes. Why were they unable to benefit from the agricultural practices that empowered the American farmers—the irrigation of fields, the use of fertilizers and pesticides, and the application of sophisticated methods of agricultural management? What role did their primitive cultural traditions and their countries’ oppressive political systems play in suppressing the industrial development and free market mechanisms that made such advances possible? And in the case of the Soviet Union, should there really be any surprise that its state-owned collective farms were unable to cope with unfavorable weather conditions? Even under good conditions— and with the advantage of some of the most fertile agricultural land in the world—the central planners of the Soviet agricultural ministry were rarely able to coerce adequate food production.

#### Food shortages lead to World War III.

Calvin 98 (William, theoretical neurophysiologist @ U Washington, “The Great Climate Flip-Flop”, Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 281, No. 1, January, p. 47-64)

The population-crash scenario is surely the most appalling. Plummeting crop yields would cause some powerful countries to try to take over their neighbors or distant lands -- if only because their armies, unpaid and lacking food, would go marauding, both at home and across the borders. The better-organized countries would attempt to use their armies, before they fell apart entirely, to take over countries with significant remaining resources, driving out or starving their inhabitants if not using modern weapons to accomplish the same end: eliminating competitors for the remaining food. This would be a worldwide problem -- and could lead to a Third World War -- but Europe's vulnerability is particularly easy to analyze. The last abrupt cooling, the Younger Dryas, drastically altered Europe's climate as far east as Ukraine. Present-day Europe has more than 650 million people. It has excellent soils, and largely grows its own food. It could no longer do so if it lost the extra warming from the North Atlantic.

### Turn — Cap Key to Tech Advances

#### Cap is key to tech innovations preventing extinction – Sustainability on the brink

Atkisson 2k (Alan, President and CEO of an international sustainability consultancy to business and government, “Sustainability is Dead – Long Live Sustainability”, http://www.academia.edu/6420556/Sustainability\_is\_Dead\_Long\_Live\_Sustainability)

Transformation of many kinds is already happening all around us, mostly in the name of globalization. **“Globalization” has become the signifier for a family of transformations in communications, finance, trade, travel, ecological and cultural interaction that are drawing the world’s people and natural systems into ever closer relationship with each other, regardless of national boundaries.**Many of **these transformations contribute more to the likelihood of global collapse than to global sustainability, because they are fueled by destructive technologies**, they result in ever greater levels of environmental damage, they undermine national democracies, and they have so far widened dramatically the gap between rich and poor.**Yet there is nothing inherently unsustainable about globalization***per se*, **if we understand that word to mean the growing integration of global human society.**Indeed,**globalization of many kinds—from the spread of better technologies to the universal adoption of human rights—is essential to attaining global sustainability.**But the engines of globalization need to be harnessed to a more noble set of goals and aspirations. **At the heart of most descriptions of globalization is the market economy. It has often been fashionable to blame the market for the environmental crisis**, and in particular to blame the market’s tendency to concentrate power within the large, independent capital structures we call “corporations.” **But we need corporations, and the market, to accomplish the change we seek. To develop and spread innovations for sustainability at transformation speed, we need corporate-scale concentrations of research, production, and distribution capacity. We need the market's speed, freedom, and incentive structures.**Clearly, we also need governors on the spread of destructive development, and the enormous fleet of old and dangerous innovations—from the internal combustion engine to the idea that cynical nihilism is “cool”—that are increasing our distance from the dream of sustainability at an accelerating rate. **But if we can alter globalization so that it turns the enormous power of the market and the corporation in a truly sustainable direction, we will watch in awe as our world changes for the better with unimaginable speed.** Envisioning the transformation of globalization will strike many as the ultimate in wishful thinking. Yet transformation begins precisely in wish and thought; and there are currently two powerful wishes adding considerable weight to global efforts to bring down the Berlin Wall between today's damaging “capitalism-at-all-costs” and tomorrow’s practice of a more mindful “capitalism conscious of all costs.” One “wish” is the United Nations’ new “Global Compact” with the corporate sector. It calls on corporations to adopt greater levels of social and environmental responsibility—a call that many are pledging to heed. The other “wish” is the non-governmental Global Reporting Initiative, which sets new criteria for measuring sustainable corporate performance and is fast becoming adopted as the international standard, by corporations and activists alike. These promising developments, still in their relative infancy, did not appear suddenly out of nowhere. There are but the latest and most successful demonstration of the power of “wishful thinking,” indulged in by hundreds of thousands of people, from the Seattle protesters of 1999 to the world government theorists of the 1930s. And these agreements are, themselves, “wishful thinking” of a kind, comprised as they are of agreements on principle and criteria for measurements. But if this is what wishful thinking can do, consider what inspired action, multiplied throughout the global system, will accomplish when seriously embraced at the same scale. Indeed, the transformation of globalization will, in many ways, signal the onset of transformation in general. **When we witness the redirection of investment flows, the adoption of new rules and ethics governing the production process, the true raising of global standards of environmental, social, and economic performance, sustainability will then be written directly into the cultural genes**, also known as “memes,” **steering global development.**These new “sustainability memes” will then be replicated in every walk of industrial life. The dream of sustainability will become business as usual.

## 1AR — Extensions

### Extend: “Reforms Good”

#### Reform is the best starting point. It avoids calcifying resistance.

Burrow 1 (Author and Publisher of the SMAC Lecture Series, Paul, “Is There An Alternative to Capitalism?”, New Colonist, April, http://www.newcolonist.com/altcap.html)

I think that if we want to build a popular movement, and create an alternative to capitalism, we need to start by asking such questions, and by articulating them in a language that’s real. (Not many people are interested in the subtleties of the “dialectical relationship between base and superstructure.” Get real!) From an organizing perspective alone, we need to recognize that the language we use, the mannerisms, style, and tone we adopt, is at least as important as the substance of our message. We need to have a little humility —we need to be a little less attached to our conclusions, a little more questioning of our assumptions, a little less quick with our judgements and dismissals. Instead of saying everyone else isn’t revolutionary enough (while we sit on our ass waiting for the Revolution; “pure” but alone), we need to look in the bloody mirror. We need to ask ourselves “What are we really doing to create a welcoming movement, a culture of resistance; what are we really doing to foster solidarity; when was the last time I reached out to someone who didn’t already share my politics; when was the last time I actually had an impact on someone?” Instead of saying “those young anarchists don’t know how to build institutions” (and then calling them “reformist” or “parochial” or “bourgeois” when they do), the Old Left needs to recognize that all the same criticisms apply equally to themselves. In addition to saying “talk minus action equals zero,” younger activists need to simultaneously pay more attention to history, theory, and the experiences of veteran activists. Talk minus action is zero, but it’s also true that action minus well-thought-out ideas and principles can be less than zero. It can be damaging to individual people, and it can hinder the growth of a radical movement. Ultimately, we need to be less concerned about the alleged failings and ignorance of others, and more concerned about our own political relevance. The entire Left, progressive, activist community (young and old, socialist or not) needs to build or expand upon its own institutions, and more importantly, the alternatives we create must embody the values we profess to hold. Instead of saying “Anything short of complete ‘Revolution’ is reformist” (and then going home to watch TV), we need to recognize that no revolution begins with the overthrow of the State. The dismantling or seizure of the State is usually a reflection of a deep revolution already occurring at the grassroots, community and workplace level. The Spanish Revolution of 1936-39 didn’t just happen because the Spanish were more “radical” or “committed” than we are. It was the culmination of almost 70 years of organizing, making mistakes, building a popular base. Pre-existing structures and worker organizations made possible a workers’ takeover of much of the Spanish economy (especially in Catalonia). Participation in radical unions, factory committees, and collectives for decades, enabled Spanish workers to develop knowledge of their enterprises, a sense of their own competence, and gave them direct experience with collective organizational principles. The struggle of the Spanish anarchists and communists offers many lessons—not the least of which is that revolution is a long-term agenda. Younger activists especially need to take this seriously, because they tend to think that militancy alone (regardless of popular support) will bring about a fast demise of capitalism. Unrealistic expectations are a fast road to burnout and despair. At the same time, however, observing that the state-capitalist system is powerful, and believing that revolution is a long-term agenda, is not an excuse to stuff our nests, or avoid direct action. As Gramsci pointed out we need to maintain an optimism of will, even if we have a pessimism of mind. In other words, we need to strike a balance between hope and reality—something that is absolutely necessary, if our efforts are to be sustained beyond youthful idealism into the rest of our lives. We need to think hard about the meaning of solidarity. Solidarity is NOT about supporting those who share your precise politics. It’s about supporting those who struggle against injustice—even if their assumptions, methods, politics, and goals differ from our own. Any anarchist who says they won’t support Cuban solidarity efforts, or could care less about the U.S. embargo, because the Cuban revolution is “Statist” and “authoritarian,” is in my opinion, full of shit. (But this doesn’t imply that we should turn a blind eye to human rights violations in Cuba, just because they’re relatively non-existent compared to the rest of Latin America (or Canada for that matter). It doesn’t imply that we should refrain from criticism of Cuba’s economic system from a socialist and working-class perspective, simply because we’re worried about the declining number of post-capitalist experiments to support.)

#### Capitalism is inevitable—reforms, not revolution, are the only option.

Wilson 2k (Editor and Publisher of Illinois Academe, (John K., “How the Left can Win Arguments and Influence People” p. 15- 16)

**Ca**pitalism **is far too ingrained** in American life **to eliminate. If you go into the most impoverished areas of America**, you will find that the **people who live there** are not seeking government control over factories or even more social welfare programs; they're **hoping, usually in vain, for a fair chance to share in the capitalist wealth. The poor do not pray for socialism-they strive to be a part of the capitalist s**ystem**. They want jobs, they want to start businesses, and they want to make money and be successful. What's wrong with America is not capitalism as a system but capitalism as a religion.** We worship the accumulation of wealth and treat the horrible inequality between rich and poor as if it were an act of God. Worst of all, we allow the government to exacerbate the financial divide by favoring the wealthy: go anywhere in America, and compare a rich suburb with a poor town-the city services, schools, parks, and practically everything else will be better financed in the place populated by rich people. **The aim is not to overthrow capitalism but to overhaul it. Give it a social-justice tune-up, make it more efficient, get the economic engine to hit on all cylinders for everybody, and stop putting out so many environmentally hazardous substances.** To some people, this goal means selling out leftist ideals for the sake of capitalism. But the right thrives on having an ineffective opposition. The Revolutionary Communist Party helps stabilize the "free market" capitalist system by making it seem as if the only alternative to free-market capitalism is a return to Stalinism. **Prospective activists for change are instead channeled into pointless discussions about the revolutionary potential of the proletariat. Instead of working to persuade people to accept progressive ideas, the far left talks to itself (which may be a blessing, given the way it communicates) and tries to sell copies of the Socialist Worker to an uninterested public.**

### Extend: “Totalizing Criticisms Fail”

#### Capitalism is not homogenous — totalizing responses like the alt fail.

Gibson-Graham 96 (Katharine, human geography@ Australian National University, Julie, geography@U of Massachusetts, The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It), p. 246-47)

The concept of capitalism itself is haunted by heterogeneity, by the historicity and singularity of each form of economy that might be called capitalist. Each capitalist site is constituted within a social and political context, and that contextualization is itself contaminating of any pure or essential and invariant attribute associated with the concept (“it is necessary to introduce haunting into the very construction of a concept”). There is no capitalism but only capitalisms. Derrida himself acknowledges the inevitability of multiplicity and contamination when he argues parenthetically (in one of the few bracketed extensions and corrections that he added to the original text of the lecture) “with regard to capital” [but there is no longer, there never was just capital, nor capitalism in the singular but capitalisms plural — whether State or private, real or symbolic, always linked to spectral forces — or rather capitalizations whose antagonisms are irreducible.] (p. 59) And what might this plurality entail? To take an admittedly extreme example, perhaps we could acknowledge that even the malign character of capitalism cannot be presumed. The malignancy that is its only appearance in Specters of Marx may not itself be free of contamination. If there are only capitalisms (and no essential capital or capitalism), some capitalist instances may be quite acceptable and benign. And if many others are malignant, for doubtless that will also be the case, it is important to ask about the contexts and conditions that produce the evil rather than accepting it as necessary and natural (for only in relation to such a question can political possibilities come to light). It might also be possible to see certain capitalist practices and institutions (some multinational corporations, for example) as relatively ineffectual and powerless, rather than as uniformly capable of dominance and self-realization.12 We might cease to speak easily of capitalist imperialism as though empire were an aspect of capitalism’s identity (albeit one that masquerades as its history).

### Extend: “Cap is Inevitable”

#### Capitalism is genetically encoded.

Clark 7 (Greg, UC-Davis, “Survival of the Richest:. Malthus, Darwin and Modern Economic Growth”, http://www.econ.ucdavis.edu/faculty/gclark/papers/capitalism%20genes.pdf)

Before 1800 all societies, including England, were Malthusian. The average man or woman had 2 surviving children. Such societies were also Darwinian. Some reproductively successful groups produced more than 2 surviving children, increasing their share of the population, while other groups produced less, so that their share declined. But unusually in England, this selection for men was based on economic success from at least 1250, not success in violence as in some other pre-industrial societies. The richest male testators left twice as many children as the poorest. Consequently the modern population of the English is largely descended from the economic upper classes of the middle ages. At the same time, from 1150 to 1800 in England there are clear signs of changes in average economic preferences towards more “capitalist” attitudes. The highly capitalistic nature of English society by 1800 – individualism, low time preference rates, long work hours, high levels of human capital – may thus stem from the nature of the Darwinian struggle in a very stable agrarian society in the long run up to the Industrial Revolution. The triumph of capitalism in the modern world thus may lie as much in our genes as in ideology or rationality.

#### Capitalism is cultural, not political. Changing the system won’t change the *ideal.*

Prothero & Fitchett 2k(June, Andrea, Associate Professor of Marketing, at the Business School in University College Dublin, Ireland, James A., professor of Marketing and Consumer Research, “Greening Capitalism: Opportunities for a Green Commodity,” *Sage Journals*, SAGE Publications is an independent publishing company founded in 1965 in New York, http://jmk.sagepub.com/content/20/1/46.full.pdf+html)

Popular portrayals of the “green revolution” are often framed in exactly the same manner as Bauman (1991) characterizes communism. Inherent within the eco-revolutionary agenda is the belief that environmental goals (as with socialist principles in the case of communism) can only be accomplished by overturning capitalist structures and capitalist social relations. In this respect, the green vision of society postcapitalism does not differ conceptually to Marx’s own notion of postcapitalist revolutionary practice. In place of the worker’s mills and fields can be found an eco-Marxist utopia of vast solar plants and recycling centers (McMurty 1992). Gone are the insatiable demands of consumers and the exploitative practices of organizations, and in their place sustainable and responsible behaviors prevail. Such readings are thus predicated on the assumption that industrial capitalism, together with consumerism and the ever-proliferating commodity culture that it produces, is ultimately responsible for the exploitation and devastation of the natural environment (Durning 1992). **The demise of communist ideologies and the acceptance of free-market capitalism throughout Central and Eastern Europe would suggest that revolutions that seek to undermine the capitalist paradigm in favor of an ideologically conceived alternative (whether communist or “green**”) may **in practice offer little** scope for change. To progress beyond the limitations of the eco-Marxist agenda and incorporate more contemporary themes, it is necessary to turn to the well-established tradition of post-Marxist cultural theory. For Baudrillard, the main deficiency in Marx’s communist manifesto is the failure to recognize the sociological and cultural role of capitalism**.** Baudrillard (1975, 1981) shows that contemporary understandings of the environment, nature, human need, and utility are just as much tied to the conditions of capitalism as are exchange and the circulation of commodities. Thus, **any definition that uses contemporary understandings of nature and human needs to define the green society cannot be differentiated or considered distinct from the capitalist mode** of production **since these terms (i.e., language) have emerged** as part of the **cultural conditions of capitalism.** Baudrillard (1975, 59) states, What [Marx] fails to recognise is that in his symbolic exchanges primitive man does not gauge himself in relation to Nature. He is not aware of necessity, a Law that takes effect only with the objectification of nature. The Law takes its definitive form in capitalist political economy; moreover, it is only an expression of scarcity. Scarcity, which itself arises in the market economy, it is not a given dimension of the economy. Hence it is an extremely serious problem that Marxist thought retains these key concepts which depend upon the metaphysics of the market economy in general and on modern capitalist ideology in particular. Not analysed or unmasked (but exported to primitive society where they do not apply) these concepts mortgage all further analysis. Baudrillard’s reasoning presents several difficulties with regard to defining ecologicalism in opposition to capitalism and commodity relations. It would seem that **any revolutionary movement**—whether its intention is the liberation of the environment or emancipation of the proletariat—**is destined to take with it the seed of capitalism** and, in doing so, only serve to further reify commodity relations in another guise. If the overthrow of commodity culture is rejected as a viable strategy by which environmental concerns can be addressed, it would seem logical to try and establish a theoretical justification that embraces capitalist social relations to further the ecological cause. This approach provides the only constructive prospect for achieving ecological objectives since it seeks to incorporate and mobilize revolutionary forces within the existing social paradigm. The code of capitalism is destined to define the revolutionary means of change, and it would therefore seem logical to identify and locate the solutions to current ecological concerns within existing social frameworks and the broader code of capitalism. There has been much discussion on the greening of organizations (Shrivastava 1994, 1995; Purser, Park, and Montuori 1995; McCloskey and Smith 1995) and the managers within those organizations (Fineman 1997). At the same time, it is also acknowledged that to change the basic structure of organizations, one must consider the economy, polity, and society in which we live (O’Connor 1994) and question the dominant social paradigm (DSP) (Kilbourne, McDonagh, and Prothero 1997), defined by Milbrath as “a society’s belief structure that organises the way people perceive and interpret the functioning of the world around them” (quoted in Kilbourne, McDonagh, and Prothero 1997, 4). Various ways of achieving this have been proposed by ecological movements and also by some enlightened organization studies and marketing academics (see, e.g., the readings in McDonagh and Prothero 1997). The failure of institutions, which operate in accordance with capitalist practices to embrace the ecological cause, is largely attributable to an inadequate conceptual basis from which to frame and understand capitalism beyond the stifling confines of economic and political paradigms.

### Extend: “Alternative Fails”

#### No mindset shift will occur – individuals won’t adjust their lifestyles.

Ehrlich 96 (Paul R., Bing Professor of Population Studies, Department of Biology Sciences at Stanford, and Anne H. Ehrlich, Senior Research Associate in the Department of Biological Sciences at Stanford, *Betrayal of Science and Reason: How Anti-Environmental Rhetoric Threatens Our Future*, p. 69-70)

But human beings are specialists in cultural evolution, which can pro-ceed much more rapidly than can genetic evolution. Through ingenuity and invention, it is possible to enlarge human carrying capacity-as in- deed has happened in the past. Today, widespread behavioral changes-such as becoming vegetarian-potentially could increase Earth's carrying capacity for human beings in a short time as well. As-suming full cooperation in the needed changes, it might be possible to support 6 billion people indefinitely (that is, to end human overpopu-lation, if there were no further population growth). But we doubt that most people in today's rich nations would willingly embrace the changes in lifestyle necessary to increase global carrying capacity. How many Americans would be willing to adjust their lifestyles radically to live, say, like the Chinese, so that more Dutch or Australians or Mexicans could be supported? How many Chinese would give up their dreams of American-style affluence for the same reason? Such lifestyle changes certainly seem unlikely to us, since most current trends among those who can afford it are toward more affluence and consumption, which tend to decrease carrying capacity and intensify the degree of overpopulation.

#### Elites are key & they won’t change.

Bast 8 (Andrew, May 17, Staff @ NY Inquirer, “With Zizek, We're All Just Left Joking Around”, http://www.nyinquirer.com/nyinquirer/2008/05/with-zizek-were.html]

What is frightening, simply put, is Žižek’s utter disregard for reality**.** In the final pages, he grapples with Francis Fukuyama’s 1989 declaration of the “End of History,” undoubtedly a text to be reckoned with—moved past, if you will—in any serious discussion of where humanity is heading. Frankly, I breathed a sigh of relief, eager for his response. What came to mind was a final passage from Fukuyama’s essay: “The end of history will be a very sad time,” the long-time neoconservative and professor of international political economy at the School of Advanced International Study at Johns Hopkins wrote in the midst of the Cold War’s end almost two decades ago. **“**The struggle for recognition, the willingness to risk one’s life for a purely abstract goal, the worldwide ideological struggle that called forth daring, courage, imagination, and idealism, will be replaced by economic calculation, the endless solving of technical problems, environmental concerns, and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands.” And in conclusion, what does Žižek offer? A slipshod analysis of the growing slum cities around the world, and why their dispossessed residents ought be tapped to find strategies for the rest of us to organize resistance against… against …It is still unclear. Global capitalism? Repressive state apparatuses**?** Overblown institutions? Feeble social welfare organizations? Privatized medical establishments? And on top of all this, if anyone should know, Žižek the intellectual should, that revolution rarely, if ever, comes from the peasants. History teaches us, in France, in Russia, in Iran, in Ethiopia, in China, the list goes on and on, that revolution comes from out-of-power elites. And their allegiance sworn to the intellectuals**.**

#### Capitalism coopts the alternative; vague rejection fails.

Kazin 1 (Michael, History @ Georgetown, The American Prospect, 8/13, “The corporation as a way of life”, <http://www.prospect.org/print/V12/14/kazin-m.html>)

Pulling my pink diaper up smartly, I still subscribe to the old argument that overweening corporate power betrays the democratic ideals of the United States--ideals, in the post-Cold War world, that most nations now share, at least officially. To work for a big firm is usually akin to living under an authoritarian regime with a smiling public face and a health plan. The incorporation of society is now so accepted that few people bother to questionfor-profit prisons, logos affixed to clothing and plastered on cityscapes, and school districts run by private firms--all of which would have amazed Americans a half-century ago. Yet **arguments based primarily on abstract convictions** about fairness and democracy **failed to curb corporate growth and influence in the past** (decades of antitrust cases notwithstanding), **and there is little hope they will** be more successful in the future. From the machine-woven cloth of Lowell's mills to the frenetic joys of Orlando's theme parks, **corporations have structured** national **life in ways that have left most** Americans **content,** even as big **business has co-opted or crushed organized resistance** to its rule. If contemporary liberals and radicals aim to do better, we will have to explain how justice can be won without grounding the great jets of Progress.

### Extend: “Alternative Causes Transition Wars”

#### Transition wars will kill the planet but not capitalism

Flood 5 (Andrew, anarchist organizer and writer, 10/6, anarkismo.net, “Civilization, Primitivism, Anarchism,” <http://www.anarkismo.net/newswire.php?story_id=1451>)

However it is worth doing a little mental exercise on this idea of the oil running out. If indeed there was no alternative what might happen? Would a primitivist utopia emerge even at the bitter price of 5,900 million people dying? No. The primitivists seem to forget that we live in a class society. The population of the earth is divided into a few people with vast resources and power and the rest of us. It is not a case of equal access to resources, rather of quite incredible unequal access. Those who fell victim to the mass die off would not include Rubert Murdoch, Bill Gates or George Bush because these people have the money and power to monopolise remaining supplies for themselves. Instead the first to die in huge number would be the population of the poorer mega cities on the planet. Cairo and Alexandria in Egypt have a population of around 20 million between them. Egypt is dependent both on food imports and on the very intensive agriculture of the Nile valley and the oasis. Except for the tiny wealthy elite those 20 million urban dwellers would have nowhere to go and there is no more land to be worked. Current high yields are in part dependent on high inputs of cheap energy. The mass deaths of millions of people is not something that destroys capitalism. Indeed at periods of history it has been seen as quite natural and even desirable for the modernization of capital. The potato famine of the 1840's that reduced the population of Ireland by 30% was seen as desirable by many advocates of free trade.(16) So was the 1943/4 famine in British ruled Bengal in which four million died(17). For the capitalist class such mass deaths, particularly in colonies afford opportunities to restructure the economy in ways that would otherwise be resisted. The real result of an 'end of energy' crisis would see our rulers stock piling what energy sources remained and using them to power the helicopter gunships that would be used to control those of us fortunate enough to be selected to toil for them in the biofuel fields. The unlucky majority would just be kept where they are and allowed to die off. More of the 'Matrix' then utopia in other words. The other point to be made here is that destruction can serve to regenerate capitalism. Like it or not large scale destruction allows some capitalist to make a lot of money. Think of the Iraq war. The destruction of the Iraqi infrastructure may be a disaster for the people of Iraq buts it's a profit making bonanza for Halliburton and co[18]. Not coincidentally the Iraq war, is helping the US A, where the largest corporations are based, gain control of the parts of the planet where much future and current oil production takes place.

## 1AR — Impact Answers

### They Say: “Cap Causes Inequality”

#### Cap is not the cause of inequality.

Vance 5 (Adjunct Instructor in Accounting at Pensacola Junior College (Laurence, Von Mises Institute, “What They Won't Tell You About Capitalism,” August 16, http://mises.org/story/1887)

The title of the book may initially seem to be an exercise in hyperbole, but such is not the case. How Capitalism Saved America is indeed the untold history of our country. After a brief introduction and two very crucial introductory chapters on the nature of capitalism and the perpetrators of anticapitalism, DiLorenzo takes us through nine chapters of American history — from the Pilgrims to the recent California energy "crisis" — and shows "how, from the very beginning, capitalism has been vital to America's growth, and how excessive government interference in the economy has only exacerbated economic problems and stifled growth." Although the book is written chronologically, any of these nine chapters can be read independently. However, only one of them is necessary to see that the book's title is not an overstatement. Because it was Marx himself who coined the term, it is no surprise that capitalism has been falsely thought to benefit only capitalists and the rich while exploiting workers and the poor. DiLorenzo dismisses as Marxist propaganda the idea that capitalism is "a zero-sum game in which 'somebody wins, somebody loses.'" Instead, "Capitalism succeeds precisely because free exchange is mutually advantageous." And not only does it succeed, it is "the source of civilizations and human progress." Capitalism has "brought to the masses products and services that were once considered luxuries available only to the rich." Capitalism is not only "the best-known source of upward economic mobility," it "actually reduces income inequalities within a nation." In short, capitalism alleviates poverty, raises living standards, expands economic opportunity, and enables scores of millions to live longer, healthier, and more peaceful lives. DiLorenzo makes great claims for capitalism. But consider the alternative: "The more regulations, controls, taxes, government-run industries, protectionism, and other forms of interventionism that exist, the poorer a country will be." Why then is capitalism blamed for causing monopolies, harming consumers, endangering workers, damaging the environment, causing instability, exploiting the Third World, breeding discrimination, and causing war? Why does "a careful review of our nation's history" reveal "a long series of myths that demonize capitalism"? DiLorenzo believes that because there is "a widespread misunderstanding of what capitalism is, our leaders — and also much of the general public — incorrectly blame capitalism for any economic problems we face."

#### Capitalism produces new technologies that reduce inequality; socialism causes inequality.

Ashworth 10 (Stephen, academic publishing @Oxford, Dec 18, “Towards the Sociology of the Universe, part 2”, <http://www.astronist.demon.co.uk/space-age/essays/Sociology2.html>)

Under capitalism, social benefit is primarily expressed in monetary terms, and society is stratified economically, with richer classes nearer the top of the social scale and poorer classes nearer the bottom. Under the socialist mode of society, the central function of capital – deciding the allocation of resources – is performed by political ideology. Social benefit is now primarily expressed in terms of ideological capital, being the level of influence, official or unofficial, which an individual enjoys within the institutions, such as in the Soviet Union the Communist Party, which express, teach and propagate that ideology. The rich in such a system are therefore the ideologically rich: those who rise to prominence in the political process and occupy official posts in the Party apparatus; while the poor are those who merely dutifully consume the Party propaganda. The poorest are those who disagree with or actively resist the ruling ideology, and who end up marginalised or criminalised as a result. In view of historical precedents such as the Soviet Union, it is highly unlikely that any realistic socialist society represents an advance over capitalist society in terms of the well-being of the majority of its members (as judged by those members). It is not known whether any third option exists that is compatible with industrialism; however, it is highly plausible that new options will appear in due course, given continued technological development and corresponding social change. Recent history suggests that politically driven attempts at creating a socially just society put all its members, except those at the very top of the Party hierarchy, at a considerable material disadvantage to corresponding members of capitalist societies. One reason for this is that democratic capitalist institutions tend to be flexible and thus capable of responding to changing circumstances, while ideology tends to resist change even in changing circumstances. It must also be clear that any beneficial changes to the modern global liberal democratic market capitalist order can only come about in an incremental fashion, as argued in the social philosophy of Karl Popper (in his book The Open Society and its Enemies). Violent political revolution would, judging by historical precedents, be so destructive that it cannot be contemplated except with extreme horror. Incremental changes in technology, for example the recent introduction of the internet, allow the institutions of democratic capitalism to evolve in ways which are unpredictable but generally beneficial to most groups in society. As civilisation continues to change under the influence of new technologies of computing, medicine and transport, particularly space transport, the democratic capitalist system will naturally also change. Considering the freedoms and privileges enjoyed by the peoples of developed countries compared with their forebears of a few generations ago, it is reasonable to look forward to continued incremental social evolution with optimism concerning the nature of future society, while setting impractical utopian dreams aside.

#### Inequality is declining because of capitalism.

Bast 1 (Joseph, pres Heartland Institute, March 1, “Socialist Myths, Capitalist Truths”, [http://www.heartland.org/publications/heartlander/article/190 /March\_2001\_Socialist\_Myths\_Capitalist\_Truths.html](http://www.heartland.org/publications/heartlander/article/190%20/March_2001_Socialist_Myths_Capitalist_Truths.html))

Capitalism is profoundly egalitarian. Its existence relies on institutions that protect the equal rights of consumers and producers, eschews privilege and authority, and distributes wealth based on each participants' contribution to satisfying the needs of others. So we should immediately be suspicious of claims that capitalism causes inequality. Historical data on income inequality in the U.S. show that both the rich and the poor are getting richer. The proportion of the U.S. population that was poor, measured by household consumption, fell from 31 percent in 1949 to just 2 percent in the late 1990s. Census data released in September 2000 found the nation's poverty rate had reached a 33-year low, and poverty among African-Americans and Hispanics was at the lowest levels since record-keeping began in the 1950s. "Snap-shot" views of income distribution in a capitalist society overlook the movement of households from low- to middle- and high-income status, and sometimes back again. According to W. Michael Cox and Richard Alm in their 1999 book, Myths of Rich & Poor, only 5 percent of households in the bottom fifth of income earners in 1975 were still there in 1991. Almost 3 out of 10 had risen to the top fifth, and more than three-quarters had reached the two highest tiers of income earners for at least one year by 1991. These numbers should be reassuring to those who like to "keep score" on the relative wealth of various categories of people, but it is possible to focus too much on such statistics. Incomes, after all, are outcomes of voluntary decisions and moral behavior. Income inequality generally means different choices are being made, often involving complex trade-offs between leisure, status, and work that outside observers cannot hope to judge as right or wrong.

### They Say: “Cap is the Root Cause of Aff Harms”

#### Capitalism isn’t the root cause of our harms.

Aberdeen 3 [Richard, founder Aberdeen Foundation, a homeless advocacy organization,“THE WAY A Theory of Root Cause and Solution” http://freedomtracks.com/uncommonsense/theway.html]

A view shared by many modern activists is that capitalism, free enterprise, multi-national corporations and globalization are the primary cause of the current global Human Rights problem and that by striving to change or eliminate these, the root problem of what ills the modern world is being addressed. This is a rather unfortunate and historically myopic view, reminiscent of early “class struggle” Marxists who soon resorted to violence as a means to achieve rather questionable ends. And like these often brutal early Marxists, modern anarchists who resort to violence to solve the problem are walking upside down and backwards, adding to rather than correcting, both the immediate and long-term Human Rights problem. Violent revolution, including our own American revolution, becomes a breeding ground for poverty, disease, starvation and often mass oppression leading to future violence. Large, publicly traded corporations are created by individuals or groups of individuals, operated by individuals and made up of individual and/or group investors. These business enterprises are deliberately structured to be empowered by individual (or group) investor greed. For example, a theorized ‘need’ for offering salaries much higher than is necessary to secure competent leadership (often resulting in corrupt and entirely incompetent leadership), lowering wages more than is fair and equitable and scaling back of often hard fought for benefits, is sold to stockholders as being in the best interest of the bottom-line market value and thus, in the best economic interests of individual investors. Likewise, major political and corporate exploitation of third-world nations is rooted in the individual and joint greed of corporate investors and others who stand to profit from such exploitation. More than just investor greed, corporations are driven by the greed of all those involved, including individuals outside the enterprise itself who profit indirectly from it. If one examines “the course of human events” closely, it can correctly be surmised that the “root” cause of humanity’s problems comes from individual human greed and similar negative individual motivation. The Marx/Engles view of history being a “class” struggle ¹ does not address the root problem and is thus fundamentally flawed from a true historical perspective (see Gallo Brothers for more details). So-called “classes” of people, unions, corporations and political groups are made up of individuals who support the particular group or organizational position based on their own individual needs, greed and desires and thus, an apparent “class struggle” in reality, is an extension of individual motivation. Likewise, nations engage in wars of aggression, not because capitalism or classes of society are at root cause, but because individual members of a society are individually convinced that it is in their own economic survival best interest. War, poverty, starvation and lack of Human and Civil Rights have existed on our planet since long before the rise of modern capitalism, free enterprise and multi-national corporation avarice, thus the root problem obviously goes deeper than this. Junior Bush and the neo-conservative genocidal maniacs of modern-day America could not have recently effectively gone to war against Iraq without the individual support of individual troops and a certain percentage of individual citizens within the U.S. population, each lending support for their own personal motives, whatever they individually may have been. While it is true that corrupt leaders often provoke war, using all manner of religious, social and political means to justify, often as not, entirely ludicrous ends, very rare indeed is a battle only engaged in by these same unscrupulous miscreants of power. And though a few iniquitous elitist powerbrokers may initiate nefarious policies of global genocidal oppression, it takes a very great many individuals operating from individual personal motivations of survival, desire and greed to develop these policies into a multi-national exploitive reality. No economic or political organization and no political or social cause exists unto itself but rather, individual members power a collective agenda. A workers’ strike has no hope of succeeding if individual workers do not perceive a personal benefit. And similarly, a corporation will not exploit workers if doing so is not believed to be in the economic best interest of those who run the corporation and who in turn, must answer (at least theoretically) to individuals who collectively through purchase or other allotment of shares, own the corporation. Companies have often been known to appear benevolent, offering both higher wages and improved benefits, if doing so is perceived to be in the overall economic best interest of the immediate company and/or larger corporate entity. Non-unionized business enterprises frequently offer ‘carrots’ of appeasement to workers in order to discourage them from organizing and historically in the United States, concessions such as the forty-hour workweek, minimum wage, workers compensation and proscribed holidays have been grudgingly capitulated to by greedy capitalist masters as necessary concessions to avoid profit-crippling strikes and outright revolution.

#### Capitalism not the root cause of social relations – Totalitarianism proves.

Howard 2 (Prof of Philosophy – SUNY- Stony Brook, Dick, *The Specter of Democracy,* pg vii-ix)

Why did Marx and his successors misunderstand his basic insight? The title of The Communist Manifesto suggests one reason. Marx’s goal was to make manifest a reality that was maturing in the womb of capitalism; the communists were to be the midwives of history. Communism would put an end to a savage history of class struggles that had divided humanity against itself. Because Marx was looking for a solution, he could not recognize that democracy posed to humankind new problems that could not be solved without putting an end to democracy itself. As if he intuited the threat posed by this new political form, Marx tried to anchor its reality in the economic relations of capitalism, which would produce its own proletarian “grave-diggers.” This project made some sense in the nineteenth century, when a growing urban working class challenged the justice of the new economic system. But the effects of twentieth-century totalitarianism make clear that the economy cannot be isolated and treated as if it were the determinant cause of social relations. The totalitarian seizure of power precedes its use of this power to impose its will on socioeconomic relations. This autonomous political intervention is not admitted by the totalitarian regime, which denies its won political nature by claiming to express only the necessities of a history whose interpretation it monopolizes. In this way totalitarianism is the antithesis and negation of democracy, whose problematic achievements stand out more sharply in its light. As such, totalitarianism can be defined as antipolitics.

### The Say: “Cap Eliminates Value to Life”

#### Capitalism enables individual to best discover meaning to their lives – It’s humane – Every alternative is worse.

Hicks 9 (Stephen, PhD Phil Rockford University, Climate of Collectivism, http://www.stephenhicks.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/hicks-ep-ch4.pdf)

Morally and politically, in practice every liberal capitalist country has a solid record for being humane, for by and large respecting rights and freedoms, and for making it possible for people to put together fruitful and meaningful lives. Socialist practice has time and time again proved itself more brutal than the worst dictatorships in history prior to the twentieth century. Each socialist regime has collapsed into dictatorship and begun killing people on a huge scale. Each has produced dissident writers such as Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Nien Cheng who have documented what those regimes are capable of.

#### Their view that capitalism destroys the value to life blames the system. Human failure is inevitable and not caused by capitalism. Only the individual controls their value and actions.

Dieteman 1 (David, attorney in Pennsylvania, “Blame it on Free Will”, September 3, <http://www.lewrockwell.com/dieteman/dieteman88.html>)

Second, what is the nature of capitalism? Capitalism means the free market, in other words, men freely exchanging things. As a shortcut, we refer to the free exchange of goods and services as "a market." A market is of course also the physical space where such exchanges take place. Third, if men freely exchange things — if they buy and sell in a market — how does such voluntary activity "eat away at our lives and relationships"? For starters, it would seem that it sustains lives and relationships: food that you buy keeps you alive, and movies and dinners sustain relationships. Dating gets a lot more difficult when you cannot rely on the division of labor to supply you with entertainers, chefs, and waiters (waiters; yes, waiters; not "servers;" if service must be in the name, are they not "servants"? One's computer may be dependent upon a server, but one's dinner may not, unless your kitchen is really automated). For that matter, contemporary life would be nearly impossible without the division of labor provided by markets. Try growing a variety of nutritious foods on your own property, plus making your own furniture and clothing, and building your own home, generating your own electricity to run the appliances that you built yourself...and I hope you get the idea. Human beings have one large problem, and one large problem only, from which all the little problems flow. The problem is not capitalis. The problem is that human beings are imperfect beings, subject to temptation and sin. Not religious? Fine. Consider that human beings have a strong tendency to screw things up, and to simply be weak, i.e., to do something — anything! — but what they are supposed to be doing. The voluntary actions of buying and selling do not "eat away at our lives and relationships." Instead, we eat away at our lives by living like a walking version of the disposal under a kitchen sink. Similarly, we destroy our own relationships with our insistence upon control, or an unthinking, lazy sort of self-centered approach to life. If you can think of nothing better to do with your time than mindlessly walk shopping malls and spend money, that says more about you than about capitalism. Read a book, go swimming, or shoot skeet. Whatever you do, you are responsible for how you spend your time. Blaming capitalism for an unhappy life or a failed love makes about as much sense as blaming a gun maker for an act of murder, or blaming a dairy farmer for your clogged arteries. Or, you might say that it makes as much sense as blaming your parents for everything bad that happens to you. Recall that this was a trendy and acceptable thing to do, until the Menendez brothers took things a bit too far, and commentators had a field day with the "I'm not responsible for anything I do" crowd.

### They Say: “Cap Causes Scarcity”

#### Scarcity arguments and biased and flawed.

Taylor 2 (Jerry, Cato Natural Resource Studies Director, “Sustainable Development: A Dubious Solution in Search of a Problem,” August 26, <http://www.cato.org/pubs/pas/pa449.pdf>)

If resources are growing more abundant while the concentration of pollutants in air sheds and watersheds continues to decline, how can we explain the proliferation of various stylized sustainability indicts that point to a deterioration of the planet’s resource base? There are five common weaknesses with such reports. First, they are almost always built upon a selective but fundamentally arbitrary or irrelevant set of indicators. Second, they are often built not upon actual resource data but upon hypotheses or theories about resource health that do not comport with the data or that rest upon highly suspect data fundamentally inconsistent with the larger data sets available to analysts. Third, they ignore the well-documented propensity of capitalist societies to create and invent new resources when old resources become relatively more scarce (that is, they assume that resources are fixed and finite when they are not). Fourth, they are highly aggregated and often subjective calculations of data sets that lack common denominators. Finally, they are frequently heavily biased by ideological assumptions about politics and government action. Accordingly, they provide little help to policy analysts or political leaders.