#### Big Oil has infiltrated the political by using their monetary influence to keep unnecessary tax breaks and subsidies

Leber 12 (Rebecca – Think Progress, “Three Ways Big Oil Spends Its Profits To Defend Oil Subsidies And Defeat Clean Energy”, 10/24, http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2012/10/24/1064231/three-ways-big-oil-spends-its-profits-to-defend-oil-subsidies-and-defeat-clean-energy/)

Starting tomorrow, the world’s largest oil companies — ExxonMobil, Shell, Chevron, BP, and ConocoPhillips — will begin to announce their third-quarter profits for 2012. In the first half of 2012, these companies — all ranked in the top 10 of Fortune 500 Global — earned over $60 billion. The oil industry reinvests tens of millions of these dollars for political purposes**,** including nearly all political contributions to Republicans, lobbying, and campaign ads. Through its enormous spending, these five and other Big Oil companies have fought to maintain $4 billion of their annual subsidies, while seeking to undermine clean energy investments: $105 Million On Lobbying Since 2011, 90 Percent Of Campaign Contributions To GOP: The big five companies have spent over $105 million on lobbying Congress since 2011, according to lobbying disclosures through the third quarter. The biggest spenders were Shell ($25.7 million), Exxon ($25.4 million), and ConocoPhillips ($22.9 million). The five companies’ oil PACs have donated over $2.16 million to mostly Republican candidates this election cycle. Koch Industries also spends big money to pressure Congress, with $16.2 million on lobbying and more than $1.3 million from its PAC (the top oil and gas spender). In total, the oil and gas industry sends 90 percent of its near $50 million in contributions to Republicans, far eclipsing their record spending in 2008. Misinformation Campaigns, Including Over $150 Million In Election Ads: Over $150 million has been spent on TV ads promoting fossil fuel interests, particularly oil and coal, reports the New York Times. In addition to traditional campaign donations, the oil industry has turned to outside groups running attack ads. Earlier this year, Americans For Prosperity — founded and funded by the Koch brothers — launched a bogus ad claiming that clean energy stimulus dollars went overseas. And the oil lobby American Petroleum Institute has its own campaign promoting myths about oil production and gas prices. For example, API chief Jack Gerard, rumored to be on Mitt Romney’s shortlist for a White House or agency appointment, claimed that oil production on federal land is down. This is simply not true, since oil production is up 240 million barrels on federal lands and waters under President Obama compared to the Bush administration. And oil companies hold 20 million acres of federal oil, gas leases in Gulf of Mexico that remain unexplored or undeveloped. This is just one of the many myths Big Oil has pushed this campaign cycle. Behind-The-Scenes Campaign To Defeat Clean Energy: Koch Industries and fossil fuel groups are mobilizing to defeat the extension of modest tax incentives for wind energy, even though oil tax breaks are permanent. The American Energy Alliance, which has Koch ties, aims to make the credit “so toxic” for Republicans it would be “impossible for John Boehner to sit at a table with Harry Reid.” The Koch-funded Americans For Prosperity is also campaigning against wind energy. Meanwhile, the industry has argued its own century-old tax breaks are necessary to maintain, despite years of record-breaking profits. Overall, these efforts to keep their tax breaks while weakening public health safeguards from pollution have paid off in Congress and for Republican candidates. The House of Representatives is the most anti-environment in Congressional history, averaging at least one anti-environment vote per day to eliminate or undermine pollution protections, many benefiting Big Oil. And the Romney/Ryan budget plan would give the big five oil companies another $2.3 billion annual tax cut beyond existing loopholes.

#### This system creates real effects in the everyday lives of real people – Dean Blanchard, a fisherman in Louisiana, describes the effects of oil subsidies on his livelihood…

Kistner 12 (Rocky, “Fossil Fuel Subsidies: the Answer Lies in the Gulf,” 6-22-12.

<http://theenergycollective.com/rockykistner/87692/fossil-fuel-subsidies-answer-lies-gulf>

You don’t have to go to Brazil to find out why this polluter payoff system has tragic consequences. We’ve got exhibit A right here in the good ole USA, where oil companies spend millions lobbying Congress and get billions in subsidies in return. It’s a fossil fuel free-for-all; Big Oil keeps its tax breaks while it drills its way to record profits. This week, NRDC and other environmental groups sued the Obama Administration to stop the planned sale of new oil leases in the deepwater Gulf, a reckless plan that ignores ongoing safety issues associated with drilling at even more dangerous depths, as NRDC’s David Pettit has blogged. Just talk to the fishermen in the Gulf about their faith in the oil companies these days. Seafood king Dean Blanchard of Grand Isle, LA, was once one of the most successful shrimp buyers on the coast. But that all changed in BP’s fiery explosion two years ago. Now his business is in tatters, ruined he says by the millions of gallons of oil and chemical dispersant that flooded into local waters and straight into Barataria Bay, one of the most productive commercial shrimping grounds in the country. But no longer. This year Blanchard says his once robust shrimp catch is down by about 50 percent, and he doesn’t expect it to get better anytime soon. In fact he bets it will get worse as the oil and dispersant mix works its way up the food chain, potentially wrecking havoc on future generations of seafood—threatening his fishing community's very survival. “Oil’s still coming in everyday out here, people are sick in the community, the fishing is getting worse….there’s deformed shrimp everywhere,” Blanchard says. “The oil companies have bought off all the politicians. I’m praying for a hurricane so it will stir up all the oil off the bottom and dump it on the Governor’s mansion. Then let’s see how he likes it.” Other fishermen confirm catches are down, and many say it's getting increasingly hard to make a living off the sea, while they say BP has done little to compensate them. A veteran Louisiana fisherman says he's caught shrimp recently with what appear to be tumor-like growths, weird deformities he's never seen before. He also says the shrimp are unusually small for this time of year, so small they fall through the nets. With the high price of gas, he given up trawling at a time when he normally is making good money. Like many fishermen in the Gulf, he has no idea what the future will hold. “Everything was going so good before the spill,” he said. “We finally had the shrimp prices up and then wham, the oil hit. We can fix things after a hurricane, but seems like we can’t fix things after an oil spill like this.”

#### Oil subsidies are part of the global neoliberal project that subjects more wealth to multinational corporations at the expense of all

Tapamor 7 (Edward – Writer for Resource Investor, “Peak Oil Passnotes: Neo-Liberalism's Ultimate Failure Part 2”, 11/16, http://www.resourceinvestor.com/2007/11/16/peak-oil-passnotes-neoliberalisms-ultimate-failure)

We pointed out last week that this column does not put any faith in the current system of economics loosely known as neo-liberalism or "free markets". We have noted that despite its ideologically rigid application around the world for the last 25 years, it has done nothing to create a supply cushion in oil markets. Instead what it has done is pass giant profits to the most powerful organisations within the industry, privatising the profits and socialising the costs. One great example at the moment is biofuels. The developed world, especially the United States, wants liquid fuel for transport. So a tax has been placed on the entire world population as the transport-dependent U.S. and EU suck out available spare capacity in the agricultural market by converting corn to ethanol. Basically land has been converted to growing corn in order to provide fuels for the states most dependent on car travel. This has boosted food prices all around the globe, even for people who do not posses cars or have ever even travelled in one. What is more amazing is that this event is not some kind of economic neo-liberal happening. Like much of free market thinking, it is in fact a myth. Fifty percent of the revenues that U.S. farmers receive from growing corn for ethanol in fact do not come from anything as neo-liberal as sales and marketing. No, 50% of the revenues come from subsidies, from the taxpayer, via the government. If you are a major industrial landowner, it is a godsend. The idea of investment to "create wealth" (another wacky neo-liberal idea - we can see you printing the money supply, we are not blind) is thrown away as every taxpayer in the U.S. subsidises major industrial concerns. Secondly comes the idea that war and global "full-spectrum dominance" can safeguard the United States. It is true that war provides liquidity for economies as - once again - taxpayer subsidies in the form of war budgets send wealth flooding up the chain to the most powerful organisations and concerns on the planet. There is now little doubt that the United States, for example, has spent around $1 trillion on the invasion and destruction of Iraq. Although we can argue over how much importance the region has in terms of invasion-to-oil-and-gas-reserves, there is little doubt that securing the region for U.S. and EU "interests" was a prime motivator - maybe not all of it but certainly a very important one. But if an economy was truly democratic - unlike any on the planet - then the U.S. could have spent that money far more wisely. One trillion dollars would buy 11.77 billion barrels of oil at $85 per barrel. Of course it could also have been spent on second generation biofuels - the ones ExxonMobil [NYSE:XOM] and Total [NYSE:TOT] are so keen on - or wind farms or solar power or insulation for American homes. Instead the money has been part of the trickle-up, the process whereby money is passed from the weakest to the richest, the real underlying motivation for neo-liberalism class war. As there are no democracies on the planet, only differing forms of oligarchy, it is no surprise to see the Chinese state capitalists or the Russian state capitalists doing roughly similar versions of the same thing. Chinese per capita consumption of oil is the same as that of the U.S. in 1904, yet we hear so often that - basically - it is the "fault" of China to create a demand-led, geo-political peak oil. What this signals is that economies need democratising, not placing in the hands of either private or state oligarchies. But in the developed world instead what we do have is a moment where modern economies - neo-liberal ones - are exposed as failures. Investment signals and market economics, such as they are, cannot satisfy what is needed, a rise in demand led by the force feeding of capitalism-for-the-rich around the world for the last 50 years. The only possible respite for this is to have a recession - where prices drop, where the weakest are hurt the most and where, once again, the richest and most powerful benefit by cherry picking assets from the disparate, profligate and downright unlucky. When peak oil bounces the world into recession, as many in the oil industry believe it will, remember who told you first.

#### Moreover, the so-called “externalities” of oil production are felt disproportionately among minority communities, as degradation of the surrounding environment strips real people of their livelihoods

Juhasz 8 (Antonia – American oil and energy analyst, Investigative Journalism Fellow at the Investigative Reporting Program, “The Tyranny of Oil”, pgs 186-188)

Chevron's Richmond Refinery in Richmond, California, is one of the oldest and largest refineries in the United States. "From the beginning, among West Coast refineries, it was the colossus," reads its corporate history. Built in 1902, the refinery sits on nearly 3,000 acres of land. To refine its capacity of 87.6 million barrels of crude oil per year—240,000 barrels per day—the refinery produces over 2 million pounds of waste per year.54 The Richmond refinery shows its age. The most recent findings of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report almost three hundred pollutant spills from the refinery in just three years, from 2001 to 2003. These are highly toxic, often cancerous, chemicals spilling directly into residential communities of families, children, the elderly, and the sick. The EPA lists the refinery in "significant noncompliance" for air pollution standards.55 But this is nothing new. In 2001 the refinery released almost 25,000 pounds of known carcinogens into the surrounding community. From 1989 to 1995, there were more than three hundred reported accidents at the refinery, including major fires, spills, leaks, explosions, toxic gas releases, flaring, and air contamination.56 San Francisco is sixteen miles away from the Chevron refinery In January 2007, most residents of the area (I among them thought the refinery had exploded. On the news we heard the gi ant boom! and watched a yellow ball of fire and a black cloud -smoke explode into the air. A leaking corroded pipe "that shoul have been detached two decades ago," according ro investigate was to blame. The five-alarm fire burned for nine hours, and t\* 100-foot flames could be seen with the naked eye in San Fra , cisco. Almost three thousand people in nearby neighborhood f received telephone calls instructing them to stay inside with th doors and windows shut to avoid breathing the toxic fumes. Later that year, in August, another giant explosion roc! Chevron's largest U.S. refinery, in Jackson County, Mississippi. The fire burned near the heart of the Pascagoula Refinery and 200-foot flames were visible for miles down the Mississippi coast. Afterward, Chevron offered free car washes to dislodge the thick layer of black soot that had settled on nearby cars from the fire. The cause of the explosion has yet to be identified. Another old equipment part was cited as the cause of one of the worst explosions in the Richmond refinery's history. According to Chevron, a leaking valve that "was initially installed more than 30 years ago" ignited a massive explosion in March 1999.57 An 18,000-pound plume of sulfur dioxide smoke was released in rhe explosion. Ten thousand residents were told to remain inside for several hours, while those in the closest neighborhoods were evacuated. "A column of thick, acrid, foul-smelling smoke rose high in the air, cloaked the refinery and then began to drift slowly to the southeast," according to one report. "The cloud killed trees and took the fur off squirrels," reported a resident. Hundreds of people flooded local hospitals complaining of breathing difficulties and vomiting. "Will Taylor, a man in his 40s, described how instant waves of nausea brought him and his co-workers to their knees, retching and gasping for breath. 'My eyes burned. My nose ran. With each breath I got sick to my stomach.' A strong chemical taste stayed in his mouth and he felt poorly for days." "I lost my voice for six weeks," reported another resident. "And I threw up a lot. Everybody did.,,5S It takes about forty minutes on public transportation to get from San Francisco to Richmond, Richmond is the last stop on the line and has a population of about a hundred thousand people, 82 percent of whom are listed as minorities by the U.S. Census. Seventeen thousand people, including those in two public housing projects, live within just three miles of the Chevron refinery." The majority of these residents are low-income African-American families who moved to Richmond from the South in the 1940s in search of work. Within one mile of and abutting rhe refinery are businesses, houses, an elementary school, and playgrounds. Nationally, it is estimated that race, even more than income level, is the crucial factor shared by communities most exposed to toxic chemicals like those released by the Richmond refinery, with communities of color disproportionately bearing the burden of our national "cancer alleys."60

#### Neoliberalism’s extermination of the public sphere is indicative of a system that leads to social exclusion and racial apartheid

Giroux 4 (Henry A. – Global Television Network Chair Professor at McMaster University 2004 Henry Neoliberalism and the Demise of Democracy: Resurrecting Hope in Dark Times Dissident Voice http://dissidentvoice.org/Aug04/Giroux0807.htm)

The ideology and power of neoliberalism also cuts across national boundaries. Throughout the globe, the forces of neoliberalism are on the march, dismantling the historically guaranteed social provisions provided by the welfare state, defining profit-making as the essence of democracy, and equating freedom with the unrestricted ability of markets to “govern economic relations free of government regulation.” [5] Transnational in scope, neoliberalism now imposes its economic regime and market values on developing and weaker nations through structural adjustment policies enforced by powerful financial institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Secure in its dystopian vision that there are no alternatives, as England’s former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher once put it, neoliberalism obviates issues of contingency, struggle, and social agency by celebrating the inevitability of economic laws in which the ethical ideal of intervening in the world gives way to the idea that we “have no choice but to adapt both our hopes and our abilities to the new global market.” [6] Coupled with a new culture of fear, market freedoms seem securely grounded in a defense of national security, capital, and property rights. When coupled with a media driven culture of fear and the everyday reality of insecurity, public space becomes increasingly militarized as state governments invest more in prison construction than in education. Prison guards and security personnel in public schools are two of the fastest growing professions. In its capacity to dehistoricize and depoliticize society, as well as in its aggressive attempts to destroy all of the public spheres necessary for the defense of a genuine democracy, neoliberalism reproduces the conditions for unleashing the most brutalizing forces of capitalism. Social Darwinism has been resurrected from the ashes of the 19th century sweatshops and can now be seen in full bloom in most reality TV programs and in the unfettered self-interests that now drives popular culture. As narcissism is replaced by unadulterated materialism, public concerns collapse into utterly private considerations and where public space does exist it is mainly used as a confessional for private woes, a cut throat game of winner take all, or a advertisement for consumerism. Neoliberal policies dominate the discourse of politics and use the breathless rhetoric of the global victory of free-market rationality to cut public expenditures and undermine those non-commodified public spheres that serve as the repository for critical education, language, and public intervention. Spewed forth by the mass media, right-wing intellectuals, religious fanatics, and politicians, neoliberal ideology, with its ongoing emphasis on deregulation and privatization, has found its material expression in an all-out attack on democratic values and on the very notion of the public sphere. Within the discourse of neoliberalism, the notion of the public good is devalued and, where possible, eliminated as part of a wider rationale for a handful of private interests to control as much of social life as possible in order to maximize their personal profit. Public services such as health care, child care, public assistance, education, and transportation are now subject to the rules of the market. Construing the public good as a private good and the needs of the corporate and private sector as the only source of investment, neoliberal ideology produces, legitimates, and exacerbates the existence of persistent poverty, inadequate health care, racial apartheid in the inner cities, and the growing inequalities between the rich and the poor. [7]

#### This system systematically degrades the possibility for robust democratic politics – Oil represents the neoliberal pursuit for wealth and power at the expense of social justice that makes a vibrant public sphere impossible and leads to exclusionary politics

Giroux 5 (Henry A. – Global Television Network Chair, Professor at McMaster University, “The Terror of Neoliberalism: Rethinking the Significance of Cultural Politics”, Winter 2005, JSTOR)

Fredric Jameson has argued in The Seeds of Time, it has now become easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism (1994, xii). The breathless rhetoric of the global victory of free-market rationality spewed forth by the mass media, right-wing intellectuals, and governments alike has found its material expression both in an all-out attack on democratic values and in the growth of a range of social problems including: virulent and persistent poverty, joblessness, inadequate health care, apartheid in the inner cities, and increasing inequalities between the rich and the poor**.** Such problems appear to have been either removed from the inventory of public discourse and social policy or factored into talk-show spectacles in which the public becomes merely a staging area for venting private interests and emotions. Within the discourse of neoliberalism that has taken hold of the public imagination, there is no way of talking about what is fundamen tal to civic life, critical citizenship, and a substantive democracy. Neoliberalism offers no critical vocabulary for speaking about political or social transformation as a democratic project. Nor is there a language for either the ideal of public commitment or the notion of a social agency capa ble of challenging the basic assumptions of corporate ideology as well as its social consequences. In its dubious appeals to universal laws, neutrality, and selective scientific research, neoliberalism "eliminates the very possibility of critical thinking, without which democratic debate becomes impossible" (Buck-Morss 2003, 65-66).This shift in rhetoric makes it possible for advocates of neoliberalism to implement the most ruthless economic and political policies without having to open up such actions to public debate and dialogue. Hence, neoliberal policies that promote the cutthroat downsizing of the workforce, the bleeding of social services, the reduction of state governments to police precincts, the ongoing liquidation of job security, the increasing elimination of a decent social wage, the creation of a society of low-skilled workers, and the emergence of a culture of permanent insecu rity and fear hide behind appeals to common sense and allegedly immutable laws of nature. When and where such nakedly ideological appeals strain both reason and imagination, religious faith is invoked to silence dissension. Society is no longer defended as a space in which to nurture the most fundamental values and relations necessary to a democracy but has been recast as an ideological and political sphere "where religious fundamentalism comes together with market fundamentalism to form the ideology of American supremacy" (Soros 2004, 10). Similarly, American imperial ambitions are now legitimated by public relations intellectuals as part of the responsibilities of empire-building, which in turn is celebrated as either a civilizing process for the rest of the globe or as simply a right bestowed upon the powerful. For instance, Ann Coulter speaks for many such intellectuals when she recently argued, while giving a speech at Penn State University, that she had no trouble with the idea that the United States invaded Iraq in order to seize its oil. As she put it, "Why not go to war just for oil? We need oil. Of course, we consume most of the world's oil; we do most of the world's production" (qtd. in Colella 2004,1). In this world-view, power, money, and a debased appeal to pragmatism always trump social and economic justice. Hence, it is not surprising for neo-conservatives to have joined hands with neoliberals and religious fundamentalists in broadcasting to the world at large an American triumphalism in which the United States is arrogantly defined as "[t]he greatest of all great powers in world history" (Frum and Pearle qtd. in Lapham 2004b, 8).2 But money, profits, and fear have become powerful ideological elements not only in arguing for opening up new markets, but also for closing down the possibility of dissent at home. In such a scenario, the police state is cele brated by religious evangelicals like John Ashcroft as a foundation of human freedom. This becomes clear not only in the passage of repressive laws such as the USA Patriot Act but also in the work of prominent neoconservatives such as David Frum and Richard Pearle who, without any irony intended, insist that "[a] free society is not an un-policed society. A free society is a self-policed society" (qtd. in Lapham 2004b, 8). In what could only be defined as an Adam Smith joins George Orwell in a religious cult in California scenario, markets have been elevated to the status of sacrosanct temples to be worshiped by eager consumers while citizens-turned soldiers of the-Army-of-God are urged to spy on each other and dissent is increas ingly criminalized.3 Political culture, if not the nature of politics itself, has undergone revo lutionary changes in the last two decades, reaching its most debased expres sion under the administration of President George W. Bush. Within this polit ical culture, not only is democracy subordinated to the rule of the market, but corporate decisions are freed from territorial constraints and the demands of public obligations, just as economics is disconnected from its social consequences. Power is increasingly removed from the dictates and control of nation states and politics is largely relegated to the sphere of the local. Zygmunt Bauman captures brilliantly what is new about the relation ship among power, politics, and the shredding of social obligations: The mobility acquired by "people who invest"?those with capital, with money which the investment requires?means the new, indeed unprece dented ... disconnection of power from obligations: duties towards employ ees, but also towards the younger and weaker, towards yet unborn genera tions and towards the self-reproduction of the living conditions of all; in short the freedom from the duty to contribute to daily life and the perpet uation of the community. . . . Shedding the responsibility for the conse quences is the most coveted and cherished gain which the new mobility brings to free-floating, locally unbound capital. (Bauman 1998, 9-10) Corporate power increasingly frees itself from any political limitations just as it uses its power through the educational force of the dominant culture to put into place an utterly privatized notion of agency in which it becomes difficult for young people and adults to imagine democracy as a public good, let alone the transformative power of collective action. Once again, demo cratic politics has become ineffective, if not banal, as civic language is impoverished and genuine spaces for democratic learning, debate, and dialogue such as schools, newspapers, popular culture, television networks, and other public spheres are either underfunded, eliminated, privatized, or subject to corporate ownership. Under the aggressive politics and culture of neoliberalism, society is increasingly mobilized for the production of violence against the poor, immigrants, dissenters, and others marginalized because of their age, gender, race, ethnicity, and color. At the center of neoliberalism is a new form of politics in the United States, a politics in which radical exclusion is the order of the day, and in which the primary questions no longer con cern equality, justice, or freedom, but are now about the survival of the slickest in a culture marked by fear, surveillance, and economic deprivation. This is a politics that hides its own ideology by eliminating the traces of its power in a rhetoric of normalization, populism, and the staging of public spectacles. As Susan George points out, the question that currently seems to define neoliberal "democracy" is "Who has a right to live or does not" (1999,para.34). Neoliberalism is not a neutral, technical, economic discourse that can be measured with the precision of a mathematical formula or defended through an appeal to the rules of a presumptively unassailable science that conve niently leaves its own history behind. Nor is it a paragon of economic ration ality that offers the best "route to optimum efficiency, rapid economic growth and innovation, and rising prosperity for all who are willing to work hard and take advantage of available opportunities" (Kotz 2003, 16). On the contrary, neoliberalism is an ideology, a politics, and at times a fanaticism that subordinates the art of democratic politics to the rapacious laws of a market economy that expands its reach to include all aspects of social life within the dictates and values of a market-driven society. More important, it is an eco nomic and implicitly cultural theory?a historical and socially constructed ideology that needs to be made visible, critically engaged, and shaken from the stranglehold of power it currently exercises over most of the command ing institutions of national and global life. As such, neoliberalism makes it difficult for many people either to imagine a notion of individual and social agency necessary for reclaiming a substantive democracy or to be able to theorize the economic, cultural, and political conditions necessary for a viable global public sphere in which public institutions, spaces, and goods become valued as part of a larger democratic struggle for a sustainable future and the downward distribution of wealth, resources, and power.

#### All movements become ineffective within systems of neoliberalism – resistance is key

Giroux 5 (Henry A. – Global Television Network Chair, Professor at McMaster University, “The Terror of Neoliberalism: Rethinking the Significance of Cultural Politics”, Winter 2005, JSTOR)

Within the discourse of neoliberalism, democracy becomes synonymous with free markets, while issues of equality, racial justice, and freedom are stripped of any substantive meaning and used to disparage those who suffer systemic deprivation and chronic punishment. Individual misfortune, like democracy itself, is now viewed as either excessive or in need of radical containment. The media, largely consolidated through corporate power, routinely provide a platform for high profile right-wing pundits and politicians to remind us either of how degenerate the poor have become or to reinforce the central neoliberal tenet that all problems are private rather than social in nature. Conservative columnist Ann Coulter captures the latter sentiment with her comment that "[i]nstead of poor people with hope and possibility, we now have a permanent underclass of aspiring criminals knifing one another between having illegitimate children and collecting welfare checks" (qtd. in Bean 2003, para.3). Radio talk show host Michael Savage, too, exemplifies the unabashed racism and fanaticism that emerge under a neoliberal regime in which ethics and justice appear beside the point. For instance, Savage routinely refers to non-white countries as "turd world nations," homosexuality as a "perversion" and young children who are victims of gunfire as "ghetto slime" (qtd. in Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting 2003,para.2, 6, 5).

#### Neoliberalism makes global war inevitable and escalates to extinction

Meszaros 3 (Monthly Review, István Mészáros – Chair of philosophy at Sussex University, “Militarism and the Coming of Wars,” 6-08, http://monthlyreview.org/0603meszaros.htm)

1.It is not for the first time in history that militarism weighs on the consciousness of the people as a nightmare. To go into detail would take far too long. However, here it should be enough to go back in history only as far as the nineteenth century when militarism, as a major instrument of policy making, came into its own, with the unfolding of modern imperialism on a global scale, in contrast to its earlier—much more limited—varieties. By the last third of the nineteenth century the British and French Empires were not the only prominent rulers of vast territories. The United States, too, made its heavy imprint by directly or indirectly taking over the former colonies of the Spanish Empire in Latin America, adding to them the bloody repression of a great liberation struggle in the Philippines and installing themselves as rulers in that area in a way which still persists in one form or another. Nor should we forget the calamities caused by “Iron Chancellor” Bismarck’s imperialist ambitions and their aggravated pursuit later on by his successors, resulting in the eruption of the First World War and its deeply antagonistic aftermath, bringing with it Hitler’s Nazi revanchism and thereby very clearly foreshadowing the Second World War itself. The dangers and immense suffering caused by all attempts at solving deep-seated social problems by militaristic interventions, on any scale, are obvious enough. If, however, we look more closely at the historical trend of militaristic adventures, it becomes frighteningly clear that they show an ever greater intensification and an ever-increasing scale, from local confrontations to two horrendous world wars in the twentieth century, and to the potential annihilation of humankind when we reach our own time. It is most relevant to mention in this context the distinguished Prussian military officer and practical as well as theoretical strategist, Karl Marie von Clausewitz (1780-1831), who died in the same year as Hegel; both of them killed by cholera. It was von Clausewitz, director of the Military School of Berlin in the last thirteen years of his life, who in his posthumously published book—Vom Kriege (On War, 1833)—offered a classic definition of the relationship between politics and war that is still frequently quoted: “war is the continuation of politics by other means.” This famous definition was tenable until quite recently, but has become totally untenable in our time. It assumed the rationalityof the actions which connect the two domains of politics and war as the continuation of one another. In this sense, the war in question had to be winnable, at least in principle, even if miscalculations leading to defeat could be contemplated at the instrumental level. Defeat by itself could not destroy the rationality of war as such, since after the—however unfavorable—new consolidation of politics the defeated party could plan another round of war as the rational continuation of its politics by other means. Thus the absolute condition of von Clausewitz’s equation to be satisfied was the winnability of war in principle, so as to recreate the “eternal cycle” of politics leading to war, and back to politics leading to another war, and so on ad infinitum. The actors involved in such confrontations were the national states. No matter how monstrous the damage inflicted by them on their adversaries, and even on their own people (just remember Hitler!), the rationality of the military pursuit was guaranteed if the war could be considered winnable in principle. Today the situation is qualitatively different for two principal reasons. First, the objective of the feasible war at the present phase of historical development, in accordance with the objective requirements of imperialism—world domination by capital’s most powerful state, in tune with its own political design of ruthless authoritarian “globalization” (dressed up as “free exchange” in a U.S. ruled global market)—is ultimately unwinnable, foreshadowing, instead, the destruction of humankind. This objective by no stretch of imagination could be considered a rational objective in accord with the stipulated rational requirement of the “continuation of politics by other means” conducted by one nation, or by one group of nations against another. Aggressively imposing the will of one powerful national state over all of the others, even if for cynical tactical reasons the advocated war is absurdly camouflaged as a “purely limited war” leading to other “open ended limited wars,” can therefore be qualified only as total irrationality. The second reason greatly reinforces the first. For the weapons already available for waging the war or wars of the twenty first century are capable of exterminating not only the adversary but the whole of humanity, for the first time ever in history. Nor should we have the illusion that the existing weaponry marks the very end of the road. Others, even more instantly lethal ones, might appear tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. Moreover, threatening the use of such weapons is by now considered an acceptable state strategic device. Thus, put reasons one and two together, and the conclusion is inescapable: envisaging war as the mechanism of global government in today’s world underlines that we find ourselves at the precipice of absolute irrationality from which there can be no return if we accept the ongoing course of development. What was missing from von Clausewitz’s classic definition of war as the “continuation of politics by other means” was the investigation of the deeper underlying causes of war and the possibility of their avoidance. The challenge to face up to such causes is more urgent today than ever before. For the war of the twenty first century looming ahead of us is not only “not winnable in principle.” Worse than that, it is in principle unwinnable. Consequently, envisaging the pursuit of war, as the Bush administration’s September 17, 2002 strategic document does, make Hitler’s irrationality look like the model of rationality.

#### Thus, Amy and I wish to utilize this debate space to begin a process of the interrogation of oil subsidies, and the broader neoliberal system they are a part of. This should be recognized not as an end-point but a starting point that can help facilitate broader discussions of neoliberalism within debate and outside of it

#### Our role as students in this debate room can provide a locus to challenge systems of neoliberalism – each instance of resistance is key break apart neoliberal pedagogy and revitalize the global public sphere. This should be evaluated as a prior question

Giroux 5 (Henry A. – Global Television Network Chair, Professor at McMaster University, “The Terror of Neoliberalism: Rethinking the Significance of Cultural Politics”, Winter 2005, JSTOR)

Just as the world has seen a more virulent and brutal form of market capitalism, generally referred to as neoliberalism, develop over the last thir ty years, it has also seen "a new wave of political activism [which] has coalesced around the simple idea that capitalism has gone too far" (Harding 2001, para.28). Wedded to the belief that the market should be the organiz ing principle for all political, social, and economic decisions, neoliberalism wages an incessant attack on democracy, public goods, and non-commodified values. Under neoliberalism everything either is for sale or is plundered for profit. Public lands are looted by logging companies and corporate ranch ers; politicians willingly hand the public's airwaves over to powerful broad casters and large corporate interests without a dime going into the public trust; Halliburton gives war profiteering a new meaning as it is granted cor porate contracts without any competitive bidding and then bills the U.S. government for millions; the environment is polluted and despoiled in the name of profit-making just as the government passes legislation to make it easier for corporations to do so; public services are gutted in order to lower the taxes of major corporations; schools more closely resemble either malls or jails, and teachers, forced to get revenue for their school by adopting mar ket values, increasingly function as circus barkers hawking everything from hamburgers to pizza parties?that is, when they are not reduced to prepping students to take standardized tests. As markets are touted as the driving force of everyday life, big government is disparaged as either incompetent or threatening to individual freedom, suggesting that power should reside in markets and corporations rather than in governments (except for their sup port for corporate interests and national security) and citizens. Citizenship has increasingly become a function of consumerism and politics has been restructured as "corporations have been increasingly freed from social control through deregulation, privatization, and other neoliberal measures" (Tabb 2003, 153). Corporations more and more design not only the economic sphere but also shape legislation and policy affecting all levels of government, and with limited opposition. As corporate power lays siege to the political process, the benefits flow to the rich and the powerful. Included in such benefits are reform policies that shift the burden of taxes from the rich to the middle class, the working poor, and state governments as can be seen in the shift from taxes on wealth (capital gains, dividends, and estate taxes) to a tax on work, principally in the form of a regressive payroll tax (Collins, Hartman, Kraut, and Mota 2004). During the 2002-2004 fiscal years, tax cuts delivered $197.3 billion in tax breaks to the wealthiest 1% of Americans (i.e., house Thisholds making more than $337,000 a year) while state governments increased taxes to fill a $200 billion budget deficit (Gonsalves 2004). Equally alarm ing, a recent Congressional study revealed that 63% of all corporations in 2000 paid no taxes while "[s]ix in ten corporations reported no tax liabili ty for the five years from 1996 through 2000, even though corporate prof its were growing at record-breaking levels during that period" (Woodard 2004, para. 11). Fortunately, the corporate capitalist fairytale of neoliberalism has been challenged all over the globe by students, labor organizers, intellectuals, com munity activists, and a host of individuals and groups unwilling to allow democracy to be bought and sold by multinational corporations, corporate swindlers, international political institutions, and those government politicians who willingly align themselves with multinational, corporate interests and rapacious profits. From Seattle to Genoa, people engaged in popular resistance are collectively taking up the challenge of neoliberalism and reviving both the meaning of resistance and the sites where it takes place. Political culture is now global and resistance is amorphous, connecting students with workers, schoolteachers with parents, and intellectuals with artists. Groups protesting the attack on farmers in India whose land is being destroyed by the government in order to build dams now find themselves in alliance with young people resisting sweatshop labor in New York City. Environmental activists are joining up with key sections of organized labor as well as groups protesting Third World debt. The collapse of the neoliberal showcase, Argentina, along with numerous corporate bankruptcies and scandals (notably including Enron), reveals the cracks in neoliberal hegemony and domination. In addition, the multiple forms of resistance against neoliberal capitalism are not limited by a version of identity politics focused exclusively on particularized rights and interests. On the contrary, identity politics is affirmed within a broader crisis of political culture and democracy that connects the militarization of public life with the collapse of the welfare state and the attack on civil liberties. Central to these new movements is the notion that neoliberalism has to be understood within a larger crisis of vision, meaning, education, and political agency. Democracy in this view is not limited to the struggle over economic resources and power; indeed, it also includes the creation of public spheres where individuals can be educated as political agents equipped with the skills, capacities, and knowledge they need to perform as autonomous political agents. I want to expand the reaches of this debate by arguing that any struggle against neoliberalism must address the discourse of political agency, civic education, and cultural politics(the ongoing struggle for a substantive and inclusive democracy) and the global public sphere. We live at a time when the conflation of private interests, empire build ing, and evangelical fundamentalism brings into question the very nature, if not the existence, of the democratic process. Under the reign of neoliberalism, capital and wealth have been largely distributed upwards, while civic virtue has been undermined by a slavish celebration of the free market as the model for organizing all facets of everyday life (Henwood 2003). Political culture has been increasingly depoliticized as collective life is organized around the modalities of privatization, deregulation, and commercialization. When the alleged champions of neoliberalism invoke politics, they substitute "ideological certainty for reasonable doubt," and deplete "the national reserves of political intelligence" just as they endorse "the illusion that the future can be bought instead of earned" (Lapham 2004a, 9,11). Under attack is the social contract with its emphasis on enlarging the public good and expanding social provisions?such as access to adequate health care, housing, employment, public transportation, and education? which provided both a safety net and a set of conditions upon which democracy could be experi enced and critical citizenship engaged. Politics has been further depoliticized by a policy of anti-terrorism practiced by the Bush administration that mim ics the very terrorism it wishes to eliminate. Not only does a policy of all embracing anti-terrorism exhausts itself in a discourse of moral absolutes and public acts of denunciation that remove politics from the realm of state power, it also strips community of democratic values by defining it almost exclusively through attempts to stamp out what Michael Leeden, a former counter-terror expert in the Reagan administration, calls "corrupt habits of mind that are still lingering around, somewhere"(qtd. in Valentine 2001, para.33). The appeal to moral absolutes and the constant mobilization of emergency time coded as a culture of fear configures politics in religious terms, hiding its entanglement with particular ideologies and diverse rela tions of power. Politics becomes empty as it is reduced to following orders, shaming those who make power accountable, and shutting down legitimate modes of dissent (Giroux 2004).

#### Critical reflection opens spaces of resistance by which we can reframe our relationship to systems of power in a manner that enhances human agency and threatens their existence

Giroux 6 (Henry A. – Global Television Network Chair, Professor at McMaster University, “Academic Freedom under Fire: The Case for Critical Pedagogy”, Fall 2006, JSTOR)

What makes critical pedagogy so dangerous to Christian evangelicals, neoconservatives, and right-wing nationalists in the United States is that central to its very definition is the task of educating students to become critical agents actively questioning and negotiating the relationship between theory and practice, critical analysis and common sense, and learning and social change. Critical pedagogy opens up a space where students should be able to come to terms with their own power as critical agents; it provides a sphere where the unconditional freedom to question and assert is central to the purpose of the university, if not democracy itself (Derrida 2001, 233). And as a political and moral practice, pedagogy should "make evident the multiplici ty and complexity of history," as a narrative to enter into critical dialogue with rather than accept unquestioningly. Similarly, such a pedagogy should cultivate in students a healthy scepticism about power, a "willingness to temper any reverence for authority with a sense of critical awareness" (Said 2001, 501). As a performative practice, pedagogy should provide the conditions for students to be able to reflectively frame their own relationship to the ongoing project of an unfinished democracy. It is precisely this relationship between democracy and pedagogy that is so threatening to conservatives such as Horowitz. Pedagogy always represents a commitment to the future, and it remains the task of educators to make sure that the future points the way to a more socially just world, a world in which the discourses of critique and possibility in conjunction with the values of reason, freedom, and equal ity function to alter, as part of a broader democratic project, the grounds upon which life is lived. This is hardly a prescription for political indoctrina tion, but it is a project that gives education its most valued purpose and meaning, which in part is "to encourage human agency, not mold it in the manner of Pygmalion" (Aronowitz 1998, 10?11). It is also a position that threatens right-wing private advocacy groups, neoconservative politicians, and conservative extremists because they recognize that such a pedagogical commitment goes to the very heart of what it means to address real inequalities of power at the social level and to conceive of education as a project for democracy and critical citizenship while at the same time foregrounding a series of important and often ignored questions such as: "Why do we [as edu cators] do what we do the way we do it"?W hose interests does higher edu cation serve? How might it be possible to understand and engage the diverse contexts in which education takes place? In spite of the right-wing view that equates indoctrination with any suggestion of politics, critical pedagogy is not concerned simply with offering students new ways to think critically and act with authority as agents in the classroom; it is also concerned to provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary for them to expand their capacities to both question deep-seated assumptions and myths that legitimate the most archaic and disempowering social practices that structure every aspect of society and to take responsibility for intervening in the world they inhabit. Education is not neutral, but that does not mean it is merely a form of indoctrination. On the contrary, as a practice that attempts to expand the capacities necessary for human agency and hence the possibilities for democracy itself, the university must nourish those pedagogical practices that promote "a concern with keeping the forever unexhausted and unfulfilled human potential open, fighting back all attempts to foreclose and pre-empt the further unravelling of human possibilities, prodding human society to go on questioning itself and preventing that questioning from ever stalling or being declared finished" (Bauman and Tester 2001, 4). In other words, critical pedagogy forges both critique and agency through a language of scepticism and possibility and a culture of openness, debate, and engagement, all elements that are now at risk in the latest and most dangerous attack on higher education.

#### Energy debates should focus on critique of broad structures instead of productivist fixes. Even if they win some truth claims – we must shift to evaluate broader public institutions and the conditions they have perpetuated

Zehner 12 (Green illusions, Ozzie Zehner is the author of Green Illusions and a visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley. His recent publications include public science pieces in Christian Science Monitor, The American Scholar, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, The Humanist, The Futurist, and Women’s Studies Quarterly. He has appeared on PBS, BBC, CNN, MSNBC, and regularly guest lectures at universities. Zehner’s research and projects have been covered by The Sunday Times, USA Today, WIRED, The Washington Post, Business Week and numerous other media outlets. He also serves on the editorial board of Critical Environmentalism. Zehner primarily researches the social, political and economic conditions influencing energy policy priorities and project outcomes. His work also incorporates symbolic roles that energy technologies play within political and environmental movements. His other research interests include consumerism, urban policy, environmental governance, international human rights, and forgeries. Zehner attended Kettering University (BS -Engineering) and The University of Amsterdam (MS/Drs – Science and Technology Studies). His research was awarded with honors at both institutions. He lives in San Francisco.)

Since this book represents a critique of alternative energy, it may seem an unlikely manual for alternative-energy proponents. But it is. Building alternative-energy infrastructure atop America's present economic, social, and cultural landscape is akin to building a sandcastle in a rising tide. A taller sand castle won't help. The first steps in this book sketch a partial blueprint for making alternative-energy technologies relevant into the future. Technological development alone will do little to bring about a durable alternative-energy future. Reimagining the social conditions of energy use will. Ultimately, we have to ask ourselves if environmentalists should be involved in the business of energy production (of any sort) while so many more important issues remain vastly underserved. Over the next several decades, it's quite likely that our power production cocktail will look very much like the mix of today, save for a few adjustments in market share. Wind and biofuel generation will become more prevalent and the stage is set for nuclear power as well, despite recent catastrophes. Nevertheless, these changes will occur over time—they will seem slow. Every power production mechanism has side effects and limitations of its own, and a global shift to new forms of power production simply means that humanity will have to deal with new side effects and limitations in the future. This simple observation seems to have gotten lost in the cheerleading for alternative-energy technologies. The mainstream environmental movement should throw down the green energy pom-poms and pull out the bifocals. It is entirely reasonable for environmentalists to criticize fossil-fuel industries for the harms they instigate. It is, however, entirely unreasonable for environmentalists to become spokespeople for the next round of ecological disaster machines such as solar cells, ethanol, and battery-powered vehicles. Environmentalists pack the largest punch when they instead act as power production watchdogs (regardless of the production method); past environmentalist pressures have cleaned the air and made previously polluted waterways swimmable. This watchdog role will be vital in the future as biofuels, nuclear plants, alternative fossil fuels, solar cells, and other energy technologies import new harms and risks. Beyond a watchdog role, environmentalists yield the greatest progress when addressing our social fundamentals, whether by supporting human rights, cleaning up elections, imagining new economic structures, strengthening communities, revitalizing democracy, or imagining more prosperous modes of consumption. Unsustainable energy use is a symptom of suboptimal social conditions. Energy use will come down when we improve these conditions: consumption patterns that lead to debt and depression; commercials aimed at children; lonely seniors stuck in their homes because they can no longer drive; kids left to fend for themselves when it comes to mobility or sexuality; corporate influence trumping citizen representation; measurements of the nation's health in dollars rather than well-being; a media concerned with advertising over insight, and so on. These may not seem like environmental issues, and they certainly don't seem like energy policy issues, but in reality they are the most important energy and environmental issues of our day. Addressing them won't require sacrifice or social engineering. They are congruent with the interests of many Americans, which will make them easier to initiate and fulfill. They are entirely realistic (as many are already enjoyed by other societies on the planet). They are, in a sense, boring. In fact, the only thing shocking about them is the degree to which they have been underappreciated in contemporary environmental thought, sidelined in the media, and ignored by politicians. Even though these first steps don't represent a grand solution, they are necessary preconditions if we intend to democratically design and implement more comprehensive solutions in the future. Ultimately, clean energy is less energy. Alternative-energy alchemy has so greatly consumed the public imagination over recent decades that the most vital and durable environmental essentials remain overlooked and underfunded. Today energy executives hiss silver-tongued fairy tales about clean-coal technologies, safe nuclear reactors, and renewable sources such as solar, wind, and biofuels to quench growing energy demands, fostering the illusion that we can maintain our expanding patterns of energy consumption without consequence. At the same time, they claim that these technologies can be made environmentally, socially, and politically sound while ignoring a history that has repeatedly shown otherwise. If we give in to accepting their conceptual frames, such as those pitting production versus production, or if we parrot their terms such as clean coal, bridge fuels, peacetime atom, smart growth, and clean energy, then we have already lost. We forfeit our right to critical democratic engagement and instead allow the powers that be to regurgitate their own terms of debate into our open upstretched mouths. Alternative-energy technologies don't clean the air. They don't clean the water. They don't protect wildlife. They don't support human rights. They don't improve neighborhoods. They don't strengthen democracy. They don't regulate themselves. They don't lower atmospheric carbon dioxide. They don't reduce consumption. They produce power. That power can lead to durable benefits, but only given the appropriate context. Ultimately, it's not a question of whether American society possesses the technological prowess to construct an alternative-energy nation. The real question is the reverse. Do we have a society capable of being powered by alternative energy? The answer today is clearly no. But we can change that. Future environmentalists will drop solar, wind, biofuels, nuclear, hydrogen, and hybrids to focus instead on women's rights, consumer culture, walkable neighborhoods, military spending, zoning, health care, wealth disparities, citizen governance, economic reform, and democratic institutions. As environmentalists and global citizens, it's not enough to say that we would benefit by shifting our focus. Our very relevance depends on it.

#### Big Oil is not impenetrable – effective movements centered around unveiling corporate domination can succeed in dismantling systems of power – empirically proven

Juhasz 8 (Antonia – American oil and energy analyst, Investigative Journalism Fellow at the Investigative Reporting Program, “The Tyranny of Oil”, pgs 18-22)

Nearly 75 percent of Americans believe that big business has too much influence over the federal government, according to a 2006 Gallup poll. In fact, the only industry that Americans like less than Big Oil is the U.S. government.3 Many people also believe that the power of corporations over the U.S. government—especially that of Big Oil—is impenetrable. If history is a guide, this simply is not true. One hundred years ago, mass movements of people across the United States joined together to fundamentally rewrite the relationship between corporations, the government, and the public. It was one of the most radical and transformative periods in U.S. history and a period to which our own time bears much resemblance. Corporate executives were working hand in glove with elected officials to advance interests widely held to be contrary to the overall economic health of the people and the nation, including waging wars for corporate profit and imperial expansion. In response, people organized against unchecked and unprecedented corporate power in what is today known as the Populist or Progressive Era. Ultimately, this era did not yield the more radical changes desired by some, but it did bring about regulation: specifically, the first federal laws in the United States to protect labor and regulate corporate activity, and the financing of political campaigns. The Sherman Antitrust Act was among these new regulatory tools to rein in the nation's "epidemic" of megacorpo-rations. Then, as now, oil lay at the heart of much of the struggle, while John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil, like its largest descendant today—ExxonMobil—reigned as the most formidable corporate power. Standard Oil's rise was part of a mass consolidation of economic and political power into the hands of a few mega-corporations in the decades following the Civil War. In 1865 these companies emerged from the war heavily supported by the U.S. government with tax breaks, subsidies, and protection from both foreign and domestic competition. They were also free from government regulation—including the absence of just about any worker rights and consumer protections. These policy choices were justified, their supporters contended, because the companies needed unimpeded growth to match the expansion of the American economy. Unregulated, the corporation did what it does naturally: whatever it could to enrich the bottom line. In describing the tactics and practices used by Standard Oil, the Interstate Commerce Commission, the first regulatory commission in U.S. history, did not mince words: "unjust discrimination," "intentional disregard of rights," "unexcused," "illegal," "excessive," "extraordinary," "forbidden," so obvious and palpable a discrimination that no discussion of it is necessary," "wholly indefensible," "patent and provoking discrimination for which no rational excuse is suggested, "obnoxious," "absurd and inexcusable," "gross disproportions and inequalities," and "the most unjust and injurious discrimination." Rockefeller built Standard Oil into the first major industrial monopoly in the United States and established the model that all others would seek to follow. Ida Tarbell writes in the introduction to her 1904 book The History of the Standard Oil Company that Standard Oil "was the first in the field, and it has furnished the methods, the charter, and the traditions for its followers. It is the most perfectly developed trust in existence; that is, it satisfies most nearly the trust ideal of entire control of the commodity in which it deals."5 The New York State Senate concluded after its hallmark investigation of Standard Oil in 1888, "Its success has been the incentive to the formation of all other trusts or combinations. It is the type of a system which has spread like a disease through the commercial system of this country.'\* Following Standard Oil's lead, the nation's largest companies merged and consolidated their own efforts by forming trusts. A "trust" is a combination of corporations where a board of trustees holds the stock of each individual company and manages the business of all. At the time, the word trust quickly became synonymous with any large corporation. The trusts gobbled up their smaller competitors and forced out of business those that they could not buy. The companies then used their size and economic clout to influence political decision-making on their behalf. Again Rockefeller set the standard, perfecting the art of the political contribution. As power was consolidated in the hands of a few great companies, the rights of workers, farmers, consumers, and smaller businesses shrank accordingly. All across the country, people responded with resistance, rebellion, and a demand for fundamental change, including new legal structures to support not only their rights but also the nation's flagging democracy. Farmers, women and children factory workers, African-American railway workers, longshoremen, suffragists, Anarchists, Communists, Socialists, Wobblies, and many other groups organized for change. On May 1, 1886, 350,000 workers at over 11,500 establishments all across the United States went on strike. In the course of that year, there were more than 1,400 strikes involving some half a million workers. By 1904, there were on average more than 4,000 strikes per year.7 The objectives of the strikers sound almost trite today, as they are rights that most American citizens now take largely for granted: the eight-hour workday, the forty-hour workweek, a minimum wage, worker safety, the right to form unions, compensation when injured on the job, and the right to work under legal contracts enforcing mutual commitments between employers and workers. The 1890 Sherman Antitrust Act was designed to protect small businesses—and thereby support the overall economy; to keep business within the realm of government regulation—and thereby protect workers and consumers; and to keep businesses small enough so that economic clout did not become political clout— and thereby protect democracy. The law would ultimately be used to bring down Standard Oil, and it remains the foundation of all U.S. antitrust policy today. However, from the 1980s until today, the original intent of the law has been all but forgotten, and the mergers of megacorporations, including the descendants of Standard Oil, have been allowed to proceed virtually without restriction. At the center of the Progressive and Populist Movements were the "muckrakers," journalists who dug up the dirt and brought sunlight to shine on the crimes committed by corporations and the politicians who supported them. While she hated the nomenclature, Ida Tarbell, author, historian, and journalist, was one of the most influential muckrakers of her day. Her blistering sixteen-part, two-year-long expose of John D. Rockefeller and his Standard Oil Company ran in McClure's Magazine from 1902 to 1904. When the series was released as a book in 1904, one journal described it as "the most remarkable book of its kind ever written in this country." Daniel Yergin, in his landmark book The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power, describes TarbelPs book, saying "Arguably, it was the single most influential book on business ever published in the United States."8 It was the nail in the coffin for the nation's most hated trust and its premier robber baron. As for Rockefeller, Yergin describes him as "the single most important figure in shaping the oil industry."9 It is a common characterization and is undoubtedly true. However, Rockefeller earned this and even greater acclaim despite the fact that neither he nor his company contributed to the discovery of oil. He did not develop the technology to drill for oil, pump it out of the earth, turn crude into kerosene for lamps or gasoline for cars, or move it through pipelines around the earth. On the contrary, Rockefeller did more than just about any other individual in history to undercut the efforts of those who made these discoveries and to push them out of the oil business altogether. Nor did Rockefeller found the first oil company, introduce the ideas of vertical or horizontal integration to the oil industry, or invent the concept of the corporate trust. Yet Rockefeller unquestionably deserves Yergin's title, because he mastered the fine art of mass consolidation and achieving unprecedented profit with little regard for the human, social, or broader economic costs of his actions. In Rockefeller's words, "The growth of a large business is merely a survival of the fittest."10 For more than a century, the direct descendants of Standard Oil, including ExxonMobil, Chevron, and Conoco-Phillips, have dutifully followed Rockefeller's business model**.** Yet all of Standard Oil's descendants should pay heed, for John D. Rockefeller personally sowed the seeds of his own demise: a peoples' movement committed to**,** and ultimately successful in, breaking up the Standard Oil Company**.**

#### Ending oil subsidies is key – they are the epitome of Big Oil’s influence in American politics

McKibben 12 (Bill – Schumann Distinguished Scholar at Middlebury College, “Welfare for (Very Rich) Oil Companies”, May, http://sojo.net/magazine/2012/05/welfare-very-rich-oil-companies)

Of the many gifts that the 99 percent award to the 1 percent—the various tax breaks and tributes that have helped push inequality in America to record levels—none are quite as annoying as the subsidies awarded the fossil fuel industry.Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders introduced a bill this spring that would trim $20 billion a year from those payouts to coal and oil and gas companies. Barack Obama, modest almost to a fault, has identified $5 billion in handouts that he’d like taken away before this year’s budget is finalized. Whatever the number, the principle is crucial. Because if we can’t agree not to subsidize the fossil fuel industry, I’d submit we pretty much can’t agree about anything. For environmentalists, few things could be more important. Worldwide, it’s estimated that global warming emissions could be cut in half if all governments stopped subsidizing fossil fuel—something that won’t happen unless the U.S. takes the lead. But let’s say for the moment that you don’t care about climate change. Let’s say you agree with Republican Sen. James Inhofe of Oklahoma that global warming is impossible because it says in Genesis “that ‘as long as the earth remains there will be seed time and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, day and night.’ My point is, God’s still up there,” Inhofe said. “The arrogance of people to think that we, human beings, would be able to change what He is doing in the climate is to me outrageous.” (I can’t help myself: This is an exceedingly dumb theology. God allows war but prevents carbon emission from heating the atmosphere?) Even if you thought that way, you’d still want to keep the federal government from paying Exxon bonuses every year. For one thing, there’s no group of industries that need the money less. Fossil fuel is the most profitable enterprise humans have ever engaged in, and by large margins. Exxon earned $41 billion last year, not quite as much as its $45 billion record in 2008, but still more money than any other company in the history of money ($1,300 a second, if you’re keeping score). The Koch brothers are the third and fourth richest men in America, thanks to their network of pipelines. Subsidizing people like this is like setting up a special welfare program only for lottery winners. It’s like arranging the NBA draft so that the team who wins the title also gets the first-round choice. It’s like reserving the parking spaces near the store for Olympic athletes. And it’s even nuttier when you think about why we subsidize things in the first place. We pick things we’d like to be able to do, but aren’t good at yet. Say, solar power—if the government helps companies invest in the new technology, they will get better at producing panels, the price will come down, a new industry will be born, and we’ll all be better off. It’s the same reason we subsidize education—young people don’t know what they need to know, so we help them go to college (unless we’re Rick Santorum). This doesn’t always work. Some kids go to college and do nothing but drink beer—the subsidy was wasted. Some solar companies—Solyndra, say—turn out not to be based on sound ideas, and so they fail. Neither case is pretty, but most people understand that you still want to subsidize both college and innovation. But fossil fuel? We learned how to burn coal in the early 1700s, and oil and gas followed. We’re very good at these things now—too good, to judge by the fact that the planet’s temperature is rising fast. Subsidizing coal is like finding that beer-drinking college student and paying him to sit in a bar all day and night—it’s not just unnecessary, it’s ludicrous. But it does make sense for one group of people—legislators. Having been given small presents (campaign donations) by fossil fuel companies, they in return bestow large presents on those corporations, using our tax dollars. Outside of Congress, huge majorities of Republicans, independents, and Democrats think it’s a bad idea; it’ll be interesting to see if that’s enough.

#### Oil subsidies perpetuates notions of funding those who are already wealth

McKibben 12 (Bill – Schumann Distinguished Scholar at Middlebury College , “Fossil-fuel subsidies: Helping the richest get richer”, 4/5, <http://articles.latimes.com/2012/apr/05/opinion/la-oe-mckibben-stop-oil-subsidies-20120404>)

Even if Congress can't pass a bill to end them, those subsidies are worth focusing on. After all, we're talking about somewhere between $10 billion and $40 billion annually (depending on what you count) in freebie cash for an energy industry already making historic profits. We should be outraged, but there's a problem: The very word "subsidies" makes American eyes glaze over. It sounds so boring, like something that has everything to do with finance and taxes and accounting, and nothing to do with us. But bring yourself to focus on fossil-fuel subsidies for just a minute, and you will realize just how loony our policy is. Start this way: You subsidize something you want to encourage, something that might not happen if you didn't support it financially. Take education. We build schools, pay teachers and give government loans and grants to college kids. Families too have embraced education subsidies, with tuition often being the last big subsidy we give the children we've raised. The theory is: Young people don't know enough yet. We need to give them a hand and a chance when it comes to further learning, so they'll be a help to society in the future. From that analogy, here are five rules that should be applied to the fossil-fuel industry. Don't subsidize those who already have plenty of cash on hand**.** No one would propose a government program of low-interest loans to send the richest kids in the country to college. We assume that the wealthy will pay full freight. Similarly, we should assume that the fossil-fuel business, the most profitable industry on Earth, should pay its way. What possible reason is there for giving, say, Exxon a tax break? Year after year the company sets records for money-making. Last year it managed to rake in a mere $41 billion in profit, just failing to break its own 2008 all-time mark of $45 billion.