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#### The United States federal government should reduce restrictions that disproportionately affect small modular nuclear reactors in the United States

#### The plan solves the only major roadblock to the creation of a robust domestic SMR industry

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Abstract: More and more companies—in the U.S. and abroad—are investing in new commercial nuclear enterprises, chief among them, small modular reactors (SMRs). The SMR industry is growing, with many promising developments in the works—which is precisely why the government should not interfere, as subsidies and government programs have already resulted in an inefficient system for large reactors. Heritage Foundation nuclear policy experts explain how the future for small reactors can remain bright.¶ Small modular reactors (SMRs) have garnered significant attention in recent years, with companies of all sizes investing in these smaller, safer, and more cost-efficient nuclear reactors. Utilities are even forming partnerships with reactor designers to prepare for potential future construction. Perhaps most impressive is that most of this development is occurring without government involvement. Private investors and entrepreneurs are dedicating resources to these technologies based on their future prospects, not on government set-asides, mandates, or subsidies, and despite the current regulatory bias in favor of large light water reactors (LWRs).¶ The result is a young, robust, innovative, and growing SMR industry. Multiple technologies are being proposed that each have their own set of characteristics based on price, fuel, waste characteristics, size, and any number of other variables. To continue this growth, policymakers should reject the temptation to offer the same sort of subsidies and government programs that have proven ineffective for large LWRs. While Department of Energy cost-sharing programs and capital subsidies seem attractive, they have yet to net any new reactor construction. Instead, policymakers should focus on the systemic issues that have continued to thwart the expansion of nuclear power in recent years. Specifically, the federal government needs to develop an efficient and predictable regulatory pathway to new reactor certification and to develop a sustainable nuclear waste management strategy.¶ Why SMRs?¶ Small modular reactors share many of the attractive qualities of large reactors, such as providing abundant emissions-free power, while adding new features that could make them more appropriate for certain applications, such as providing power to rural communities or for dedicated industrial use. SMRs are not yet positioned to take the place of traditional large LWRs, but they represent an important growth area for the commercial nuclear industry.¶ Indeed, should the promise of small modular reactors be realized, the technology could transform the nuclear industry. That is because these attributes would potentially mitigate some of the financial and regulatory problems that nuclear energy has recently faced. SMRs potentially cost less (at least in up-front capital), are more mobile and multifunctional, provide competition, and can largely be produced by existing domestic infrastructure.¶ Lower Costs Up Front. Large reactors are very expensive to license and construct and require massive up-front capital investments to begin a project. Small reactors, while providing far less power than large reactors, can be built in modules and thus be paid for over time. For example, estimates for larger reactors range from $6 billion to $10 billion and must be financed all at once. The Babcock & Wilcox Company’s modular mPower reactors, alternatively, can be purchased in increments of 125 megawatts (MW), which would allow costs to be spread out over time. Though cost estimates are not yet available for the mPower reactor, its designers have stated that they will be competitive. This should not be used as a reason to refrain from building larger, 1,000-plus MW reactors. Each utility will have its own set of variables that it must consider in choosing a reactor technology, but given that one of the primary justifications for government subsidies is that the high costs of large reactors puts unacceptable strain on utility balance sheets, an option that spreads capital outlays over time should be attractive.¶ Safe Installation in Diverse Locations. Some designs are small enough to produce power for as few as 20,000 homes. One such reactor, Hyperion Power’s HPM (Hyperion Power Module) offers 25 MW of electricity for an advertised cost of $50 million per unit. This makes the HPM a potential power solution for isolated communities or small cities.[1] The Alaskan town of Galena, for example, is planning to power its community with a small reactor designed by Toshiba, while Fairbanks is looking into a small plant constructed by Hyperion.[2] In addition, Western Troy Capital Resources has stated that it will form a private corporation to provide electric power from small reactors for remote locations in Canada.[3] Public utility officials in Grays Harbor, Washington, have spoken with the NuScale Power company about powering the community with eight small nuclear plants;[4] and Hyperion Power has reported a high level of interest in small nuclear reactor designs from islands around the world.[5]¶ Using a small nuclear reactor could cut electricity costs in isolated areas since there would be no need for expensive transmission lines to carry power to remote locations.[6] SMRs could also potentially be integrated into existing energy infrastructure. SMRs could be built into old coal plants, for instance. The reactors would replace the coal boilers and be hooked into the existing turbines and distribution lines. According to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, these modifications could be completed safely since small reactors will likely be easier to control during times of malfunction.[7]¶ Multi-functionality. SMRs can be used in a variety of applications that have substantial power and heat requirements. The chemical and plastics industries and oil refineries all use massive amounts of natural gas to fuel their operations. Similarly, small reactors could produce the heat needed to extract oil from tar sands, which currently requires large amounts of natural gas. While affordable today, natural gas prices vary significantly over time, so the long-term predictable pricing that nuclear provides could be very attractive. SMRs may also provide a practical solution for desalination plants (which require large amounts of electricity) that can bring fresh water to parts of the world where such supplies are depleting.[8] Perhaps most important, is that SMRs have the potential to bring power and electricity to the 1.6 billion people in the world today that have no access to electricity, and to the 2.4 billion that rely on biomass, such as wood, agricultural residue, and dung for cooking and heating.[9]¶ Competition. While competition among large nuclear-reactor technologies currently exists, small reactors will add a new dimension to nuclear-reactor competition. Multiple small technology designs are set to emerge on the market. Not only will competition among small reactors create a robust market, it will also provide an additional incentive for large reactors to improve. If smaller reactors begin to capture a share of the nuclear market and the energy market at large, it will drive innovation and ultimately lower prices for both new and existing technologies.¶ Domestic Production. Although the nuclear industry necessarily shrank to coincide with decreased demand, much of the domestic infrastructure remains in place today and could support the expansion of small-reactor technologies. Although the industrial and intellectual base has declined over the past three decades, forging production, heavy manufacturing, specialized piping, mining, fuel services, and skilled labor could all be found in the United States. Lehigh Heavy Forge Corporation in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, could build the forges while Babcock & Wilcox could provide the heavy nuclear components, for instance. AREVA/Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding broke ground on a heavy components manufacturing facility last June.[10] Further, a number of companies are expanding manufacturing, engineering, and uranium enrichment capabilities—all in the United States.¶ If SMRs are so great, where is the construction?¶ While some designs are closer to market introduction than others, the fact is that America’s regulatory and policy environment is not sufficient to support a robust expansion of existing nuclear technologies, much less new ones. New reactor designs are difficult to license efficiently, and the lack of a sustainable nuclear waste management policy causes significant risk to private investment.¶ Many politicians are attempting to mitigate these market challenges by offering subsidies, such as loan guarantees. While this approach still enjoys broad support in Congress and industry, the reality is that it has not worked. Despite a lavish suite of subsidies offered in the Energy Policy Act of 2005, including loan guarantees, insurance against government delays, and production tax credits, no new reactors have been permitted, much less constructed. These subsidies are in addition to existing technology development cost-sharing programs that have been in place for years and defer significant research and development costs from industry to the taxpayer.¶ The problem with this approach is that it ignores the larger systemic problems that create the unstable marketplace to begin with. These systemic problems generally fall into three categories:¶ Licensing. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is ill prepared to build the regulatory framework for new reactor technologies, and no reactor can be offered commercially without an NRC license. In a September 2009 interview, former NRC chairman Dale E. Klein said that small nuclear reactors pose a dilemma for the NRC because the commission is uneasy with new and unproven technologies and feels more comfortable with large light water reactors, which have been in operation for years and has a long safety record.[11] The result is that enthusiasm for building non-light-water SMRs is generally squashed at the NRC as potential customers realize that there is little chance that the NRC will permit the project within a timeframe that would promote near-term investment. So, regardless of which attributes an SMR might bring to the market, the regulatory risk is such that real progress on commercialization is difficult to attain. This then leaves large light water reactors, and to a lesser extent, small ones, as the least risky option, which pushes potential customers toward that technology, which then undermines long-term progress, competition, and innovation.¶ Nuclear Waste Management. The lack of a sustainable nuclear waste management solution is perhaps the greatest obstacle to a broad expansion of U.S. nuclear power. The federal government has failed to meet its obligations under the 1982 Nuclear Waste Policy Act, as amended, to begin collecting nuclear waste for disposal in Yucca Mountain. The Obama Administration’s attempts to shutter the existing program to put waste in Yucca Mountain without having a backup plan has worsened the situation. This outcome was predictable because the current program is based on the flawed premise that the federal government is the appropriate entity to manage nuclear waste. Under the current system, waste producers are able to largely ignore waste management because the federal government is responsible. The key to a sustainable waste management policy is to directly connect financial responsibility for waste management to waste production. This will increase demand for more waste-efficient reactor technologies and drive innovation on waste-management technologies, such as reprocessing. Because SMRs consume fuel and produce waste differently than LWRs, they could contribute greatly to an economically efficient and sustainable nuclear waste management strategy.¶ Government Intervention. Too many policymakers believe that Washington is equipped to guide the nuclear industry to success. So, instead of creating a stable regulatory environment where the market value of different nuclear technologies can determine their success and evolution, they choose to create programs to help industry succeed. Two recent Senate bills from the 111th Congress, the Nuclear Energy Research Initiative Improvement Act (S. 2052) and the Nuclear Power 2021 Act (S. 2812), are cases in point. Government intervention distorts the normal market processes that, if allowed to work, would yield the most efficient, cost-effective, and appropriate nuclear technologies. Instead, the federal government picks winners and losers through programs where bureaucrats and well-connected lobbyists decide which technologies are permitted, and provides capital subsidies that allow investors to ignore the systemic problems that drive risk and costs artificially high. This approach is especially detrimental to SMRs because subsidies to LWRs distort the relative benefit of other reactor designs by artificially lowering the cost and risk of a more mature technology that already dominates the marketplace.¶ How to Fix a Broken System¶ At the Global Nuclear Renaissance Summit on July 24, 2008, then-NRC chairman Dale Klein said that a nuclear renaissance with regard to small reactors will take “decades to unfold.”[12] If Members of Congress and government agencies do not reform their current approach to nuclear energy, this will most certainly be the case. However, a new, market-based approach could lead to a different outcome. Instead of relying on the policies of the past, Congress, the Department of Energy, and the NRC should pursue a new, 21st-century model for small and alternative reactor technologies by doing the following:¶ Reject additional loan guarantees. Loan guarantee proponents argue that high up-front costs of new large reactors make them unaffordable without loan guarantees. Presumably, then, a smaller, less expensive modular option would be very attractive to private investors even without government intervention. But loan guarantees undermine this advantage by subsidizing the capital costs and risk associated with large reactors. A small reactor industry without loan guarantees would also provide competition and downward price pressure on large light water reactors. At a minimum, Congress should limit guarantees to no more than two plants of any reactor design and limit to two-thirds the amount of any expanded loan guarantee program that can support a single technology. Such eligibility limits will prevent support from going only to a single basic technology, such as large light water reactors.[13]¶ Avoid subsidies. Subsidies do not work if the objective is a diverse and economically sustainable nuclear industry. Despite continued attempts to subsidize the nuclear industry into success, the evidence demonstrates that such efforts invariably fail. The nuclear industry’s success stories are rooted in the free market. Two examples include the efficiency and low costs of today’s existing plants, and the emergence of a private uranium enrichment industry. Government intervention is the problem, as illustrated by the government’s inability to meet its nuclear waste disposal obligations.¶ Build expertise at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The NRC is built to regulate large light water reactors. It simply does not have the regulatory capability and resources to efficiently regulate other technologies, and building that expertise takes time. Helping the NRC to develop that expertise now would help bring new technologies into the marketplace more smoothly. Congress should direct and resource the NRC to develop additional broad expertise for liquid metal-cooled, fast reactors and high-temperature, gas-cooled reactors. With its existing expertise in light water technology, this additional expertise would position the NRC to effectively regulate an emerging SMR industry.¶ Establish a new licensing pathway. The current licensing pathway relies on reactor customers to drive the regulatory process. But absent an efficient and predictable regulatory pathway, few customers will pursue these reactor technologies. The problem is that the legal, regulatory, and policy apparatus is built to support large light water reactors, effectively discriminating against other technologies. Establishing an alternative licensing pathway that takes the unique attributes of small reactors into consideration could help build the necessary regulatory support on which commercialization ultimately depends.[14]¶ Resolve staffing, security, construction criteria, and fee-structure issues by December 31, 2011. The similarity of U.S. reactors has meant that the NRC could establish a common fee structure and many general regulatory guidelines for areas, such as staffing levels, security requirements, and construction criteria. But these regulations are inappropriate for many SMR designs that often have smaller staff requirements, unique control room specifications, diverse security requirements, and that employ off-site construction techniques. Subjecting SMRs to regulations built for large light water reactors would add cost and result in less effective regulation. The NRC has acknowledged the need for this to be resolved and has committed to doing so, including developing the budget requirements to achieve it. It has not committed to a specific timeline.[15] Congress should demand that these issues be resolved by the end of 2011.

#### Expanding nuclear power revitalizes the economy

Fertel 9—35 years of experience consulting for electric utilities on issues related to designing, siting, licensing and managing both fossil and nuclear plants. Worked in executive positions with such organizations as Ebasco, Management Analysis Company and Tenera. In November 1990, he joined the U.S. Council for Energy Awareness as vice president of Technical Programs. (Marvin, Op-Ed: In Energy, Nuclear Leads Transition to Green Jobs, http://www.nei.org/keyissues/newnuclearplants/economicbenefitsofnewnuclearplants/in-energy-nuclear-leads-transition-to-green-jobs/)

There is tremendous potential for rebuilding the U.S. economy on green jobs, particularly as energy companies gear up to meet rising electricity demand. The nuclear energy industry already is creating tens of thousands of American green jobs in the first wave of this transition.¶ Nuclear energy is one of the few bright spots in the U.S. economy – expanding rather than contracting. That’s due to a growing consensus that any credible program to address climate change must include carbon-free technologies like nuclear energy.¶ Energy companies, mainly in the fast-growing Sun Belt, have filed federal permits to build up to 26 nuclear plants. Betting on an increased emphasis on carbon-free nuclear energy to meet future power needs in the United States and elsewhere, reactor designers and manufacturers are expanding engineering centers and manufacturing facilities as well as their payrolls.¶ Green job growth has already begun in North Carolina, Tennessee and Pennsylvania and will spread to Virginia and Louisiana in the coming months. In Lake Charles, La., the Shaw Group and Westinghouse will fabricate reactor modules at a 300-acre site that will employee 1,400 workers. In Newport News, Va., Northrop Grumman and AREVA are building a new facility to manufacture massive reactor vessels and stream generators.¶ These and other companies already have hired more than 9,000 employees and invested $4 billion in developing new nuclear manufacturing and business operations. The Shaw-Westinghouse facility alone will generate 2,900 jobs—an economic horn of plenty for local officials. In this case, Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal said “we know that we have to invest more in alternative domestic energy sources like wind, ethanol, solar and nuclear energy. This announcement does not only represent new jobs and a new, vibrant economic engine in our state, but also shows that Louisiana is harnessing the future of the energy industry and the most innovative thinking of the next generation.”¶ Tim Kaine said his state has “unique attributes” to position it as a leader in nuclear energy. After the Newport News project was announced last October, the local newspaper focused on the single most important fact for local workers: Northrop Grumman + AREVA = 540 good jobs for Newport News. ¶ Engineering and manufacturing jobs are green jobs in today’s market and foretell the significant potential in the energy sector for stimulating the U.S. economy. ¶ The U.S. electricity industry faces an unprecedented challenge. It must invest up to $2 trillion in new power generation and distribution technology to meet an expected 25 percent increase in demand by 2030. And it must do so assuming that there will be a price on carbon, currently a byproduct of 70 percent of the nation’s electricity production capability. Of the emission-free sources, nuclear energy dominates today and has the most potential for large-scale expansion. ¶ Nuclear energy must play an important role in helping America succeed in this challenge. Expanding nuclear power will help reduce the threat of global warming, meet the rising demand for electricity and stimulate the U.S. economy. ¶ ¶ Building a new generation of nuclear plants will create tens of thousands of dependable, good-paying jobs for American workers. Whether building new carbon-free nuclear power plants or a “smart” grid that will help use electricity more wisely, nuclear energy jobs are as green as any other low or non-carbon source of electricity.¶ A single nuclear plant will create 1,400 to 1,800 jobs during construction and 400 to 700 employees during the 60-year operating lifetime of the plant. Based on economic studies of 22 U.S. nuclear power plants, each year a new reactor will produce $430 million in local expenditures for goods, services and labor; generate more than $20 million in state and local tax revenue; and produce at least $75 million in federal tax payments. Construction of a new reactor also will provide a substantial boost to suppliers of commodities and manufacturers of hundreds of components.¶ An abundant supply of electricity is critical to preserving and advancing our quality of life, standard of living and national security. Affordable, reliable electricity is vital for America’s long-term economic success, but building all new sources of electricity is capital intensive. The pace of new nuclear plant development, and of job creation in this sector of the economy, is largely dictated by the financing support available from the federal government – particularly in today’s tight credit markets. ¶ Limited financial stimulus for wind, solar and advanced nuclear plants is appropriate to jumpstart this economic shift. For example, the federal loan guarantee program passed by Congress for carbon-free energy sources will lower the cost of building new electricity supplies that will in turn keep consumer costs down. Best of all, it doesn’t use U.S. taxpayer money. Those companies that will pursue loan guarantees also will pay the fees associated with implementing the program. ¶ However, $18.5 billion in loan guarantee volume approved by Congress in 2005 was swamped by applications from 17 companies seeking a total of $122 billion in loan guarantees for new nuclear plant projects. The loan guarantee program alone doesn’t address the real need for $2 trillion in financing for the electricity sector over the next 15 years. ¶ The economic and energy challenges facing our nation are daunting. We must have a national energy policy that develops carbon-free technologies, drives innovation to supply reliable electricity and creates jobs to help stimulate the U.S. economy. Nuclear energy is a vital part of the solution to these goals—producing 73 percent of all carbon-free electricity while creating tens of thousands of stable, high-paying jobs as part of a transition to a greener economy.

#### That’s key to solve economic collapse

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But economic growth will depend upon trillions of dollars of Federal investment that ameliorate the immediate situation by laying the basis for the long-term increased productivity of the economy, as a whole. It is not a question of simply creating jobs, but increasing the capital intensity of the economy, and raising the productive level of the nation’s workforce. This is the function of investments in basic economic infrastructure.¶ **There will be no economic recovery, or growth, without a massive expansion** and upgrading **of the nation’s energy supply** and distribution system. Contrary to “popular opinion,” which has been shaped by scam artists like T. Boone “Windbag” Pickens, and “green” ideologues like Al Gore, **only a massive expansion of nuclear energy can provide the** quality and **quantity of energy that a 21st Century economy requires**.¶ Although the first tentative steps have been taken by electric utilities to restart the construction of new nuclear power plants, with more than two dozen reactor license applications filed with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, this “renaissance” in nuclear power will not materialize without a Federally directed “stimulus.” Similarly, the disappearance of the U.S. nuclear manufacturing industry has begun to be reversed, but the reconstitution of a nuclear industry, based on the most modern power plant designs and advanced manufacturing techniques, will not happen without a nationally directed effort.¶ For decades, the mass-production auto industry, and its component manufacturers, created one out of every thirteen industrial jobs in the United States. This was the reservoir of the nation’s machine tool design and industrial engineering talent. **The industry, which now lies in ruin, must be retooled and mobilized to recreate a nuclear manufacturing industry**.

#### Nuclear’s key to stop energy gaps that cause conflict and collapse the economy

Becker et al 8—article by 6 MIT professors – Department of Physics, Professor Emeritus, MIT—Richard Milner—Director, Lab for Nuclear Science & Professor, MIT–AND—Eric Cosman— Department of Physics, Professor Emeritus, MIT—AND—Peter Demos—Department of Physics, Professor Emeritus, MIT—AND—Bruno Coppi—Prof of Physics, MIT (A Perspective on the Future Energy Supply of the United States: The Urgent Need for Increased Nuclear Power, web.mit.edu/fnl/volume/212/milner.html)

The reliable and affordable availability of energy is the lifeblood of human civilization in the twenty-first century. It is essential to the quality and security of everyday life of the citizens in the United States. For example, the sudden loss of electrical power invariably reduces living conditions of the most technologically advanced society to a primitive state. The protracted loss of electric power would lead to chaos in the United States, with resultant instability worldwide. Recently, it has become clear that the future energy security of the United States is at serious risk from two different sources.¶ Most of the energy used in buildings, industry, and transportation arises from the chemical burning of fossil fuels. The waste produced in the burning process includes greenhouse gases (e.g., carbon dioxide, methane) which for the last 200 years have accumulated in the Earth’s atmosphere. The present concentration of carbon dioxide in the Earth’s atmosphere is estimated as 385 ppm, which substantially exceeds the estimated values over the last 500,000 years. Basic scientific arguments tell us that the increased carbon dioxide levels should result in heating of the Earth’s surface. Measurements indicate that the average temperature at the Earth’s surface has significantly risen over the last 100 years. If humanity wishes to preserve the planet on which human civilization developed, significant changes in the way we produce energy are urgently required. This is a global security challenge where the U.S. must play a leadership role.¶ Secondly, the energy supply of the United States relies to a great degree on the reliable and affordable availability of oil. For example, transportation (road, rail, sea, air) depends almost completely on oil. The world’s supply of oil is limited and it is located in many regions of the world which are politically unstable and unfriendly to the United States. In addition to this, it is possible that the total world oil supply may have already peaked. In the last two decades, the U.S. has been involved in two wars in the Middle East where the world’s major source of oil is located.¶ Until the U.S. dependence on foreign oil is significantly reduced, there is every expectation that increasing amounts of precious U.S. blood and treasure will have to be expended in widening conflicts in the cause of energy security.¶ It is widely accepted that the U.S. must find a way to wean itself from its addiction to oil. In ground transportation, which is a major oil consumer, significant progress is being made with batteries and fuel cells to replace gasoline with electricity, which can be generated in alternative ways.¶ Strongly motivated by these two considerations, the development of new technologies to increase energy efficiency and to produce reliable and affordable energy with minimal greenhouse gas emission to the Earth’s atmosphere is a high priority in the U.S. and in many other countries. It is essential that these efforts be encouraged and enhanced. However, the probability of success and the timescale for realization of these technologies is highly uncertain. The economic stability and national security of the United States over the coming decades cannot be secured by assuming optimistically that these new technologies will succeed in time to avoid a major discontinuity in the supply of oil and gas from foreign and potentially hostile sources. Further, it is not acceptable, nor is it possible, that the U.S. continues to burn fossil fuels indefinitely at present levels, thereby putting in clear jeopardy the planet on which we have evolved.¶ Nuclear Power is Carbon-free, Technologically Feasible, Scalable, and Economical¶ The United States needs immediately to develop on a large scale an energy source which does not produce greenhouse gases, which is already known to be technologically feasible, and which is economical in view of projected costs of energy in the future. That energy source is nuclear fission.¶ Nuclear fission power reactor technology was developed in the U.S. and has been utilized for electricity generation on a large scale across the globe for half a century. For example, France produces about 70% of its electricity using nuclear power. In the U.S. about 20% of the electricity used is produced using nuclear power. However, there are states where it is significantly larger, e.g., in Illinois about 50% of electricity is generated by nuclear power. The U.S. should establish the goal to produce half of its electricity by means of nuclear power as soon as feasible. This will have the effect of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, avoiding the risk of an “energy gap” in supply, and providing valuable time for new energy technologies to be developed. This goal would fast track and increase the projected levels of nuclear power over the scenarios considered in several energy studies, including the 2003 MIT study, The Future of Nuclear Power.¶ A Change in U.S. Government Policy and Leadership is Needed¶ The expansion of nuclear power in the U.S. requires a major change in U.S. government policy and a change in the U.S. public’s perceptions. In the past 30 years there has been criticism of nuclear fission power that has raised the American public’s concern; however, this criticism must be viewed today in the context of national energy needs and the positive experience that has been gained from the use of nuclear power.¶ The criticism has related primarily to nuclear reactor safety, storage and environmental risks of nuclear waste, proliferation of nuclear materials that could be used in weapons, and the cost of nuclear power relative to coal, natural gas, and oil. In each of these cases, the problems are either solvable, have been exaggerated in view of decades-long experience, are insignificant compared to a national economic crisis or international hostilities caused by a gap in U.S. energy supply, or are insignificant compared to the dangers of greenhouse gas emissions.¶ The safety record for reactors has been excellent, and safety can be further assured by improved reactor design. There are many decades of experience of safe handling, storage, and monitoring of radioactive materials worldwide. In addition, there are now several possible strategies that would actually use the existing waste to produce energy, thereby increasing the long-term availability of nuclear energy.¶ The U.S. must be an example for major greenhouse gas-emitting countries possessing nuclear technology, e.g., China, India, and Russia, in committing to a considerable reduction in global emissions. The cost of nuclear power becomes less important as foreign fuel prices spiral upward, and if the carbon tax factor is included, nuclear power becomes very economically important. Further, the cost of nuclear power would be irrelevant if our economy were to collapse from a cutoff of oil supply, or worse, if we had to go to war to secure our energy supply.¶ A Call for Action¶ Today the advancement of nuclear power in the U.S. is crippled by governmental policy, regulation, and misconceptions. In the long term, it is reasonable to expect that the energy needs of the U.S. will be met from a number of different sources, only one of which will be nuclear fission. However, to ensure the energy security of the Nation in the medium term and to allow time for the development of new energy technologies which can drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the U.S. needs to initiate immediately a program to implement nuclear fission reactors on a large scale.

#### Decline kills primacy

Gelb 10 [Leslie H. Gelb, a former New York Times columnist and senior official in the state and defense departments, is currently president emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, Fashioning a Realistic Strategy for the Twenty-First Century,” Fletcher Forum of World Affairs vol.34:2 summer 2010 http://fletcher.tufts.edu/forum/archives/pdfs/34-2pdfs/Gelb.pdf]

Power is what it always has been. It is the ability to get someone to do something they do not want to do by means of your resources and your position. It was always that. There is no such thing in my mind as “soft” power or “hard” power or “smart” power or “dumb” power. It is people who are hard or soft or smart or dumb. Power is power. And people use it wisely or poorly. Now, what has changed is the composition of power in international affairs. For almost all of history, international power was achieved in the form of military power and military force. Now, particularly in the last fifty years or so, it has become more and more economic. So power consists of economic power, military power, and diplomatic power, but the emphasis has shifted from military power (for almost all of history) to now, more economic power. And, as President Obama said in his West Point speech several months ago, our economy is the basis of our international power in general and our military power in particular. That is where it all comes from. ¶ Whether other states listen to us and act on what we say depends a good deal on their perception of the strength of the American economy. A big problem for us in the last few years has been the perception that our economy is in decline.

#### The plan is key to competitiveness, influencing China’s rise, and maintaining hegemony

Cullinane 11—Staff at House Foreign Affairs Committee. Graduate student at the Institute of World Politics (Scott, America Falling Behind: The Strategic Dimensions of Chinese Commercial Nuclear Energy, 9/28/11, [www.ensec.org/index.php?view=article&catid=118%3Acontent&id=319%3Aamerica-falling-behind-the-strategic-dimensions-of-chinese-commercial-nuclear-energy&tmpl=component&print](http://www.ensec.org/index.php?view=article&catid=118%3Acontent&id=319%3Aamerica-falling-behind-the-strategic-dimensions-of-chinese-commercial-nuclear-energy&tmpl=component&print)=1&page=&option=com\_content&Itemid=376)

Due to a confluence of events the United States has recently focused more attention on nuclear weapons policy than it has in previous years; however, the proliferation of commercial nuclear technology and its implications for America’s strategic position have been largely ignored. While the Unites States is currently a participant in the international commercial nuclear energy trade, America’s own domestic construction of nuclear power plants has atrophied severely and the US risks losing its competitive edge in the nuclear energy arena.¶ Simultaneously, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has made great strides in closing the nuclear energy development gap with America. Through a combination of importing technology, research from within China itself, and a disciplined policy approach the PRC is increasingly able to leverage the export of commercial nuclear power as part of its national strategy. Disturbingly, China does not share America’s commitment to stability, transparency, and responsibility when exporting nuclear technology. This is a growing strategic weakness and risk for the United States. To remain competitive and to be in a position to offset the PRC when required the American government should encourage the domestic use of nuclear power and spur the forces of technological innovation.¶ America: dominant no longer¶ History has recorded well American wartime nuclear developments which culminated in the July 1945 Trinity Test, but what happened near Arco, Idaho six years later has been overlooked. In 1951, scientists for the first time produced usable electricity from an experimental nuclear reactor. Once this barrier was conquered the atom was harnessed to generate electricity and permitted America to move into the field of commercial nuclear power. In the next five years alone the United States signed over 20 nuclear cooperation agreements with various countries. Not only did the US build dozens of power plants domestically during the 1960s and 1970s, the US Export-Import Bank also distributed $7.1 billion dollars in loans and guarantees for the international sale of 49 reactors. American built and designed reactors were exported around the world during those years. Even today, more than 60% of the world’s 440 operating reactors are based on technology developed in the United States. The growth of the US civilian nuclear power sector stagnated after the Three Mile Island incident in 1979 – the most serious accident in American civilian nuclear power history. Three Mile Island shook America’s confidence in nuclear power and provided the anti-nuclear lobby ample fuel to oppose the further construction of any nuclear power plants. In the following decade, 42 planned domestic nuclear power plants were cancelled, and in the 30 years since the Three Mile Island incident the American nuclear power industry has survived only through foreign sales and merging operations with companies in Asia and Europe. Westinghouse sold its nuclear division to Toshiba and General Electric joined with Hitachi. Even the highest levels of the American government came to cast nuclear power aside. President Bill Clinton bragged in his 1993 State of the Union Address that “we are eliminating programs that are no longer needed, such as nuclear power research and development.” ¶ America’s slow pace of reactor construction over the past three decades has stymied innovation and caused the nuclear sector and its industrial base to shrivel. While some aspects of America’s nuclear infrastructure still operate effectively, many critical areas have atrophied. For example, one capability that America has entirely lost is the means to cast ultra heavy forgings in the range of 350,000 – 600,000 pounds, which impacts the construction of containment vessels, turbine rotors, and steam generators. In contrast, Japan, China, and Russia all possess an ultra heavy forging capacity and South Korea and India plan to build forges in this range. Likewise, the dominance America enjoyed in uranium enrichment until the 1970s is gone. The current standard centrifuge method for uranium enrichment was not invented in America and today 40% of the enriched uranium US power plants use is processed overseas and imported. Another measure of how much the US nuclear industry has shrunk is evident in the number of companies certified to handle nuclear material. In the 1980s the United States had 400 nuclear suppliers and 900 holders of N-stamp certificates (N-stamps are the international nuclear rating certificates issued by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers). By 2008 that number had reduced itself to 80 suppliers and 200 N-stamp holders. ¶ A recent Government Accountability Office report, which examined data from between 1994 and 2009, found the US to have a declining share of the global commercial nuclear trade. However, during that same period over 60 reactors were built worldwide. Nuclear power plants are being built in the world increasingly by non-American companies. ¶ The American nuclear industry entered the 1960s in a strong position, yet over the past 30 years other countries have closed the development gap with America. The implications of this change go beyond economics or prestige to include national security. These changes would be less threatening if friendly allies were the ones moving forward with developing a nuclear export industry; however, the quick advancement of the PRC in nuclear energy changes the strategic calculus for America. ¶ The shifting strategic landscape¶ While America’s nuclear industry has languished, current changes in the world’s strategic layout no longer allow America the option of maintaining the status quo without being surpassed. The drive for research, development, and scientific progress that grew out of the Cold War propelled America forward, but those priorities have long since been downgraded by the US government. The economic development of formerly impoverished countries means that the US cannot assume continued dominance by default. The rapidly industrializing PRC is seeking its own place among the major powers of the world and is vying for hegemony in Asia; nuclear power is an example of their larger efforts to marshal their scientific and economic forces as instruments of national power.¶ The rise of China is a phrase that connotes images of a backwards country getting rich off of exporting cheap goods at great social and environmental costs. Yet, this understanding of the PRC has lead many in the United States to underestimate China’s capabilities. The Communist Party of China (CPC) has undertaken a comprehensive long-term strategy to transition from a weak state that lags behind the West to a country that is a peer-competitor to the United States. Nuclear technology provides a clear example of this. ¶ In 1978, General Secretary Deng Xiaoping began to move China out of the destructive Mao era with his policies of 'reform and opening.' As part of these changes during the 1980s, the CPC began a concerted and ongoing effort to modernize the PRC and acquire advanced technology including nuclear technology from abroad. This effort was named Program 863 and included both legal methods and espionage. By doing this, the PRC has managed to rapidly catch up to the West on some fronts. In order to eventually surpass the West in scientific development the PRC launched the follow-on Program 973 to build the foundations of basic scientific research within China to meet the nation’s major strategic needs. These steps have brought China to the cusp of the next stage of technological development, a stage known as “indigenous innovation.”¶ In 2006 the PRC published their science and technology plan out to 2020 and defined indigenous innovation as enhancing original innovation, integrated innovation, and re-innovation based on assimilation and absorption of imported technology in order improve national innovation capability. The Chinese seek to internalize and understand technological developments from around the world so that they can copy the equipment and use it as a point to build off in their own research. This is a step beyond merely copying and reverse engineering a piece of technology. The PRC sees this process of absorbing foreign technology coupled with indigenous innovation as a way of leapfrogging forward in development to gain the upper hand over the West. The PRC’s official statement on energy policy lists nuclear power as one of their target fields. When viewed within this context, the full range of implications from China’s development of nuclear technology becomes evident. The PRC is now competing with the United States in the areas of innovation and high-technology, two fields that have driven American power since World War Two. China’s economic appeal is no longer merely the fact that it has cheap labor, but is expanding its economic power in a purposeful way that directly challenges America’s position in the world.¶ The CPC uses the market to their advantage to attract nuclear technology and intellectual capital to China. The PRC has incentivized the process and encouraged new domestic nuclear power plant construction with the goal of having 20 nuclear power plants operational by 2020. The Chinese Ministry of Electrical Power has described PRC policy to reach this goal as encouraging joint investment between State Owned Corporations and foreign companies. 13 reactors are already operating in China, 25 more are under construction and even more reactors are in the planning stages. ¶ In line with this economic policy, China has bought nuclear reactors from Westinghouse and Areva and is cooperating with a Russian company to build nuclear power plants in Taiwan. By stipulating that Chinese companies and personnel be involved in the construction process, China is building up its own domestic capabilities and expects to become self-sufficient. China’s State Nuclear Power Technology Corporation has partnered with Westinghouse to build a new and larger reactor based on the existing Westinghouse AP 1000 reactor. This will give the PRC a reactor design of its own to then export. If the CPC is able to combine their control over raw materials, growing technical know-how, and manufacturing base, China will not only be a powerful economy, but be able to leverage this power to service its foreign policy goals as well.¶ Even though the PRC is still working to master third generation technology, their scientists are already working on what they think will be the nuclear reactor of the future. China is developing Fourth Generation Fast Neutron Reactors and wants to have one operational by 2030. Additionally, a Chinese nuclear development company has announced its intentions to build the “world’s first high-temperature, gas-cooled reactor” in Shandong province which offers to possibility of a reactor that is nearly meltdown proof. A design, which if proved successful, could potentially redefine the commercial nuclear energy trade. ¶ The risk to America¶ The international trade of nuclear material is hazardous in that every sale and transfer increases the chances for an accident or for willful misuse of the material. Nuclear commerce must be kept safe in order for the benefits of nuclear power generation to be realized. Yet, China has a record of sharing dangerous weapons and nuclear material with unfit countries. It is a risk for America to allow China to become a nuclear exporting country with a competitive technical and scientific edge. In order to limit Chinese influence and the relative attractiveness of what they can offer, America must ensure its continuing and substantive lead in reactor technology.¶ The PRC’s record of exporting risky items is well documented. It is known that during the 1980s the Chinese shared nuclear weapon designs with Pakistan and continues to proliferate WMD-related material. According to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence to Congress, China sells technologies and components in the Middle East and South Asia that are dual use and could support WMD and missile programs. Jane’s Intelligence Review reported in 2006 that China, ¶ Despite a 1997 promise to Washington to halt its nuclear technology sales to Iran, such assistance is likely to continue. In 2005, Iranian resistance groups accused China of selling Iran beryllium, which is useful for making nuclear triggers and maraging steel (twice as hard as stainless steel), which is critical for fabricating centrifuges needed to reprocess uranium into bomb-grade material. ¶ China sells dangerous materials in order to secure its geopolitical objectives, regardless if those actions harm world stability. There is little reason to believe China will treat the sale of nuclear reactors any differently. Even if the PRC provides public assurances that it will behave differently in the future, the CPC has not been truthful for decades about its nuclear material and weapons sales and hence lacks credibility. For example, in 1983 Chinese Vice Premier Li Peng said that China does not encourage or support nuclear proliferation. In fact, it was that same year that China contracted with Algeria, then a non-NPT [Non-Proliferation Treaty] state, to construct a large, unsafeguarded plutonium production reactor. In 1991 a Chinese Embassy official wrote in a letter to the The Washington Post that 'China has struck no nuclear deal with Iran.' In reality, China had provided Iran with a research reactor capable of producing plutonium and a calutron, a technology that can be used to enrich uranium to weapons-grade. It has been reported that even after United Nation sanctions were put on Iran, Chinese companies were discovered selling “high-quality carbon fiber” and “pressure gauges” to Iran for use in improving their centrifuges.¶ In 2004 the PRC joined the Nuclear Suppliers Groups (NSG), gaining international recognition of their growing power in the nuclear field. In spite of this opportunity for China to demonstrate its responsibility with nuclear energy, it has not fulfilled it NSG obligations. ¶ The PRC has kept the terms of its nuclear reactor sale to Pakistan secret and used a questionable legal technicality to justify forgoing obtaining a NSG waiver for the deal. Additionally, China chose to forgo incorporating new safety measures into the reactors in order to avoid possible complications¶ A further consequence of China exporting reactors is that these countries may wish to control the fuel cycle which provides the uranium to power their new reactors. The spread of fuel cycle technology comes with two risks: enrichment and reprocessing. Uranium can be enriched to between 3% and 5% for reactor use, but the process can be modified to produce 90% enriched uranium which is weapons-grade. Even if a country only produces low enriched uranium they could easily begin enriching at a higher level if they so choose. Every new country that nuclear technology or information is spread to exponentially increases the risk of material being stolen, given to a third party or being used as the launching point for a weapons program. China’s history of proliferation and willingness to engage economically with very unsavory governments seems likely to increase the risks involving nuclear material. ¶ Strategy and policy¶ In the context of US – PRC relations, nuclear energy is more than a matter of generating electrical power; it is a critical issue of national and global security. The direct consequences of China’s proliferation of commercial nuclear technology are accompanied by even larger issues which require new responses from the United States. China’s ability to connect and integrate economic and energy policy with their grand strategy is as impressive as it is menacing. The PRC leadership has established a coherent policy of economic diplomacy to leverage their economic and technological advancements in a way currently unmatched by the US government. ¶ The US in contrast has not matched its strategy with actions. The US National Security Strategy (NSS), released in 2010, recognizes that economic competitiveness is the “wellspring of American power.” The strategy cites American’s enduring need for a “strong, innovative, and growing” economy, yet these words are hard to reconcile with the current state of the US nuclear and related industries. The NSS goes further and explicitly spells out that:¶ The United States has a window of opportunity to lead in the development of clean energy technology… If [the United States does] not develop the policies that encourage the private sector to seize the opportunity, the Unites States will fall behind and increasingly become an importer of these new energy technologies.¶ Yet, this recognition from the highest levels of the US government has not done enough to substantially alter the situation or effect the bureaucratic operations of government. A Government Accountability Office report released after the NSS was written found that the US government still lacked a well defined strategy to support and promote US nuclear exports, and the domestic nuclear industry is being stifled by an "outdated and unclear… authorization process" from the Department of Energy.¶ It appears that over the past two decades the US government has grown to accept America’s economic soft power as a permanent condition and hence has not felt compelled to promote or actively defend America’s position. The PRC is now showing that America’s economic strength can be mitigated and co-opted. To adequately counter Chinese activities the US will have to make greater efforts to clearly identify the situation and ensure that policy conforms to strategy in order for the US to advance its position. Prudent actions for US government include:¶ • Build a permanent storage facility, either at Yucca Mountain or elsewhere, to dispose of nuclear waste material. The lack of a permanent storage area is a limiting factor on any expansion of domestic nuclear power plants. ¶ • Streamline the licensing and authorization process for new reactors. Some recent progress has been made in this area, but more can be done to improve efficiencies. ¶ • Continue to build on the incentives for the construction of nuclear power plants that were put in place by the Energy Policy Act of 2005.¶ • Re-write US export controls to guard against PRC industrial espionage, improve US counterintelligence in places of nuclear research, and confront problems associated with deemed-export at US research institutions. ¶ • Invest in nuclear energy research, specifically in safer more efficient reactors that reduce the upfront costs that often hamper nuclear power plant construction. Small reactors or modular construction represent two areas with good potential. ¶ • Create a whole of government strategy for the construction and export of nuclar reactors and related equipment. ¶ • These previous steps will allow the US to engage the PRC from a position of strength and begin a more serious dialogue that links economic cooperation on reactor construction to safer proliferation practices. America cannot stop the PRC from developing and exporting reactors, but the US can present more attractive, more technically sophisticated options and use diplomatic and economic pressure to influence China to act responsibly when exporting nuclear technology. ¶ • Perhaps most importantly, consistent and strong leadership from the executive branch will be critical for implementing these policy changes and for framing the issue of nuclear commerce with regards to China in terms of security and international influence, not only in commercial terms. ¶ The United States today still holds many advantages, both potential and actual, over the PRC. The innovative culture inherent in America is still pushing forward research. America has the means and tools at its disposal to remain competitive and successful in a world where China is a global power. The question is what America will decide it wants its place in the nuclear world to be. Nuclear energy commerce is important for US energy security with proliferation implications, but it is even more important because it is indicative of larger efforts on both sides of the Pacific to shape the 21st century.

#### Maintaining economic power gaps is key to stop great-power transition wars

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Today, economic and fiscal trends pose the most severe long-term threat to the United States’ position as global leader. While the United States suffers from fiscal imbalances and low economic growth, the economies of rival powers are developing rapidly. The continuation of these two trends could lead to a shift from American primacy toward a multi-polar global system, leading in turn to increased geopolitical rivalry and even war among the great powers. The current recession is the result of a deep financial crisis, not a mere fluctuation in the business cycle. Recovery is likely to be protracted. The crisis was preceded by the buildup over two decades of enormous amounts of debt throughout the U.S. economy — ultimately totaling almost 350 percent of GDP — and the development of credit-fueled asset bubbles, particularly in the housing sector. When the bubbles burst, huge amounts of wealth were destroyed, and unemployment rose to over 10 percent. The decline of tax revenues and massive countercyclical spending put the U.S. government on an unsustainable fiscal path. Publicly held national debt rose from 38 to over 60 percent of GDP in three years. Without faster economic growth and actions to reduce deficits, publicly held national debt is projected to reach dangerous proportions. If interest rates were to rise significantly, annual interest payments — which already are larger than the defense budget — would crowd out other spending or require substantial tax increases that would undercut economic growth. Even worse, if unanticipated events trigger what economists call a “sudden stop” in credit markets for U.S. debt, the United States would be unable to roll over its outstanding obligations, precipitating a sovereign-debt crisis that would almost certainly compel a radical retrenchment of the United States internationally. Such scenarios would reshape the international order. It was the economic devastation of Britain and France during World War II, as well as the rise of other powers, that led both countries to relinquish their empires. In the late 1960s, British leaders concluded that they lacked the economic capacity to maintain a presence “east of Suez.” Soviet economic weakness, which crystallized under Gorbachev, contributed to their decisions to withdraw from Afghanistan, abandon Communist regimes in Eastern Europe, and allow the Soviet Union to fragment. If the U.S. debt problem goes critical, the United States would be compelled to retrench, reducing its military spending and shedding international commitments. We face this domestic challenge while other major powers are experiencing rapid economic growth. Even though countries such as China, India, and Brazil have profound political, social, demographic, and economic problems, their economies are growing faster than ours, and this could alter the global distribution of power. These trends could in the long term produce a multi-polar world. If U.S. policymakers fail to act and other powers continue to grow, it is not a question of whether but when a new international order will emerge. The closing of the gap between the United States and its rivals could intensify geopolitical competition among major powers, increase incentives for local powers to play major powers against one another, and undercut our will to preclude or respond to international crises because of the higher risk of escalation. The stakes are high. In modern history, the longest period of peace among the great powers has been the era of U.S. leadership. By contrast, multi-polar systems have been unstable, with their competitive dynamics resulting in frequent crises and major wars among the great powers. Failures of multi-polar international systems produced both world wars. American retrenchment could have devastating consequences. Without an American security blanket, regional powers could rearm in an attempt to balance against emerging threats. Under this scenario, there would be a heightened possibility of arms races, miscalculation, or other crises spiraling into all-out conflict. Alternatively, in seeking to accommodate the stronger powers, weaker powers may shift their geopolitical posture away from the United States. Either way, hostile states would be emboldened to make aggressive moves in their regions. As rival powers rise, Asia in particular is likely to emerge as a zone of great-power competition. Beijing’s economic rise has enabled a dramatic military buildup focused on acquisitions of naval, cruise, and ballistic missiles, long-range stealth aircraft, and anti-satellite capabilities. China’s strategic modernization is aimed, ultimately, at denying the United States access to the seas around China. Even as cooperative economic ties in the region have grown, China’s expansive territorial claims — and provocative statements and actions following crises in Korea and incidents at sea — have roiled its relations with South Korea, Japan, India, and Southeast Asian states. Still, the United States is the most significant barrier facing Chinese hegemony and aggression. Given the risks, the United States must focus on restoring its economic and fiscal condition while checking and managing the rise of potential adversarial regional powers such as China. While we face significant challenges, the U.S. economy still accounts for over 20 percent of the world’s GDP. American institutions — particularly those providing enforceable rule of law — set it apart from all the rising powers. Social cohesion underwrites political stability. U.S. demographic trends are healthier than those of any other developed country. A culture of innovation, excellent institutions of higher education, and a vital sector of small and medium-sized enterprises propel the U.S. economy in ways difficult to quantify. Historically, Americans have responded pragmatically, and sometimes through trial and error, to work our way through the kind of crisis that we face today. The policy question is how to enhance economic growth and employment while cutting discretionary spending in the near term and curbing the growth of entitlement spending in the out years. Republican members of Congress have outlined a plan. Several think tanks and commissions, including President Obama’s debt commission, have done so as well. Some consensus exists on measures to pare back the recent increases in domestic spending, restrain future growth in defense spending, and reform the tax code (by reducing tax expenditures while lowering individual and corporate rates). These are promising options. The key remaining question is whether the president and leaders of both parties on Capitol Hill have the will to act and the skill to fashion bipartisan solutions. Whether we take the needed actions is a choice, however difficult it might be. It is clearly within our capacity to put our economy on a better trajectory. In garnering political support for cutbacks, the president and members of Congress should point not only to the domestic consequences of inaction — but also to the geopolitical implications. As the United States gets its economic and fiscal house in order, it should take steps to prevent a flare-up in Asia. The United States can do so by signaling that its domestic challenges will not impede its intentions to check Chinese expansionism. This can be done in cost-efficient ways. While China’s economic rise enables its military modernization and international assertiveness, it also frightens rival powers. The Obama administration has wisely moved to strengthen relations with allies and potential partners in the region but more can be done. Some Chinese policies encourage other parties to join with the United States, and the U.S. should not let these opportunities pass. China’s military assertiveness should enable security cooperation with countries on China’s periphery — particularly Japan, India, and Vietnam — in ways that complicate Beijing’s strategic calculus. China’s mercantilist policies and currency manipulation — which harm developing states both in East Asia and elsewhere — should be used to fashion a coalition in favor of a more balanced trade system. Since Beijing’s over-the-top reaction to the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to a Chinese democracy activist alienated European leaders, highlighting human-rights questions would not only draw supporters from nearby countries but also embolden reformers within China. Since the end of the Cold War, a stable economic and financial condition at home has enabled America to have an expansive role in the world. Today we can no longer take this for granted. Unless we get our economic house in order, there is a risk that domestic stagnation in combination with the rise of rival powers will undermine our ability to deal with growing international problems. Regional hegemons in Asia could seize the moment, leading the world toward a new, dangerous era of multi-polarity.

#### Hegemony solves nuke war and extinction

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It is worth first examining the larger picture: We live in a time of arguably the greatest structural change in the global order yet endured, with this historical moment's most amazing feature being its relative and absolute lack of mass violence. That is something to consider when Americans contemplate military intervention in Libya, because if we do take the step to prevent larger-scale killing by engaging in some killing of our own, we will not be adding to some fantastically imagined global death count stemming from the ongoing "megalomania" and "evil" of American "empire." We'll be engaging in the same sort of system-administering activity that has marked our stunningly successful stewardship of global order since World War II. Let me be more blunt: As the guardian of globalization, the U.S. military has been the greatest force for peace the world has ever known. Had America been removed from the global dynamics that governed the 20th century, the mass murder never would have ended. Indeed, it's entirely conceivable there would now be no identifiable human civilization left, once nuclear weapons entered the killing equation. But the world did not keep sliding down that path of perpetual war. Instead, America stepped up and changed everything by ushering in our now-perpetual great-power peace. We introduced the international liberal trade order known as globalization and played loyal Leviathan over its spread. What resulted was the collapse of empires, an explosion of democracy, the persistent spread of human rights, the liberation of women, the doubling of life expectancy, a roughly 10-fold increase in adjusted global GDP and a profound and persistent reduction in battle deaths from state-based conflicts. That is what American "hubris" actually delivered. Please remember that the next time some TV pundit sells you the image of "unbridled" American military power as the cause of global disorder instead of its cure. With self-deprecation bordering on self-loathing, we now imagine a post-American world that is anything but. Just watch who scatters and who steps up as the Facebook revolutions erupt across the Arab world. While we might imagine ourselves the status quo power, we remain the world's most vigorously revisionist force. ¶ As for the sheer "evil" that is our military-industrial complex, again, let's examine what the world looked like before that establishment reared its ugly head. The last great period of global structural change was the first half of the 20th century, a period that saw a death toll of about 100 million across two world wars. That comes to an average of 2 million deaths a year in a world of approximately 2 billion souls. Today, with far more comprehensive worldwide reporting, researchers report an average of less than 100,000 battle deaths annually in a world fast approaching 7 billion people. Though admittedly crude, these calculations suggest a 90 percent absolute drop and a 99 percent relative drop in deaths due to war. We are clearly headed for a world order characterized by multipolarity, something the American-birthed system was designed to both encourage and accommodate. But given how things turned out the last time we collectively faced such a fluid structure, we would do well to keep U.S. power, in all of its forms, deeply embedded in the geometry to come.¶ To continue the historical survey, after salvaging Western Europe from its half-century of civil war, the U.S. emerged as the progenitor of a new, far more just form of globalization -- one based on actual free trade rather than colonialism. America then successfully replicated globalization further in East Asia over the second half of the 20th century, setting the stage for the Pacific Century now unfolding.

#### U.S. hegemonic decline causes global great-power war, collapses trade and spreads economic nationalism and protectionism

Zhang & Shi 11 – Yuhan Zhang, researcher at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; Lin Shi, Columbia University, independent consultant for the Eurasia Group and consultant for the World Bank, January 22, 2011, “America’s decline: A harbinger of conflict and rivalry,” East Asia Forum, online: http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2011/01/22/americas-decline-a-harbinger-of-conflict-and-rivalry/

Over the past two decades, no other state has had the ability to seriously challenge the US military. Under these circumstances, motivated by both opportunity and fear, many actors have bandwagoned with US hegemony and accepted a subordinate role. Canada, most of Western Europe, India, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Singapore and the Philippines have all joined the US, creating a status quo that has tended to mute great power conflicts. ¶ However, as the hegemony that drew these powers together withers, so will the pulling power behind the US alliance. The result will be an international order where power is more diffuse, American interests and influence can be more readily challenged, and conflicts or wars may be harder to avoid.¶ As history attests, power decline and redistribution result in military confrontation. For example, in the late 19th century America’s emergence as a regional power saw it launch its first overseas war of conquest towards Spain. By the turn of the 20th century, accompanying the increase in US power and waning of British power, the American Navy had begun to challenge the notion that Britain ‘rules the waves.’ Such a notion would eventually see the US attain the status of sole guardians of the Western Hemisphere’s security to become the order-creating Leviathan shaping the international system with democracy and rule of law.¶ Defining this US-centred system are three key characteristics: enforcement of property rights, constraints on the actions of powerful individuals and groups and some degree of equal opportunities for broad segments of society. As a result of such political stability, free markets, liberal trade and flexible financial mechanisms have appeared. And, with this, many countries have sought opportunities to enter this system, proliferating stable and cooperative relations.¶ However, what will happen to these advances as America’s influence declines? Given that America’s authority, although sullied at times, has benefited people across much of Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, as well as parts of Africa and, quite extensively, Asia, the answer to this question could affect global society in a profoundly detrimental way.¶ Public imagination and academia have anticipated that a post-hegemonic world would return to the problems of the 1930s: regional blocs, trade conflicts and strategic rivalry. Furthermore, multilateral institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank or the WTO might give way to regional organisations.¶ For example, Europe and East Asia would each step forward to fill the vacuum left by Washington’s withering leadership to pursue their own visions of regional political and economic orders. Free markets would become more politicised — and, well, less free — and major powers would compete for supremacy.¶ Additionally, such power plays have historically possessed a zero-sum element. In the late 1960s and 1970s, US economic power declined relative to the rise of the Japanese and Western European economies, with the US dollar also becoming less attractive. And, as American power eroded, so did international regimes (such as the Bretton Woods System in 1973).¶ A world without American hegemony is one where great power wars re-emerge, the liberal international system is supplanted by an authoritarian one, and trade protectionism devolves into restrictive, anti-globalisation barriers. This, at least, is one possibility we can forecast in a future that will inevitably be devoid of unrivalled US primacy.

#### War is at its lowest level in history because of US primacy---best statistical studies prove heg solves war because it makes democratic peace resilient globalization sustainable---it’s the deeper cause of proximate checks against war

Owen 11 John M. Owen Professor of Politics at University of Virginia PhD from Harvard "DON’T DISCOUNT HEGEMONY" Feb 11 www.cato-unbound.org/2011/02/11/john-owen/dont-discount-hegemony/

Andrew Mack and his colleagues at the Human Security Report Project are to be congratulated. Not only do they present a study with a striking conclusion, driven by data, free of theoretical or ideological bias, but they also do something quite unfashionable: they bear good news. Social scientists really are not supposed to do that. Our job is, if not to be Malthusians, then at least to point out disturbing trends, looming catastrophes, and the imbecility and mendacity of policy makers. And then it is to say why, if people listen to us, things will get better. We do this as if our careers depended upon it, and perhaps they do; for if all is going to be well, what need then for us?¶ Our colleagues at Simon Fraser University are brave indeed. That may sound like a setup, but it is not. I shall challenge neither the data nor the general conclusion that **violent conflict around the world has been decreasing in fits** and starts since the Second World War. When it comes to **violent conflict among and within countries**, things have been getting better. (The trends have not been linear—Figure 1.1 actually shows that the frequency of interstate wars peaked in the 1980s—but the 65-year movement is clear.) Instead I shall accept that Mack et al. are correct on the macro-trends, and focus on their explanations they advance for these remarkable trends. With apologies to any readers of this forum who recoil from academic debates, this might get mildly theoretical and even more mildly methodological.¶ Concerning international wars, one version of the “nuclear-peace” theory is not in fact laid to rest by the data. It is certainly true that nuclear-armed states have been involved in many wars. They have even been attacked (think of Israel), which falsifies the simple claim of “assured destruction”—that any nuclear country A will deter any kind of attack by any country B because B fears a retaliatory nuclear strike from A.¶ But the most important “nuclear-peace” claim has been about mutually assured destruction, which obtains between two robustly nuclear-armed states. The claim is that (1) rational states having second-strike capabilities—enough deliverable nuclear weaponry to survive a nuclear first strike by an enemy—will have an overwhelming incentive not to attack one another; and (2) we can safely assume that nuclear-armed states are rational. It follows that states with a second-strike capability will not fight one another.¶ Their colossal atomic arsenals neither kept the United States at peace with North Vietnam during the Cold War nor the Soviet Union at peace with Afghanistan. But the argument remains strong that those arsenals did help keep the United States and Soviet Union at peace with each other. Why non-nuclear states are not deterred from fighting nuclear states is an important and open question. But in a time when calls to ban the Bomb are being heard from more and more quarters, we must be clear about precisely what the broad trends toward peace can and cannot tell us. They may tell us nothing about why we have had no World War III, and little about the wisdom of banning the Bomb now.¶ Regarding the downward trend in international war, Professor Mack is friendlier to more palatable theories such as the “democratic peace” (democracies do not fight one another, and the proportion of democracies has increased, hence less war); the interdependence or “commercial peace” (states with extensive economic ties find it irrational to fight one another, and interdependence has increased, hence less war); and the notion that people around the world are more anti-war than their forebears were. Concerning the downward trend in civil wars, he favors theories of economic growth (where commerce is enriching enough people, violence is less appealing—a logic similar to that of the “commercial peace” thesis that applies among nations) and the end of the Cold War (which end reduced superpower support for rival rebel factions in so many Third-World countries).¶ These are all plausible mechanisms for peace. What is more, none of them excludes any other; all could be working toward the same end. That would be somewhat puzzling, however. Is the world just lucky these days? How is it that an array of peace-inducing factors happens to be working coincidentally in our time, when such a magical array was absent in the past? The answer may be that one or more of these mechanisms reinforces some of the others, or perhaps some of them are mutually reinforcing. Some scholars, for example, have been focusing on whether economic growth might support democracy and vice versa, and whether both might support international cooperation, including to end civil wars.¶ We would still need to explain how this charmed circle of causes got started, however. And here let me raise another factor, perhaps even less appealing than the “nuclear peace” thesis, at least outside of the United States. That factor is what international relations scholars call hegemony—specifically American hegemony.¶ A theory that many regard as discredited, but that refuses to go away, is called hegemonic stability theory. The theory emerged in the 1970s in the realm of international political economy. It asserts that for the global economy to remain open—for countries to keep barriers to trade and investment low—one powerful country must take the lead. Depending on the theorist we consult, “taking the lead” entails paying for global public goods (keeping the sea lanes open, providing liquidity to the international economy), coercion (threatening to raise trade barriers or withdraw military protection from countries that cheat on the rules), or both. The theory is skeptical that international cooperation in economic matters can emerge or endure absent a hegemon. The distastefulness of such claims is self-evident: they imply that it is good for everyone the world over if one country has more wealth and power than others. More precisely, they imply that it has been good for the world that the United States has been so predominant.¶ There is no obvious reason why hegemonic stability theory could not apply to other areas of international cooperation, including in security affairs, human rights, international law, peacekeeping (UN or otherwise), and so on. What I want to suggest here—suggest, not test—is that American hegemony might just be a deep cause of the steady decline of political deaths in the world.¶ How could that be? After all, the report states that United States is the third most war-prone country since 1945. Many of the deaths depicted in Figure 10.4 were in wars that involved the United States (the Vietnam War being the leading one). Notwithstanding politicians’ claims to the contrary, a candid look at U.S. foreign policy reveals that the country is as ruthlessly self-interested as any other great power in history.¶ The answer is that U.S. hegemony might just be a deeper cause of the proximate causes outlined by Professor Mack. Consider economic growth and openness to foreign trade and investment, which (so say some theories) render violence irrational. American power and policies may be responsible for these in two related ways. First, at least since the 1940s Washington has prodded other countries to embrace the market capitalism that entails economic openness and produces sustainable economic growth. The United States promotes capitalism for selfish reasons, of course: its own domestic system depends upon growth, which in turn depends upon the efficiency gains from economic interaction with foreign countries, and the more the better. During the Cold War most of its allies accepted some degree of market-driven growth.¶ Second, the U.S.-led western victory in the Cold War damaged the credibility of alternative paths to development—communism and import-substituting industrialization being the two leading ones—and left market capitalism the best model. The end of the Cold War also involved an end to the billions of rubles in Soviet material support for regimes that tried to make these alternative models work. (It also, as Professor Mack notes, eliminated the superpowers’ incentives to feed civil violence in the Third World.) What we call globalization **is** caused in part by the emergence of the United States as the global hegemon.¶ The same case can be made, with somewhat more difficulty, concerning the spread of democracy. Washington has supported democracy only under certain conditions—the chief one being the absence of a popular anti-American movement in the target state—but those conditions have become much more widespread following the collapse of communism. Thus in the 1980s the Reagan administration—the most anti-communist government America ever had—began to dump America’s old dictator friends, starting in the Philippines. Today Islamists tend to be anti-American, and so the Obama administration is skittish about democracy in Egypt and other authoritarian Muslim countries. But general U.S. material and moral support for liberal democracy remains strong.

#### Absolute decline means the US will become uncooperative and desperate---hegemonic wars will ensue

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Two closely related, though distinct, theoretical arguments focus explicitly on the consequences for international politics of a shift in power between a dominant state and a rising power. In War and Change in World Politics, Robert Gilpin suggested that peace prevails when a dominant state’s capabilities enable it to ‘govern’ an international order that it has shaped. Over time, however, as economic and technological diffusion proceeds during eras of peace and development, other states are empowered. Moreover, the burdens of international governance drain and distract the reigning hegemon, and challengers eventually emerge who seek to rewrite the rules of governance. As the power advantage of the erstwhile hegemon ebbs, it may become desperate enough to resort to the ultima ratio of international politics, force, to forestall the increasingly urgent demands of a rising challenger. Or as the power of the challenger rises, it may be tempted to press its case with threats to use force. It is the rise and fall of the great powers that creates the circumstances under which major wars, what Gilpin labels ‘hegemonic wars’, break out.13 Gilpin’s argument logically encourages pessimism about the implications of a rising China. It leads to the expectation that international trade, investment, and technology transfer will result in a steady diffusion of American economic power, benefiting the rapidly developing states of the world, including China. As the US simultaneously scurries to put out the many brushfires that threaten its far-flung global interests (i.e., the classic problem of overextension), it will be unable to devote sufficient resources to maintain or restore its former advantage over emerging competitors like China. While the erosion of the once clear American advantage plays itself out, the US will find it ever more difficult to preserve the order in Asia that it created during its era of preponderance. The expectation is an increase in the likelihood for the use of force – either by a Chinese challenger able to field a stronger military in support of its demands for greater influence over international arrangements in Asia, or by a besieged American hegemon desperate to head off further decline. Among the trends that alarm those who would look at Asia through the lens of Gilpin’s theory are China’s expanding share of world trade and wealth (much of it resulting from the gains made possible by the international economic order a dominant US established); its acquisition of technology in key sectors that have both civilian and military applications (e.g., information, communications, and electronics linked with to forestall, and the challenger becomes increasingly determined to realize the transition to a new international order whose contours it will define. the ‘revolution in military affairs’); and an expanding military burden for the US (as it copes with the challenges of its global war on terrorism and especially its struggle in Iraq) that limits the resources it can devote to preserving its interests in East Asia.14 Although similar to Gilpin’s work insofar as it emphasizes the importance of shifts in the capabilities of a dominant state and a rising challenger, the power-transition theory A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler present in The War Ledger focuses more closely on the allegedly dangerous phenomenon of ‘crossover’– the point at which a dissatisfied challenger is about to overtake the established leading state.15 In such cases, when the power gap narrows, the dominant state becomes increasingly desperate. Though suggesting why a rising China may ultimately present grave dangers for international peace when its capabilities make it a peer competitor of America, Organski and Kugler’s power-transition theory is less clear about the dangers while a potential challenger still lags far behind and faces a difficult struggle to catch up. This clarification is important in thinking about the theory’s relevance to interpreting China’s rise because a broad consensus prevails among analysts that Chinese military capabilities are at a minimum two decades from putting it in a league with the US in Asia.16 Their theory, then, points with alarm to trends in China’s growing wealth and power relative to the United States, but especially looks ahead to what it sees as the period of maximum danger – that time when a dissatisfied China could be in a position to overtake the US on dimensions believed crucial for assessing power. Reports beginning in the mid-1990s that offered extrapolations suggesting China’s growth would give it the world’s largest gross domestic product (GDP aggregate, not per capita) sometime in the first few decades of the twentieth century fed these sorts of concerns about a potentially dangerous challenge to American leadership in Asia.17 The huge gap between Chinese and American military capabilities (especially in terms of technological sophistication) has so far discouraged prediction of comparably disquieting trends on this dimension, but inklings of similar concerns may be reflected in occasionally alarmist reports about purchases of advanced Russian air and naval equipment, as well as concern that Chinese espionage may have undermined the American advantage in nuclear and missile technology, and speculation about the potential military purposes of China’s manned space program.18 Moreover, because a dominant state may react to the prospect of a crossover and believe that it is wiser to embrace the logic of preventive war and act early to delay a transition while the task is more manageable, Organski and Kugler’s power-transition theory also provides grounds for concern about the period prior to the possible crossover.19 pg. 647-650

#### The rise of the rest is inevitable, but absolute US power makes the transition safe---the alt is transition wars

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Although international political conditions will differ enormously in the coming decades from those of the middle 1940’s, it would be grossly irresponsible for the United States to shrug off its burdens of great power status and return to the slumber that it once enjoyed. Almost certainly, if the United States had refused to take an active role in European politics in the middle of the twentieth century, a world would have emerged in which American values would not have flourished and even their survival on the North American continent would have been profoundly threatened. America’s refusal to play a substantial role in the great power struggles of this century would have similarly deleterious effects. Importantly, if the United States withdraws to its hemisphere a third world war is far more likely. In a meta region full of young rising powers the presence of a strategically mature superpower can be expected to have a stabilizing effect; the enormous military resources possessed by America compels would be aggressors to consider carefully before launching a strategic adventure. Even more chillingly, as noted above, it is possible that the multipolar system could become sufficiently unbalanced that it would collapse, with a power such as China building a coalition that would allow it ultimately to emerge as the master of eastern Eurasia and the greatest power in the world. nited States is the “court of last resort” protecting against such an eventuality. The latter possibility does not contradict the above argument that us unipolarity is unsustainable - as an extra Eurasian power lacking the ruthlessness to destroy potential great power competitors preventatively, Washington simply cannot sustain unipolarity indefinitely. Nonetheless, while **the** emerging **multipolar** **system** appears robust it **should receive “care and feeding**” – otherwise it is vulnerable to grossly unbalanced events such as the creation of a very aggressive coalition dedicated to achieving Eurasian hegemony and willing if necessary to fight a third world war t o achieve it. Most likely such a coalition would not be able to simply bully its way to hegemony; it probably would have to fight, the results being a war enormously costly in blood, perhaps even one that would **dwarf World War II** in its price. If the aggressive coalition won, in turn, the multipolar system would be destroyed and the United States would face a competitor far more powerful than itself , and in all likelihood a world in which **democracy and personal liberty would be in eclipse**. In any case it is a geopolitical imperative for the United States that no power or coalition attains hegemony in Eastern Eurasia, much less that an explicitly hostile state or coalition succeeds in doing so. If the United States is to guard its national interests in this century, **it is vital that it ensures** the **transition** from unipolarity **to multipolarity occurs in a**s **gentle** a **manner** as possible. In this capacity, it is important to understand that the United States is in long term relative decline, but, at the same time to acknowledge that it has very great military, financial and diplomatic resources at its disposal. If Washington deploys these resources wisely it can maximize its security over the long term and **minimize the probability of a great power war.**

#### Every credible measure of study shows violence is down because of everything consistent with the aff---it’s only a question of sustaining current dynamics and preventing shocks to the system

Pinker 11 Steven Pinker is Professor of psychology at Harvard University "Violence Vanquished" Sept 24 online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424053111904106704576583203589408180.html

On the day this article appears, you will read about a shocking act of violence. Somewhere in the world there will be a terrorist bombing, a senseless murder, a bloody insurrection. It's impossible to learn about these catastrophes without thinking, "What is the world coming to?"¶ But a better question may be, "How bad was the world in the past?"¶ Believe it or not, the world of the past was much worse. Violence has been in decline for thousands of years, and today we may be living in the most peaceable era in the existence of our species.¶ The decline, to be sure, has not been smooth. It has not brought violence down to zero, and it is not guaranteed to continue. But it is a persistent historical development, visible on scales from millennia to years, from the waging of wars to the spanking of children.¶ This claim, I know, invites skepticism, incredulity, and sometimes anger. We tend to estimate the probability of an event from the ease with which we can recall examples, and scenes of carnage are more likely to be beamed into our homes and burned into our memories than footage of people dying of old age. There will always be enough violent deaths to fill the evening news, so people's impressions of violence will be disconnected from its actual likelihood.¶ Evidence of our bloody history is not hard to find. Consider the genocides in the Old Testament and the crucifixions in the New, the gory mutilations in Shakespeare's tragedies and Grimm's fairy tales, the British monarchs who beheaded their relatives and the American founders who dueled with their rivals.¶ Today the decline in these brutal practices can be quantified. A look at the numbers shows that over the course of our history, humankind has been blessed with six major declines of violence.¶ The first was a process of pacification: the transition from the anarchy of the hunting, gathering and horticultural societies in which our species spent most of its evolutionary history to the first agricultural civilizations, with cities and governments, starting about 5,000 years ago.¶ For centuries, social theorists like Hobbes and Rousseau speculated from their armchairs about what life was like in a "state of nature." Nowadays we can do better. Forensic archeology—a kind of "CSI: Paleolithic"—can estimate rates of violence from the proportion of skeletons in ancient sites with bashed-in skulls, decapitations or arrowheads embedded in bones. And ethnographers can tally the causes of death in tribal peoples that have recently lived outside of state control.¶ These investigations show that, on average, about 15% of people in prestate eras died violently, compared to about 3% of the citizens of the earliest states. Tribal violence commonly subsides when a state or empire imposes control over a territory, leading to the various "paxes" (Romana, Islamica, Brittanica and so on) that are familiar to readers of history.¶ It's not that the first kings had a benevolent interest in the welfare of their citizens. Just as a farmer tries to prevent his livestock from killing one another, so a ruler will try to keep his subjects from cycles of raiding and feuding. From his point of view, such squabbling is a dead loss—forgone opportunities to extract taxes, tributes, soldiers and slaves.¶ The second decline of violence was a civilizing process that is best documented in Europe. Historical records show that between the late Middle Ages and the 20th century, European countries saw a 10- to 50-fold decline in their rates of homicide.¶ The numbers are consistent with narrative histories of the brutality of life in the Middle Ages, when highwaymen made travel a risk to life and limb and dinners were commonly enlivened by dagger attacks. So many people had their noses cut off that medieval medical textbooks speculated about techniques for growing them back.¶ Historians attribute this decline to the consolidation of a patchwork of feudal territories into large kingdoms with centralized authority and an infrastructure of commerce. Criminal justice was nationalized, and zero-sum plunder gave way to positive-sum trade. People increasingly controlled their impulses and sought to cooperate with their neighbors.¶ The third transition, sometimes called the Humanitarian Revolution, took off with the Enlightenment. Governments and churches had long maintained order by punishing nonconformists with mutilation, torture and gruesome forms of execution, such as burning, breaking, disembowelment, impalement and sawing in half. The 18th century saw the widespread abolition of judicial torture, including the famous prohibition of "cruel and unusual punishment" in the eighth amendment of the U.S. Constitution.¶ At the same time, many nations began to whittle down their list of capital crimes from the hundreds (including poaching, sodomy, witchcraft and counterfeiting) to just murder and treason. And a growing wave of countries abolished blood sports, dueling, witchhunts, religious persecution, absolute despotism and slavery.¶ The fourth major transition is the respite from major interstate war that we have seen since the end of World War II. Historians sometimes refer to it as the Long Peace.¶ Today we take it for granted that Italy and Austria will not come to blows, nor will Britain and Russia. But centuries ago, the great powers were almost always at war, and until quite recently, Western European countries tended to initiate two or three new wars every year. The cliché that the 20th century was "the most violent in history" ignores the second half of the century (and may not even be true of the first half, if one calculates violent deaths as a proportion of the world's population).¶ Though it's tempting to attribute the Long Peace to nuclear deterrence, non-nuclear developed states have stopped fighting each other as well. Political scientists point instead to the growth of democracy, trade and international organizations—all of which, the statistical evidence shows, reduce the likelihood of conflict. They also credit the rising valuation of human life over national grandeur—a hard-won lesson of two world wars.¶ The fifth trend, which I call the New Peace, involves war in the world as a whole, including developing nations. Since 1946, several organizations have tracked the number of armed conflicts and their human toll world-wide. The bad news is that for several decades, the decline of interstate wars was accompanied by a bulge of civil wars, as newly independent countries were led by inept governments, challenged by insurgencies and armed by the cold war superpowers.¶ The less bad news is that civil wars tend to kill far fewer people than wars between states. And the best news is that, since the peak of the cold war in the 1970s and '80s, organized conflicts of all kinds—civil wars, genocides, repression by autocratic governments, terrorist attacks—have declined throughout the world, and their death tolls have declined even more precipitously.¶ The rate of documented direct deaths from political violence (war, terrorism, genocide and warlord militias) in the past decade is an unprecedented few hundredths of a percentage point. Even if we multiplied that rate to account for unrecorded deaths and the victims of war-caused disease and famine, it would not exceed 1%.¶ The most immediate cause of this New Peace was the demise of communism, which ended the proxy wars in the developing world stoked by the superpowers and also discredited genocidal ideologies that had justified the sacrifice of vast numbers of eggs to make a utopian omelet. Another contributor was the expansion of international peacekeeping forces, which really do keep the peace—not always, but far more often than when adversaries are left to fight to the bitter end.¶ Finally, the postwar era has seen a cascade of "rights revolutions"—a growing revulsion against aggression on smaller scales. In the developed world, the civil rights movement obliterated lynchings and lethal pogroms, and the women's-rights movement has helped to shrink the incidence of rape and the beating and killing of wives and girlfriends.¶ In recent decades, the movement for children's rights has significantly reduced rates of spanking, bullying, paddling in schools, and physical and sexual abuse. And the campaign for gay rights has forced governments in the developed world to repeal laws criminalizing homosexuality and has had some success in reducing hate crimes against gay people.¶ Why has violence declined so dramatically for so long? Is it because violence has literally been bred out of us, leaving us more peaceful by nature?¶ This seems unlikely. Evolution has a speed limit measured in generations, and many of these declines have unfolded over decades or even years. Toddlers continue to kick, bite and hit; little boys continue to play-fight; people of all ages continue to snipe and bicker, and most of them continue to harbor violent fantasies and to enjoy violent entertainment.¶ It's more likely that human nature has always comprised inclinations toward violence and inclinations that counteract them—such as self-control, empathy, fairness and reason—what Abraham Lincoln called "the better angels of our nature." Violence has declined because historical circumstances have increasingly favored our better angels.¶ The most obvious of these pacifying forces has been the state, with its monopoly on the legitimate use of force. A disinterested judiciary and police can defuse the temptation of exploitative attack, inhibit the impulse for revenge and circumvent the self-serving biases that make all parties to a dispute believe that they are on the side of the angels.¶ We see evidence of the pacifying effects of government in the way that rates of killing declined following the expansion and consolidation of states in tribal societies and in medieval Europe. And we can watch the movie in reverse when violence erupts in zones of anarchy, such as the Wild West, failed states and neighborhoods controlled by mafias and street gangs, who can't call 911 or file a lawsuit to resolve their disputes but have to administer their own rough justice.¶ Another pacifying force has been commerce, a game in which everybody can win. As technological progress allows the exchange of goods and ideas over longer distances and among larger groups of trading partners, other people become more valuable alive than dead. They switch from being targets of demonization and dehumanization to potential partners in reciprocal altruism.¶ For example, though the relationship today between America and China is far from warm, we are unlikely to declare war on them or vice versa. Morality aside, they make too much of our stuff, and we owe them too much money.¶ A third peacemaker has been cosmopolitanism—the expansion of people's parochial little worlds through literacy, mobility, education, science, history, journalism and mass media. These forms of virtual reality can prompt people to take the perspective of people unlike themselves and to expand their circle of sympathy to embrace them.¶ These technologies have also powered an expansion of rationality and objectivity in human affairs. People are now less likely to privilege their own interests over those of others. They reflect more on the way they live and consider how they could be better off. Violence is often reframed as a problem to be solved rather than as a contest to be won. We devote ever more of our brainpower to guiding our better angels. It is probably no coincidence that the Humanitarian Revolution came on the heels of the Age of Reason and the Enlightenment, that the Long Peace and rights revolutions coincided with the electronic global village.

#### Focus on strategic deterrence is key to adverting crisis escalation—reject the infinite number of root causes that debilitate action

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If major interstate war is predominantly a product of a synergy between a potential nondemocratic aggressor and an absence of effective deterrence, what is the role of the many traditional "causes" of war? Past, and many contemporary, theories of war have focused on the role of specific disputes between nations, ethnic and religious differences, arms races, poverty and social injustice, competition for resources, incidents and accidents, greed, fear, perceptions of "honor," and many other factors. Such factors may well play a role in motivating aggression or generating fear and manipulating public opinion. The reality, however, is that while some of these factors may have more potential to contribute to war than others, there may well be **an infinite set** of motivating factors, or human wants, motivating aggression. It is not the independent existence of such motivating factors for war but rather the circumstances permitting or encouraging high-risk decisions leading to war that is the key to more effectively controlling armed conflict. And the same may also be true of democide. The early focus in the Rwanda slaughter on "ethnic conflict," as though Hutus and Tutsis had begun to slaughter each other through spontaneous combustion, distracted our attention from the reality that a nondemocratic Hutu regime had carefully planned and orchestrated a genocide against Rwandan Tutsis as well as its Hutu opponents. 158 Certainly if we were able to press a button and end poverty, racism, religious intolerance, injustice, and endless disputes, we would want to do so. Indeed, democratic governments must remain committed to policies that will produce a better world by all measures of human progress. The broader achievement of democracy and the rule of law will itself assist in this progress. **No one**, however, **has yet been able to demonstrate the kind of robust correlation with any of these "traditional" causes of war** that is reflected in the "democratic peace." Further, given the difficulties in overcoming many of these social problems, an approach to war exclusively dependent on their solution may **doom us to war for generations** to come. [\*394] A useful framework for thinking about the war puzzle is provided in the Kenneth Waltz classic Man, the State and War, 159 first published in 1954 for the Institute of War and Peace Studies, in which he notes that previous thinkers about the causes of war have tended to assign responsibility at one of the three levels of individual psychology, the nature of the state, or the nature of the international system. This tripartite level of analysis has subsequently been widely copied in the study of international relations. We might summarize my analysis in this classical construct by suggesting that the most critical variables are the second and third levels, or "images," of analysis. Government structures, at the second level, seem to play a central role in levels of aggressiveness in high-risk behavior leading to major war. In this, the "democratic peace" is an essential insight. The third level of analysis, the international system, or totality of external incentives influencing the decision to go to war, is also critical when government structures do not restrain such high-risk behavior on their own. Indeed, nondemocratic systems may not only fail to constrain inappropriate aggressive behavior, they may even massively enable it by placing the resources of the state at the disposal of a ruthless regime elite. It is not that the first level of analysis, the individual, is unimportant - I have already argued that it is important in elite perceptions about the permissibility and feasibility of force and resultant necessary levels of deterrence. It is, instead, that the second level of analysis, government structures, may be a powerful proxy for settings bringing to power those who are disposed to aggressive military adventures and in creating incentive structures predisposed to high-risk behavior. We might also want to keep open the possibility that a war/peace model focused on democracy and deterrence might be further usefully refined by adding psychological profiles of particular leaders as we assess the likelihood of aggression and levels of necessary deterrence. Nondemocracies' leaders can have different perceptions of the necessity or usefulness of force and, as Marcus Aurelius should remind us, not all absolute leaders are Caligulas or Neros. Further, the history of ancient Egypt reminds us that not all Pharaohs were disposed to make war on their neighbors. Despite the importance of individual leaders, however, the key to war avoidance is understanding that major international war is critically an interaction, or synergy, of certain characteristics at levels two and three - specifically an absence of [\*395] democracy and an absence of effective deterrence. Yet another way to conceptualize the importance of democracy and deterrence in war avoidance is to note that each in its own way internalizes the costs to decision elites of engaging in high-risk aggressive behavior. Democracy internalizes these costs in a variety of ways including displeasure of the electorate at having war imposed upon it by its own government. And deterrence either prevents achievement of the objective altogether or imposes punishing costs making the gamble not worth the risk. 160 III. Testing the Hypothesis Hypotheses, or paradigms, are useful if they reflect the real world better than previously held paradigms. In the complex world of foreign affairs and the war puzzle, perfection is unlikely. No general construct will fit all cases even in the restricted category of "major interstate war;" there are simply too many variables. We should insist, however, on testing against the real world and on results that suggest enhanced usefulness over other constructs. In testing the hypothesis, we can test it for consistency with major wars. That is, in looking, for example, at the principal interstate wars in the twentieth century, did they present both a nondemocratic aggressor and an absence of effective deterrence? 161 And although it, by itself, does not prove causation, we might also want to test the hypothesis against settings of potential wars that did not occur. That is, in non-war settings, was there an absence of at least one element of the synergy? We might also ask questions about the effect of changes on the international system in either element of the synergy. That is, what, in general, happens when a totalitarian state makes a transition to stable democracy or vice versa? And what, in general, happens when levels of deterrence are dramatically increased or decreased?

#### Life has intrinsic and objective value achieved through subjective pleasures---its preservation should be an a priori goal

Amien Kacou 8 WHY EVEN MIND? On The A Priori Value Of “Life”, Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy, Vol 4, No 1-2 (2008) cosmosandhistory.org/index.php/journal/article/view/92/184

Furthermore, that manner of finding things good that is in pleasure can certainly not exist in any world without consciousness (i.e., without “life,” as we now understand the word)—slight analogies put aside. In fact, we can begin to develop a more sophisticated definition of the concept of “pleasure,” in the broadest possible sense of the word, as follows: it is the common psychological element in all psychological experience of goodness (be it in joy, admiration, or whatever else). In this sense, pleasure can always be pictured to “mediate” all awareness or perception or judgment of goodness: there is pleasure in all consciousness of things good; pleasure is the common element of all conscious satisfaction. In short, it is simply the very experience of liking things, or the liking of experience, in general. In this sense, pleasure is, not only uniquely characteristic of life but also, the core expression of goodness in life—the most general sign or phenomenon for favorable conscious valuation, in other words. This does not mean that “good” is absolutely synonymous with “pleasant”—what we value may well go beyond pleasure. (The fact that we value things needs not be reduced to the experience of liking things.) However, what we value beyond pleasure remains a matter of speculation or theory. Moreover, we note that a variety of things that may seem otherwise unrelated are correlated with pleasure—some more strongly than others. In other words, there are many things the experience of which we like. For example: the admiration of others; sex; or rock-paper-scissors. But, again, what they are is irrelevant in an inquiry on a priori value—what gives us pleasure is a matter for empirical investigation.

Thus, we can see now that, in general, something primitively valuable is attainable in living—that is, pleasure itself. And it seems equally clear that we have a priori logical reason to pay attention to the world in any world where pleasure exists. Moreover, we can now also articulate a foundation for a security interest in our life: since the good of pleasure can be found in living (to the extent pleasure remains attainable),[17] and only in living, therefore, a priori, life ought to be continuously (and indefinitely) pursued at least for the sake of preserving the possibility of finding that good.

However, this platitude about the value that can be found in life turns out to be, at this point, insufficient for our purposes. It seems to amount to very little more than recognizing that our subjective desire for life in and of itself shows that life has some objective value. For what difference is there between saying, “living is unique in benefiting something I value (namely, my pleasure); therefore, I should desire to go on living,” and saying, “I have a unique desire to go on living; therefore I should have a desire to go on living,” whereas the latter proposition immediately seems senseless? In other words, “life gives me pleasure,” says little more than, “I like life.” Thus, we seem to have arrived at the conclusion that the fact that we already have some (subjective) desire for life shows life to have some (objective) value. But, if that is the most we can say, then it seems our enterprise of justification was quite superficial, and the subjective/objective distinction was useless—for all we have really done is highlight the correspondence between value and desire. Perhaps, our inquiry should be a bit more complex.

#### Rationality is good and argumentation should start from empirical and political problem-solving --- any alt fails and devolves into crippling relativism --- all their arguments will become offense for us

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A pragmatic theory of argument

The first step in developing a justifiable theory of rational argument that can account for the epistemological and axiological attacks is to recognize the performative contradiction at the heart of the postmodern critique. Postmodernists rely on rational argument in order to attack rational argument and they consistently claim that their positions are in some way superior to those of their modernist opponents. Writing of post-structuralism, Amanda Anderson notes "the incommensurability between its epistemological stance and its political aims, between its descriptions and its prescriptions, between the pessimism of its intellect and, if not the optimism, at least the intrusiveness of its moral and political will" (1992, 64).

The performative contradiction at the heart of postmodernism is nowhere more evident than in the epistemological critique of modernism. The two most important points made by postmodernists in relation to epistemology are that humans can understand the world only through their symbols and that there is no means of using "reality" to test a symbolic description. Advocates of traditional approaches to rationality have not been able to satisfactorily answer these positions, precisely because they seem to be "true" in some sense. This "truth," however, suggests that a theory of rational argument may be salvageable. If postmodernists can defend their views as in some sense "truer" than those of their modernist opponents, then there must be some standard for judging "truth" that can withstand the postmodern indictment. That standard is pragmatic efficacy in fulfilling a purpose in relation to a given problem.

Both modernists and postmodernists generally assume that truth and fact are equivalent terms. Thus, a "true" statement is one that is factually correct in all circumstances. By this standard, of course, there are no totally "true" statements. However, if no statement can be proved factually true, then a focus on facts is an inappropriate standard for judging truth.

I suggest that knowledge and truth should be understood not as factual statements that are certain, but as symbolic statements that function as useful problem-solving tools. When we say that a view is true, we really mean that a given symbolic description consistently solves a particular problem. Thus, the statement "the sun will come up tomorrow" can be considered "true," despite ambiguities that a postmodernist might point to in regard to the meaning of sun or tomorrow, because it usefully and consistently solves a particular epistemic problem.

The standard for "truth" is pragmatic utility in fulfilling a purpose in relation to a particular problem. A true statement is one that "works" to solve the problem. Both the nature of the problem and the arguer's purpose in relation to that problem infiuence whether a given statement is viewed as true knowledge. This explains why biological researchers and physicians often seem to have different definitions of truth in regard to medical practice. The researcher is concerned with fully understanding the way that the body works. His or her purpose dictates application of rigorous standards for evaluating evidence and causation. By contrast, the physician is concerned with treating patients and therefore may apply a much lower standard for evaluating new treatments. The pragmatic theory of argument I am defending draws heavily on the work of William James, who believed that "the only test of probable truth is what works" (1982, 225). Alan Brinton explains that for jEunes "the ultimate question of truth is a question about the concepts and their fruitfulness in serving the purposes for which they were created and imposed. Ideas are true insofar as they serve these purposes, and false insofar as they fail to do so" (1982, 163). Some contemporary pragmatists take a similar view. For example, Nicholas Rescher writes in relation to methodology that "the proper test for the correctness or appropriateness of anything methodological in nature is plainly and obviously posed by the paradigmatically pragmatic questions: Does it work? Does it attain its intended purposes?" (1977, 3). Similarly, Celeste Condit Railsback argues that "truth is . . . relative to the language and purposes of the persons who are using it" (1983, 358-59). At this point, someone like Derrida might argue that while the pragmatic approach accounts for the symbolic nature of truth, it does not deal with the inability of humans to get at reality directly. Although the postmodern critique denies that humans can directly experience "the facts," it does not deny that a real-world exists.

Thus, a pragmatist endorses a given scientific theory because the symbolic description present in that theory does a better job than its competitors of fulfilling a set of purposes in a given context. Because it fulfills those purposes, we call the theory "true." We cannot attain knowledge about "the facts," but we can test the relative adequacy of competing problem-solving statements against those facts. Michael Redhead, a professor of history and philosophy of science at Cambridge University, notes that "we can always conjecture, but there is some control. The world kicks back" (in Peterson 1992,175; emphasis added). Knowledge is not about "facts." It is about finding symbolic descriptions of the world that work, that is, avoiding nature's kicks in fulfilling a given purpose.

The foregoing suggests that a principled pragmatic theory of argument sidesteps the postmodern critique. Argumentation theory should be understood as a set of pragmatic rules of thumb about the kinds of symbolic statements that effectively solve problems. These statements exist at varying levels of generality. A consistency principle , for example, is really a rule of thumb stating something like "All other things being equal, consistent symbolic descriptions are more likely to prove useful for solving a particular problem in relation to a given purpose than are inconsistent descriptions." Other principles are linked to narrower purposes in more specific contexts. Thus, the standards for evaluating arguments in a subfield of physics will be tied to the particular purposes and problems found in that subfield. The key point is that all aspects of a theory of argument can be justified pragmatically, based on their value for producing useful solutions to problems.

A pragmatic theory of argument can be understood as operating at three levels, all of which are tied to functionality. At the first or definitional level, argument is best understood as a kind of discourse or interaction in which reasons and evidence are presented in support of a claim. Argument as a symbolic form is valued based on its ability to deal with problems; the business of argument is problem solving. At a second or theoretical level, what Toulmin would call fieldinvariant, general principles of rational argument are justified pragmatically based on their capacity to solve problems. Thus, tests of evidence, general rules for describing argument, standards relating to burden of proof or presumption, and fallacies, all can be justified pragmatically based on the general problem-solving purpose served by all argument. For example, the requirement that claims must be supported with evidence can be justified as a general rule of thumb for distinguishing between strong and weak (that is, useful and useless) arguments. Certainly, there are cases in which unsupported assertions are "true" in some sense. However, the principle that any claim on belief should be supported with evidence of some type is a functional one for distinguishing between claims that are likely to be useful and those that are less likely to be useful.

At a third level, that of specific fields or subfields, principles of argumentation are linked to pragmatic success in solving problems in the particular area (see Rowland 1982). Thus, for instance, the rules of evidence found in the law are linked directly to the purposes served by legal argument. This explains why the burden of proof in a criminal trial is very different from that found in the civil law. The purpose of protecting the innocent from potential conviction requires that a higher standard of proof be applied in this area than elsewhere.

The pragmatic perspective I have described is quite different from that of interpretive pragmatists such as Richard Rorty (1979, 1982, 1985, 1987) and Stanley Fish (1980, 1989a, 1989b). Rorty, while denying the existence of legitimate formal or content-based standards for "proof" (1982,277), endorses a processual epistemology based on "the idea of [substituting] 'unforced agreement' for that of 'objectivity' " (41-42). Janet Home summarizes Rorty's views, noting that "the difference between 'certified knowledge' and 'mere belief is based upon intersubjective agreement rather than correspondence" (1989, 249). By contrast. Fish grounds reason in the practices of particular "interpretive communities" (1989b, 98). In this view, "Particular facts are firm or in question insofar as the perspective . . . within which they emerge is firmly in place, settled" (Fish 1989a, 308).

Unfortunately, a theory of argumentation cannot be salvaged merely by grounding reason in conversational practice or community assent. If there are no agreed upon standards, then how does one "rationally" test a claim intersubjectively or in process? Fish and Rorty beg the question when they ground reason in community and conversational process. Unlike Rorty and Fish, who reject the ideas of "truth" and "knowledge," I argue that those concepts must be redefined in relation to problem solving.

The pragmatic theory of argument that I have advanced provides a principled means of choosing among competing alternatives, regardless of the context. One always should ask whether or not a particular symbolic description of the world fulfills its purposes. In so doing, methodological principles for testing knowledge claims, such as tests of evidence, fallacies, and more precise field standards, can be justified, and then they can be applied within the conversation or by the community. The approach, therefore, provides standards to be applied in Rorty's process or by Fish's community and avoids the tautology that otherwise confronts those approaches. The perspective neatly avoids the problems associated with modernism, but also provides a principled approach to argument that does not lead to relativism.

In defense of rational argument

When argument is viewed as a pragmatic problem-solving tool, the power of the postmodern critique largely dissipates. At the most basic level, a pragmatic theory of argument is based on premises such as the following:

'Statements supported by evidence and reasoning are more likely to be useful for satisfactorily solving a problem than ones that lack that support.

'Consistent arguments are more likely to be generalizable than inconsistent ones.

'Experts are more likely to have useful viewpoints about technical questions tied to a particular field than nonexperts. These statements are not "true" in the factual sense, but they are universally recognized as useful, a point that is emphasized in the work of even the most committed postmodernist. Even someone like Derrida demands that his opponents support their claims with evidence and consistent reasoning. In so doing, Derrida clearly recognizes the functional utility of general standards for testing argument form and process.

Arguing should be understood as a pragmatic process for locating solutions to problems. The ultimate justification of argument as a discipline is that it produces useful solutions. Of course, not all arguments lead to successful solutions because the world is a complex place and the people who utilize the form/process are flawed. However, the general functional utility of argument as a method of invention or discovery and the method of justification is undisputed. The pragmatic approach to argument also provides a means of answering the axiological objections to traditional reason. Initially, the view that argument is often a means of enslaving or disempowering people is based on a misunderstanding of how argument as a form of discourse functions. In fact, the danger of symbolic oppression is less applicable to argument as a type of symbol use than to other forms. Argument tells us how to solve problems. It can be a force for enslavement only to the degree that a successful problem-solution is enslaving. This is a rare event in any society grounded in democratic ethics.

Additionally, argument as a form and process is inherently person-respecting because in argument it is not status or force that matters, but only the reasoning (see Brockriede 1972). In a pure argumentative encounter, it does not matter whether you are President of the United States or a college junior; all that is relevant is what you have to say. Of course, this ideal is rarely realized, but the principle that humans should test their claims against standards of argumentation theory that are tied to pragmatic problem solving (and not base conclusions on power) is one that recognizes the fundamental humanity in all people.

Furthermore, argument is one of the most important means of protecting society from symbolic oppression. Argument as an internal process within an individual and external process within society provides a method of testing the claims of potential oppressors. Therefore, training in argument should be understood as a means of providing pragmatic tools for breaking out of terministic or disciplinary prisons.

Against this view, it could be argued that pragmatism, because of its "practical" bent, inevitably degenerates into "hegemonic instrumental reason" in which technocratic experts control society. In Eclipse of Reason, Max Horkheimer takes the position that "in its instrumental aspect, stressed by pragmatism," reason "has become completely harnessed to the social process. Its operational value, its role in the domination of men and nations has been made the sole criterion" (1947, 21). Later, he notes that "pragmatism is the counterpart of modern industrialism for which the factory is the prototype of human existence" (50).

The claims that pragmatism reduces reason to a mere instrument of production or leads to undemocratic technocratic control of society are, however, misguided. Initially, it is worth noting that Horkeimer's aim is not to indict rationality per se, but to focus on the inadequacy of a purely instrumental form of rationality, which he labels "subjective reason." Near the conclusion of Eclipse of Reason, Horkheimer defends "objective reason": "This concept of truth—the adequation of name and thing—inherent in every genuine philosophy, enables thought to withstand if not to overcome the demoralizing and mutilating effects of formalized reason" (1947, 180). The goal of this essay, to develop a theory of rational argument that can withstand the postmodern indictment, is quite consistent with Horkheimer's view that humans need "objective reason" in order to "unshackle . . . independent thought" and oppose "cynical nihilism" (127, 174). While there can be no purely "objective reason," field-invariant and field-dependent principles of argumentation can be justified pragmatically to serve the aims that Horkheimer assigns to that form.

Moreover, a pragmatic theory of argument should not be confused with a decision-making approach based on mere practicality or self-interest. Principles of argument are justified pragmatically, that is, because they work consistently to solve problems. But after justification, the invariant and relevant field-dependent principles may be used to test the worth of any argument and are not tied to a simple utilitarian benefit/loss calculus. The misconception that a pragmatic theory of truth is tied to a simplistic instrumentalism is a common one. John Dewey notes, for instance, that William James's reference to the "cash value" of reasoning was misinterpreted by some "to mean that the consequences themselves of our rational conceptions must be narrowly limited by their pecuniary value" (1982, 33). In fact, pragmatism "concerns not the nature of consequences but the nature of knowing" (Dewey 1960,331). Or as James himself put it, "The possession of true thoughts means everywhere the possession of invaluable instruments of action" (1948, 161). Pragmatism "is a method only," which "does not stand for any special result" (James 1982, 213), but that method can be used to justify principles of argument that in turn can be used to check the excesses of instrumental reason. Moreover, a pragmatic approach to argument is self-correcting. According to James, pragmatism "means the open air and possibilities of nature, as against dogma, artificiality and the pretense of finality in truth" (213). Dewey makes the same point when he claims that pragmatic theory involves "the use of intelligence to liberate and liberalize action" (1917,63). Nor does pragmatism necessarily lead to expert domination. A pragmatic argumentation theory endorses deference to the opinion of experts only on questions for which the expert possesses special knowledge relevant to a particular problem. And even on such issues, the views of the expert would be subject to rigorous testing. It would be quite unpragmatic to defer to expert opinion, absent good reasons and strong evidence.

The previous analysis in no way denies the risks associated with technical reason. It is, however precisely because of such risks that a principled pragmatic theory of argument is needed. Given that we live in an advanced technological society, it is inevitable that technical reason will play a role. Postmodernism points to the dangers of technical reason, but provides no means of avoiding those risks. A pragmatic theory of argument, by contrast, justifies principles of rationality that can be used to protect society from the nihilistic excesses of a purely instrumental reason.

### 2AC

Belief in life after death causes complacency and paralysis – makes extinction inevitable

David Ray Griffin, Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Theology at Claremont, 1989

God and religion in the postmodern world: essays in postmodern theology

The most contemporary form of the moral objection to belief in life after death is the fifth claim—that belief in life after death **creates complacency about the fate of the earth**, a complacency we can ill afford in this age of environmental pollution and nuclear arsenals. If human souls can live without bodies, at least biological bodies, runs this objection, then they can live without the planet. The destruction of the planet's capacity to support life would therefore be no ultimate tragedy. The complacency produced by this belief is increased by those apocalyptic visions according to which our everlasting life will be preceded by the foreordained destruction of the earth (through nuclear war, many Christians believe), followed by the creation of a new earth. But even without this extreme doctrine, it is felt, belief in life after death **prevents that intense passion to save the earth** which is now needed. If we are to be motivated to engage in the almost superhuman (ask of ridding the planet of nuclear weapons, Jonathan Schell seems to believe," we must be convinced that the destruction of the planet's life would be the ultimate tragedy—the very death of meaning— and this it cannot be if billions of human souls live on in some other realm. This objection, unlike the former ones, does not apply only to a super-naturalistic understanding of life after death. Of course, the apocalyptic vision of the destruction and instantaneous re-creation of the world is su-pernaturalistic to the extreme degree. But the more general charge applies to all views of life after death, insofar as they lead us to think that the planet's death, however tragic, would not be the very death of meaning.

#### Disproving the univerasiality of the liberal subject doesn’t disprove our claims

Owen 2 David Owen, Reader of Political Theory at the Univ. of Southampton, Millennium Vol 31 No 3 2002 p. 655-7

Commenting on the ‘philosophical turn’ in IR, Wæver remarks that ‘[a] frenzy for words like “epistemology” and “ontology” often signals this philosophical turn’, although he goes on to comment that these terms are often used loosely.4 However, loosely deployed or not, it is clear that debates concerning ontology and epistemology play a central role in the contemporary IR theory wars. In one respect, this is unsurprising since it is a characteristic feature of the social sciences that periods of disciplinary disorientation involve recourse to reflection on the philosophical commitments of different theoretical approaches, and there is no doubt that such reflection can play a valuable role in making explicit the commitments that characterise (and help individuate) diverse theoretical positions. Yet, such a philosophical turn is not without its dangers and I will briefly mention three before turning to consider a confusion that has, I will suggest, helped to promote the IR theory wars by motivating this philosophical turn. The first danger with the philosophical turn is that it has an inbuilt tendency to prioritise issues of ontology and epistemology over explanatory and/or interpretive power as if the latter two were merely a simple function of the former. But while the explanatory and/or interpretive power of a theoretical account is not wholly independent of its ontological and/or epistemological commitments (otherwise criticism of these features would not be a criticism that had any value), it is by no means clear that it is, in contrast, wholly dependent on these philosophical commitments. Thus, for example, one need not be sympathetic to rational choice theory to recognise that it can provide powerful accounts of certain kinds of problems, such as the tragedy of the commons in which dilemmas of collective action are foregrounded. It may, of course, be the case that the advocates of rational choice theory cannot give a good account of why this type of theory is powerful in accounting for this class of problems (i.e., how it is that the relevant actors come to exhibit features in these circumstances that approximate the assumptions of rational choice theory) and, if this is the case, it is a philosophical weakness—but this does not undermine the point that, for a certain class of problems, **rational choice theory may provide the best account** available to us. In other words, while the critical judgement of theoretical accounts in terms of their ontological and/or epistemological sophistication is one kind of critical judgement, it is not the only or even necessarily the most important kind. The second danger run by the philosophical turn is that because **prioritisation of ontology** and epistemology promotes theory-construction from philosophical first principles, it **cultivates a theory-driven rather than problem-driven approach to IR.** Paraphrasing Ian Shapiro, the point can be put like this: since it is the case that there is always a plurality of possible true descriptions of a given action, event or phenomenon, the challenge is to decide which is the most apt in terms of getting a perspicuous grip on the action, event or phenomenon in question given the purposes of the inquiry; yet, from this standpoint, ‘theory-driven work is part of a **reductionist program’** in that it ‘dictates always opting for the description that calls for the explanation that flows from the preferred model or theory’.5 The justification offered for this strategy rests on the mistaken belief that it is necessary for social science because general explanations are required to characterise the classes of phenomena studied in similar terms. However, as Shapiro points out, this is to misunderstand the enterprise of science since ‘whether there are general explanations for classes of phenomena is a question for social-scientific inquiry, not to be prejudged before conducting that inquiry’.6 Moreover, this strategy **easily slips into the promotion of the pursuit of generality over that of empirical validity**. The third danger is that the preceding two combine to encourage the formation of a particular image of disciplinary debate in IR—what might be called (only slightly tongue in cheek) ‘the Highlander view’—namely, an image of warring theoretical approaches with each, despite occasional temporary tactical alliances, dedicated to the strategic achievement of sovereignty over the disciplinary field. It encourages this view because the turn to, and prioritisation of, ontology and epistemology stimulates the idea that there can only be one theoretical approach which gets things right, namely, the theoretical approach that gets its ontology and epistemology right. This image feeds back into IR exacerbating the first and second dangers, and **so a potentially vicious circle arises.**

#### Liberal humanism good / true --- we can effect social structures

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Universality is not just an ideological illusion. On the contrary, it is the single most palpable feature of our political world. It is not just an idea one can choose or oppose as the theoretical fancy takes you, but the structure of global reality itself. As Justin Rosenberg writes: 'By the end of the twentieth century . . . the wilfulness lies patently with anyone who seeks to deny the need for large-scale, systematic, historical explanation. For this has been an age of global wars, of ideological conflicts superimposed on a global state system, of booms and slumps that were worldwide in their impact, and of (ecological and political) challenges which now confront the whole of humanity.' 15 We must ask ourselves why it is, then, that just at the historical moment when this system was becoming more 'total' than ever, some radical intellectuals began to denounce the whole notion of totality as a bad dream. Was it among other things because, fixated on fascism or Stalinism, the only kind of totality they could imagine was the crudely obvious one of 'totalitarianism'? As the environmentalists are only too aware, universality in the end means that we inhabit the same small planet; and though we may forget about totality, we may be sure that it will not forget about us. We come finally to 'humanist', a term bedevilled by its several clashing meanings. There is an ethical sense of the word, meaning the belief that human beings should be accorded compassion and respect; a sociological sense, meaning that social structures are best viewed as the products of human agents; and an historical sense, denoting periods such as the Renaissance in which 'man' becomes the centre of scholarly attention. This latter meaning may or may not involve yet another sense of the term: the belief that there is an important distinction between humans and other animals, perhaps, though not necessarily, with the corollary that the former should rule sovereign over the latter. But the word can also suggest the sovereignty of the human as opposed to the divine or supernatural, in which case it becomes a rather more positive synonym for atheism or agnosticism, and merges into the idea of a 'naturalistic' world view. For this Enlightenment doctrine, it belongs to the dignity of human beings that they should rely upon their own capacities, rather than on some transcendent power. This in turn may be coupled with a further meaning of 'humanist' an affirmation of human self-development or self-perfection, usually with progressivist or even Utopian implications. Such a belief, however, need not be anti-supematuralist, as in the case of the various Christian humanisms of the West.

#### Maximizing all lives is the only way to affirm equality

**Cummiskey 90** – Professor of Philosophy, Bates (David, Kantian Consequentialism, Ethics 100.3, p 601-2, p 606, jstor, AG)

We must not obscure the issue by characterizing this type of case as the sacrifice of individuals for some abstract "social entity." It is not a question of some persons having to bear the cost for some elusive "overall social good." Instead, the question is whether some persons must bear the inescapable cost for the sake of other persons. Nozick, for example, argues that "to use a person in this way does not sufficiently respect and take account of the fact that he is a separate person, that his is the only life he has."30 Why, however, is this not equally true of all those that we do not save through our failure to act? By emphasizing solely the one who must bear the cost if we act, one fails to sufficiently respect and take account of the many other separate persons, each with only one life, who will bear the cost of our inaction. In such a situation, what would a conscientious Kantian agent, an agent motivated by the unconditional value of rational beings, choose? We have a duty to promote the conditions necessary for the existence of rational beings, but both choosing to act and choosing not to act will cost the life of a rational being. Since the basis of Kant's principle is "rational nature exists as an end-in-itself' (GMM, p. 429), the reasonable solution to such a dilemma involves promoting, insofar as one can, the conditions necessary for rational beings. If I sacrifice some for the sake of other rational beings, I do not use them arbitrarily and I do not deny the unconditional value of rational beings. **Persons** may **have "dignity**, an unconditional and incomparable value" that transcends any market value (GMM, p. 436), **but**, as rational beings, persons **also** have **a fundamental equality which dictates that some must** sometimes **give way for the sake of others.** The formula of the end-in-itself thus does not support the view that we may never force another to bear some cost in order to benefit others. If one focuses on the equal value of all rational beings, then equal consideration dictates that one sacrifice some to save many. [continues] According to Kant, the objective end of moral action is the existence of rational beings. Respect for rational beings requires that, in deciding what to do, one give appropriate practical consideration to the unconditional value of rational beings and to the conditional value of happiness. Since agent-centered constraints require a non-value-based rationale, the most natural interpretation of the demand that one give equal respect to all rational beings lead to a consequentialist normative theory. We have seen that there is no sound Kantian reason for abandoning this natural consequentialist interpretation. In particular, a consequentialist interpretation does not require sacrifices which a Kantian ought to consider unreasonable, and it does not involve doing evil so that good may come of it. It simply requires an uncompromising commitment to the equal value and equal claims of all rational beings and a recognition that, in the moral consideration of conduct, one's own subjective concerns do not have overriding importance.

#### Nuke war threat is real and o/w racism and invisible violence---their expansion of structural violence to an all-pervasive omnipresence makes preventing war impossible – also answers their value to life claim

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Galtung is very legitimately interested in problems of world poverty and the failure of development of the really poor. He tried to amalga- mate this interest with the peace research interest in the more narrow sense. Unfortunately, he did this by downgrading the study of inter- national peace, labeling it "negative peace" (it should really have been labeled "negative war") and then developing the concept of "structural violence," which initially meant all those social structures and histories which produced an expectation of life less than that of the richest and longest-lived societies. He argued by analogy that if people died before the age, say, of 70 from avoidable causes, that this was a death in "war"' which could only be remedied by something called "positive peace." Unfortunately, the concept of structural violence was broadened, in the word of one slightly unfriendly critic, to include anything that Galtung did not like. Another factor in this situation was the feeling, certainly in the 1960s and early 1970s, that nuclear deterrence was actually succeeding as deterrence and that the problem of nuclear war had receded into the background. This it seems to me is a most danger- ous illusion and diverted conflict and peace research for ten years or more away from problems of disarmament and stable peace toward a grand, vague study of world developments, for which most of the peace researchers are not particularly well qualified. To my mind, at least, the quality of the research has suffered severely as a result.' The complex nature of the split within the peace research community is reflected in two international peace research organizations. The official one, the International Peace Research Association (IPRA), tends to be dominated by Europeans somewhat to the political left, is rather, hostile to the United States and to the multinational cor- porations, sympathetic to the New International Economic Order and thinks of itself as being interested in justice rather than in peace. The Peace Science Society (International), which used to be called the Peace Research Society (International), is mainly the creation of Walter Isard of the University of Pennsylvania. It conducts meetings all around the world and represents a more peace-oriented, quantitative, science- based enterprise, without much interest in ideology. COPRED, while officially the North American representative of IPRA, has very little active connection with it and contains within itself the same ideological split which, divides the peace research community in general. It has, however, been able to hold together and at least promote a certain amount of interaction between the two points of view. Again representing the "scientific" rather than the "ideological" point of view, we have SIPRI, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, very generously (by the usual peace research stand- ards) financed by the Swedish government, which has performed an enormously useful service in the collection and publishing of data on such things as the war industry, technological developments, arma- ments, and the arms trade. The Institute is very largely the creation of Alva Myrdal. In spite of the remarkable work which it has done, how- ever, her last book on disarmament (1976) is almost a cry of despair over the folly and hypocrisy of international policies, the overwhelming power of the military, and the inability of mere information, however good, go change the course of events as we head toward ultimate ca- tastrophe. I do not wholly share her pessimism, but it is hard not to be a little disappointed with the results of this first generation of the peace research movement. Myrdal called attention very dramatically to the appalling danger in which Europe stands, as the major battleground between Europe, the United States, and the Soviet Union if war ever should break out. It may perhaps be a subconscious recognition-and psychological denial-of the sword of Damocles hanging over Europe that has made the European peace research movement retreat from the realities of the international system into what I must unkindly describe as fantasies of justice. But the American peace research community, likewise, has retreated into a somewhat niggling scientism, with sophisticated meth- odologies and not very many new ideas. I must confess that when I first became involved with the peace research enterprise 25 years ago I had hopes that it might produce some- thing like the Keynesian revolution in economics, which was the result of some rather simple ideas that had never really been thought out clearly before (though they had been anticipated by Malthus and others), coupled with a substantial improvement in the information system with the development of national income statistics which rein- forced this new theoretical framework. As a result, we have had in a single generation a very massive change in what might be called the "conventional wisdom" of economic policy, and even though this conventional wisdom is not wholly wise, there is a world of difference between Herbert Hoover and his total failure to deal with the Great Depression, simply because of everybody's ignorance, and the moder- ately skillful handling of the depression which followed the change in oil prices in 1-974, which, compared with the period 1929 to 1932, was little more than a bad cold compared with a galloping pneumonia. In the international system, however, there has been only glacial change in the conventional wisdom. There has been some improvement. Kissinger was an improvement on John Foster Dulles. We have had the beginnings of detente, and at least the possibility on the horizon of stable peace between the United States and the Soviet Union, indeed in the whole temperate zone-even though the tropics still remain uneasy and beset with arms races, wars, and revolutions which we cannot really afford. Nor can we pretend that peace around the temper- ate zone is stable enough so that we do not have to worry about it. The qualitative arms race goes on and could easily take us over the cliff. The record of peace research in the last generation, therefore, is one of very partial success. It has created a discipline and that is something of long-run consequence, most certainly for the good. It has made very little dent on the conventional wisdom of the policy makers anywhere in the world. It has not been able to prevent an arms race, any more, I suppose we might say, than the Keynesian economics has been able to prevent inflation. But whereas inflation is an inconvenience, the arms race may well be another catastrophe. Where, then, do we go from here? Can we see new horizons for peace and conflict research to get it out of the doldrums in which it has been now for almost ten years? The challenge is surely great enough. It still remains true that war, the breakdown of Galtung's "negative peace," remains the greatest clear and present danger to the human race, a danger to human survival far greater than poverty, or injustice, or oppression, desirable and necessary as it is to eliminate these things. Up to the present generation, war has been a cost and an inconven- ience to the human race, but it has rarely been fatal to the process of evolutionary development as a whole. It has probably not absorbed more than 5% of human time, effort, and resources. Even in the twenti- eth century, with its two world wars and innumerable smaller ones, it has probably not acounted for more than 5% of deaths, though of course a larger proportion of premature deaths. Now, however, ad- vancing technology is creating a situation where in the first place we are developing a single world system that does not have the redundancy of the many isolated systems of the past and in which therefore if any- thing goes wrong everything goes wrong. The Mayan civilization could collapse in 900 A.D., and collapse almost irretrievably without Europe or China even being aware of the fact. When we had a number of iso- lated systems, the catastrophe in one was ultimately recoverable by migration from the surviving systems. The one-world system, therefore, which science, transportation, and communication are rapidly giving us, is inherently more precarious than the many-world system of the past. It is all the more important, therefore, to make it internally robust and capable only of recoverable catastrophes. The necessity for stable peace, therefore, increases with every improvement in technology, either of war or of peacex

#### This is true at a fundamental and ontological level

Paterson 3 Craig, Department of Philosophy, Providence College, Rhode Island “A Life Not Worth Living?”, Studies in Christian Ethics, <http://sce.sagepub.com>

Contrary to those accounts, I would argue that it is death per se that is really the objective evil for us, not because it deprives us of a prospective future of overall good judged better than the alter- native of non-being. It cannot be about harm to a former person who has ceased to exist, for no person actually suffers from the sub-sequent non-participation. Rather, death in itself is an evil to us because it ontologically destroys the current existent subject — it is the ultimate in metaphysical lightening strikes.80 The evil of death is truly an ontological evil borne by the person who already exists, independently of calculations about better or worse possible lives. Such an evil need not be consciously experienced in order to be an evil for the kind of being a human person is. Death is an evil because of the change in kind it brings about, a change that is destructive of the type of entity that we essentially are. Anything, whether caused naturally or caused by human intervention (intentional or unintentional) that drastically interferes in the process of maintaining the person in existence is an objective evil for the person. What is crucially at stake here, and is dialectically supportive of the self-evidency of the basic good of human life, is that death is a radical interference with the current life process of the kind of being that we are. In consequence, death itself can be credibly thought of as a ‘primitive evil’ for all persons, regardless of the extent to which they are currently or prospectively capable of participating in a full array of the goods of life.81

In conclusion, concerning willed human actions, it is justifiable to state that any intentional rejection of human life itself cannot therefore be warranted since it is an expression of an ultimate disvalue for the subject, namely, the destruction of the present person; a radical ontological good that we cannot begin to weigh objectively against the travails of life in a rational manner. To deal with the sources of disvalue (pain, suffering, etc.) we should not seek to irrationally destroy the person, the very source and condition of all human possibility.82

#### Choice is key --- they are serial killers

Paterson 3 Craig, Department of Philosophy, Providence College, Rhode Island “A Life Not Worth Living?”, Studies in Christian Ethics, <http://sce.sagepub.com>

In determining whether a life is worth living or not, **attention should be focused upon an array of ‘interests’ of the person**, and these, for the competent patient at least, are going to vary considerably, since they will be informed by the patient’s underlying dispositions, and, for the incompetent, by a minimal quality threshold. It follows that for competent patients, a broad-ranging assessment of quality of life concerns is the trump card as to whether or not life continues to be worthwhile. Different patients may well decide differently. That is the prerogative of the patient, for the only unpalatable alternative is to force a patient to stay alive. For Harris, life can be judged valuable or not when the person assessing his or her own life determines it to be so. If a person values his or her own life, then that life is valuable**, precisely to the extent that he or she values it**. Without any real capacity to value, there can be no value. As Harris states, ‘. . . the value of our lives is the value we give to our lives’. It follows that the primary injustice done to a person is to deprive the person of a life he or she may think valuable. Objectivity in the value of human life, for Harris, essentially becomes one of negative classification (ruling certain people out of consideration for value), allied positively to a broad range of ‘critical interests’; interests worthy of pursuing — **friendships, family, life goals, etc**. — which are subjected to de facto **self-assessment** for the further determination of meaningful value. Suicide, assisted suicide, and voluntary euthanasia, can therefore be justified, on the grounds that once the competent nature of the person making the decision has been established, the thoroughgoing commensuration between different values, in the form of interests or preferences, is essentially left up to the individual to determine for himself or herself.

#### Life is a pre-requisite to death’s symbolic value---fearing death doesn’t preclude recognizing life’s finitude and its inevitability---we can still create provisional value in life---individuals should have the option to live

Cara Kalnow 9 A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of MPhil at the University of St. Andrews “WHY DEATH CAN BE BAD AND IMMORTALITY IS WORSE” https://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/bitstream/10023/724/3/Cara%20Kalnow%20MPhil%20thesis.PDF

(PA) also provided us with good reason to reject the Epicurean claim that the finitude of life cannot be bad for us. With (PA), we saw that our lives could accumulate value through the satisfaction of our desires beyond the boundaries of the natural termination of life. But Chapter Four determined that the finitude of life is a necessary condition for the value of life as such and that many of our human values rely on the finite temporal structure of life. I therefore argued that an indefinite life cannot present a desirable alternative to our finite life, because life as such would not be recognized as valuable. In this chapter, I have argued that the finitude of life is instrumentally good as it provides the recognition that life itself is valuable. Although I ultimately agree with the Epicureans that the finitude of life cannot be an evil, this conclusion was not reached from the Epicurean arguments against the badness of death, and I maintain that (HA) and (EA) are insufficient to justify changing our attitudes towards our future deaths and the finitude of life. Nonetheless, the instrumental good of the finitude of life that we arrived at through the consideration of immortality should make us realize that the finitude of life cannot be an evil; it is a necessary condition for the recognition that life as such is valuable.

Although my arguments pertaining to the nature of death and its moral implications have yielded several of the Epicurean conclusions, my position still negotiates a middle ground between the Epicureans and Williams, as (PA) accounts for the intuition that it is rational to fear death and regard it as an evil to be avoided. I have therefore reached three of the Epicurean conclusions pertaining to the moral worth of the nature of death: (1) that the state of being dead is nothing to us, (2) death simpliciter is nothing to us, and (3) the finitude of life is a matter for contentment. But against the Epicureans, I have argued that we can rationally fear our future deaths, as categorical desires provide a disutility by which the prospect of death is rationally held as an evil to be avoided. Finally, I also claimed against the Epicureans, that the prospect of death can rationally be regarded as morally good for one if one no longer desires to continue living.

5.3 Conclusion

I began this thesis with the suggestion that in part, the Epicureans were right: death—when it occurs—is nothing to us. I went on to defend the Epicurean position against the objections raised by the deprivation theorists and Williams. I argued that the state of being dead, and death simpliciter, cannot be an evil of deprivation or prevention for the person who dies because (once dead), the person—and the grounds for any misfortune—cease to exist. I accounted for the anti-Epicurean intuition 115 that it is rational to fear death and to regard death as an evil to be avoided, not because deathsimpliciter is bad, but rather because the prospect of our deaths may be presented to us as bad for us if our deaths would prevent the satisfaction of our categorical desires. Though we have good reasons to rationally regard the prospect of our own death as an evil for us, the fact that life is finite cannot be an evil and is in fact instrumentally good, because it takes the threat of losing life to recognize that life as such is valuable. In this chapter, I concluded that even though death cannot be of any moral worth for us once it occurs, we can attach two distinct values to death while we are alive: we can attach a value of disutility (or utility) to the prospect of our own individual deaths, and we must attach an instrumentally good value to the fact of death as such. How to decide on the balance of those values is a matter for psychological judgment.

#### Life good---Schopenhaeur wrong

Amien Kacou 8 WHY EVEN MIND? On The A Priori Value Of “Life” Cosmos and History: The Journal of Natural and Social Philosophy, Vol 4, No 1-2 (2008) cosmosandhistory.org/index.php/journal/article/view/92/184

IV. Is life “better than” death a priori?

a. The value of survival

We are now in a position to state an answer to our main question. As we have shown, we are animated (at the very least) by an infinite desire for pleasure and it is impossible to desire that our present generally consistent desires be extinguished before they are satisfied. Therefore, it is impossible to desire the end of what makes pleasure possible (namely, experience, “life”) unless perhaps pain is a constant of that condition—that is, unless life presents a constant problem. Indeed, We have seen that pain has the form of a problem—it signals non-definitive (thus temporary!) dissatisfaction with consciousness, or hardship. In other terms: [simple pain] = [(consciousness\*desire) + obstacle]. On the other hand: [consciousness\*desire] = [desire for satisfaction including pleasure]. Therefore: [Simple pain] = [desire for satisfaction including pleasure + obstacle]. Since, as shown above, consciousness is always an expression of desire, then [consciousness\*desire] can be simplified to [consciousness].

In this way, pain can be seen to address an additional circumstance (the obstacle it signals) seemingly outside of the essence of consciousness. Nonetheless, perhaps we could imagine that such circumstance always subsists with consciousness, or even “precedes” it in some way (in which case, we might be more inclined to relax our restriction to a priori matters). What if, for instance, we were to theorize that the birth of consciousness is explained by the circumstantial advantage it confers—say, toward organic survival, as aforesaid? (For instance, it provides a sense of orientation.) Perhaps this could be expressed by saying that, at its foundation, consciousness (“life” in the relevant sense) is an expression of a will to such power as would allow organisms to survive. It would return us to the view that consciousness is, at its essence, valuable as a security device or capacity instrumental to something else whose value could also be questioned. The issue would be whether that circumstantial advantage addresses an “obstacle” explaining the need for the advantage. If so, then the nature of the desire for pleasure could more accurately be described, not as “infinite,” but rather as “indefinite”—pleasure would have value only so long as the advantage is needed.

However, such an image would also be the result of what we characterized earlier as a confusion of modalities. The fact is that the advantage, the power, which consciousness is supposed to confer, fails as a whole to correspond to any problem or obstacle. Were the fundamental value of consciousness considered to be that it furthers our security interests in general simply by ameliorating our capacity for orientation away from undesirable circumstances (relative to some desire other than that for pleasure), then the general “circumstance” that the advantage of having consciousness addresses could simply be described as follows: it is the fact that undesirable circumstances can exist. In other words, consciousness could be seen as an advantage vis-à-vis the simple fact that things can go wrong—which, as we have seen, is a condition of the existence of value itself. Thus the advantage would not be aimed at a problem or obstacle. Rather, it would be aimed at the possibility of problems and obstacles, perfectly reflecting the form of desire itself. Accordingly, desiring the end of the condition for which the advantage is needed a priori would be the same as desiring the end of the possibility of problems, which, in turn, would be the same as desiring the end of desire—the disappearance of value.[31]

In sum: no problem for consciousness precedes or is inherent to consciousness, which indeed involves an infinite desire for pleasure. Therefore, it is false to say as Schopenhauer said that “essentially all life is suffering.” Whereas the end of pain can only be desired, it is impossible to desire the end of the essence of life, because it would have to involve a satisfaction with the end of an unproblematic infinite desire. In other words, we cannot help but desire the continuation of life-as-such: our survival is good a priori. Life at its essence is not suffering—pain is an a posteriori (i.e., circumstantial) phenomenon of consciousness.

Furthermore, since, as we have seen, life is an expression of desire (and no state of desire can be one of indifference), then life “at its essence” cannot be indifference. The value of our situated (i.e., a posteriori) experiences can be assumed to be entirely variable. For instance, anyone of us could imaginably be born with a health condition that causes chronic headaches, or instead with a tendency for joyful reverie, or something else. However, the initial value of experience (to the extent we can distinguish experience from its objects—to the extent we commit to assign a value to all life in general) is the same for all.

It follows that life at its essence is pleasure. Life inherently, initially, “produces” pleasure. It “begins” as pleasure, so to speak, only to be countered, frustrated, a posteriori, by pain. (We can think of pain as thwarted pleasure—but not of pleasure as thwarted pain.)[32] And the desire for pleasure appears more precisely as a quest, not really to find or discover pleasure,[33] but rather to sustain (continue), and then augment (intensify) or expand (diversify) pleasure.

In conclusion, since the infinite desire for pleasure finds its greatest satisfaction a priori in its own perpetuation, then life finds its greatest satisfaction a priori in its own perpetuation. The fact that the circumstances of life (limited life expectancy, torture, etc…) do not allow, or frustrate, such perpetuation, however, forces us to reevaluate our death. But this issue belongs to another type of inquiry—on the subjective or circumstantial or a posteriori value of life.

b. The value of birth

The above “demonstration” that our survival-as-such is good may also suggest that the mere fact that experience exists can be said to be a good thing. If experience (which we have shown to be an expression of desire) inherently produces pleasure (which is satisfaction with experience), then there is a point at which, or a degree to which, we can treat desire and satisfaction interchangeably. Indeed, pleasure is produced not simply after it is desired, but while it is desired. Thus, it is perhaps possible, on this account, to suggest of the birth of the desire for pleasure that it is good. In any event, we cannot rationally prefer a priori not to have been born in the first place.

Conclusions: The value of life, ethical foundationalism and post-theism

The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind pitiless indifference.[34]

a. Nihilistic theism:

In conclusion, we have shown that the desire for the good of life is a priori superior to the desire for the good of death—and that the good of life finds its highest form in its own perpetuation.

We have also noted that circumstantial entanglements could conceivably make us think we want what we do not want. In other words, irrational behavior becomes possible: it becomes possible to find discrete pleasure in things that should not give us pleasure—say, because they compromise access to greater pleasure. This explains why it becomes possible to even deny the value of life-as-such.

We can also reason that it is the circumstance that the perpetuation of life and pleasure seems practically (i.e., a posteriori) impossible—because we believe we are mortal and expect to die—that forces us to, not only reevaluate our death but also, focus more on the other dimensions of pleasure (intensity and diversity). And, what is even more interesting: it is the denial of the truth of this apparent circumstance, this imperfection of pleasure, which forms the central concern of theological worldviews

 (which devalue pleasure in its finite form—at least, to the extent that it does not seem conditioned by them). This concern finds expression in two assertions: that experience belongs to an immortal soul; and that perfect pleasure is guaranteed in “heaven.”

“Heaven” is defined as a place where nothing bad can occur—a place where problems and dissatisfaction are not possible. (A place of absolute, necessary security.) As we have seen, however, any desire for such a place would seem to entail a desire for a place where value is no longer possible—because value always entails a preference over alternatives (one of which is bad). In other words, desiring to go to heaven would be the same as desiring the end of desire, the disappearance of value.

We need not investigate in detail the circumstances that make it possible to say that such a place ought to exist. (Perhaps it relates to a fear of Murphy’s Law—“what can go wrong will go wrong.”)[35] But we can “see” how tempting it is to say so, and thus unwittingly sacrifice the possibility of the good to the desire for its necessity. Those who commit to such a place, we call “greedy nihilists.” Hamlet, for instance, even though he does not actually mention a place we would call “heaven,” shows that he is a greedy nihilist when he laments “outrageous fortune” to the point of finding value in the idea of the end of experience—he wishes that things in general were incapable of going wrong. (This is precisely the contrary of amor fati.) It is as if one needed to be able to believe in the possibility of a perfect, everlasting, totalitarian state of goodness in order to be able to find anything good at all.

Heaven can be defined as “God’s realm.” That “God” may be defined as an inescapable (perhaps even all-inclusive, somehow), eternally consistent, committed and supreme preference and power. Through these attributes, It makes heaven possible. Therefore, it is Its authority that conditions the possibility of the good itself (which for greedy nihilists, as we have shown, is conditioned on the idea of its necessity). Thus, that “God” becomes the source or foundation of ethics and value.

Accordingly, when the idea that such a “God” does not exist becomes contemplated, the idea that the good itself does not exist also becomes contemplated. With the idea of the disappearance of the duty imposed by that “God” also comes the idea of the disappearance of the good itself. Thus, it is as if the greedy nihilistic theist needed to feel compelled to love anything at all by such “God,” without which she would be terminally overcome with a sense of all-encompassing futility. In other words, she would become a passive nihilist—in the Nietzschean sense.

In sum, there would be two sides to this paradoxical coin we can now call the Nietzschean God. On one side, it is something that guarantees the preservation of one’s “willingness to care,” so to speak, more or less like an anti-depressant. Because of immortality and heaven, it becomes impossible to “lose” the world. On the other side, it is something that forces one to care. Because of immortality and hell, it becomes impossible to “escape” the world—and costly to try to do so.

The Nietzschean God could perhaps be distinguished from the run of the mill “God,” perhaps more primitive, which is sought, not to provide a source or ground for the very possibility of value, but simply to provide marginal gain or good fortune—or perhaps a special kind of inspiration in the face of dismal odds. We could define this “God” broadly as, “that which can help us in our darkest hours,” and, for contrast, baptize it “the Pascalian God”—solely as an evocation of the opportunism suggested by Blaise Pascal’s wager, and not necessarily as a claim regarding the wisdom of that wager as stated or of Pascal’s beliefs. To the opportunist, it is good if the Pascalian God exists, but it is not necessary that the Pascalian God exist for things to be good.

It is perhaps the temptation to further define the Pascalian God, in order to make It more predictable, that eventually leads us to conceive of the totalitarian Nietzschean God—inflating, in the process, the problem of fortune (chance), from a discrete, marginal, “quantized” phenomenon, so to speak, to a massive one.

b. Post-theism and axiological realism

Post-theism needs not involve any negation of the existence of a particular “God.”[36] It needs only involve a realization that we must find answers without reference to any such “God.”

The “cause” for the existence of value, like the ”cause” for the existence of consciousness, is a matter open to speculation or theorizing. For instance, it may be that organic beings have a tendency to value things (to have preferences) simply by virtue of their contingent material constitution. In other words, Dawkins (in the epigraph above) could be right. Or, it may be that our world (if modal realism makes sense) contains in its modal particularity a definitive “bias” which, somehow, immortal souls within it reflect in their innate sense of value. Whatever! For our purposes, the only difference would be that in one case the “force” of value would seem to come from the contingent forces that hold us together, whereas in the other it would appear to come from the fact that the finding of value is incidentally inescapable (i.e., because we just happen to live in that world with the relevant modal particularity).

What must be understood is that neither “theory” should change anything to the “value of value.”

An ethical foundation is “something for the sake of which everything else can be valued.”[37] Greedy nihilists believe that an absence of external obligation (external force) at the foundation (or as the source) of value (desire) would eliminate value. However, we have seen that their worldview was founded on a desire for something that would make value impossible. Perhaps, then, something like “gratuity” (freedom) would best serve as “foundation.”

But such a “foundation” would seem to correspond to no foundation at all, except for the simple fact that we value things. It would not be conditioned upon any additional claims about other entities. And yet this would seem to make sense, since any such conditioning (of the possibility of asserting value) would itself have to express (albeit indirectly) an assertion of value already preexisting that conditioning. What, then, when it presupposes that value exists, could such conditioning add to the possibility of that existence? (Or, perhaps more importantly, what might it subtract?)

In other words, while we see that the constitution of all morality is twofold—including (1) value (i.e., the fact that we value anything), and (2) the fact that the service of what we value may be conditioned[38]—we now also see that, however, we cannot meaningfully, by ourselves, place conditions for our valuing things in general, for valuing things in the first place.

In yet other words, we have seen that, in terms of general phenomena, care (value) “precedes” belief. Therefore, how could any belief—except the senseless (uninformative) belief that value exists—rationally condition value? More specifically, how could belief in a particular explanation for the existence of value condition value? (These are rhetorical questions.)

Value cannot be self-defeating—desire cannot desire its own dissatisfaction. Moreover, every moment in life expresses or pursues value. Accordingly, conscious behavior must always be limited to value-supporting actions—at least so long as external forces do not interfere. Therefore, even if it is imaginable that there exists outside of life a state of affairs wherein there is no concern with things, and that such a state should in principle be accessible (if death is the end of experience), we nonetheless find ourselves incapable of truly desiring it as an end in itself. Hamlet’s lament (if sincere) was nothing more than the product of a special kind of confusion (or stupidity).

In this sense, we are “trapped” in value—our “escape” could only come (directly at least, if at all) from the exterior. Perhaps then it follows that it is in those who depend on external references, or transcendental “truths,” to provide their axiological source or foundation that we truly begin to find the collapse of what makes value (and therefore morality) possible.

c. Temptation of “meaning”

To ask for the meaning of life can be thought ultimately to ask what should be done with one’s time thought of as a whole (a single project). We have said more specifically that what we seek when we search for “the meaning of life” in the most basic or general sense can be one or both of two things: either it is an explanation for the fact that “life” as we know it exists, or it is a justification for our most basic (or “default”) desire to survive. We have also defined the word “meaningful” (as pertaining to life), for purposes of our inquiry, as being basically synonymous with the word “useful”—a relation between objects and moments, on the one hand, and how what we value can be served, on the other hand.

On the one hand, one who seeks an explanation for the fact that life exists may well seek no more than an inspiration to, as it were, shape her life. On the other hand, one who seeks a justification for our most basic desire to survive seems to seek an inspiration to want a life. What we have attempted to show can be stated as follows: that wanting to live is an a priori aspect of life—in other words, life has value a priori, irrespective of any explanation regarding its existence.

As we have shown that life-as-such (the general condition of experience) has, at the very least, the unproblematic value of pleasure (the liking of experience, or the experience of liking things), then the service of pleasure could be seen as that object or moment in

life that is sufficiently “meaningful” in serving what we value. Furthermore, since value-as-such could not be conditioned by any explanation, then the very existence of unproblematic value in life could not rationally be conditioned on one explanation or another for the existence of life. It is not simply that we have some subjective desire for life, but that living things cannot help but desire life a priori.

Accordingly, we should be able to see life as an end in itself. Although one explanation, as opposed to another, for the existence of life could depict a better overall situation for life (e.g., one that would involve immortality), we must fight the temptation to believe that any explanation could condition our finding life good.

#### Extinction actually is the end of all human consciousness---this arg is dumb

Stenger 92 – Victor J. Stenger, Adjunct Professor of Philosophy, University of Colorado, 1992, “The Myth of Quantum Consciousness,” online: http://www.colorado.edu/philosophy/vstenger/Quantum/QuantumConsciousness.pdf

Quantum mechanics is called on further to argue that the cosmic field, like Newton’s aether, couples to the human mind itself. In Robert Lanza’s view, that field is the universal mind of all humanity - living, dead, and unborn. Ironically, this seemingly profound association between quantum and mind is an artifact, the consequence of unfortunate language used by Bohr, Heisenberg and the others who originally formulated quantum mechanics. In describing the necessary interaction between the observer and what is being observed, and how the state of a system is determined by the act of its measurement, they inadvertently left the impression that human consciousness enters the picture to cause that state come into being. This led many who did not understand the physics, but liked the sound of the words used to describe it, to infer a fundamental human role in what was previously a universe that seemed to have need for neither gods nor humanity.

If Bohr and Heisenberg had spoken of measurements made by inanimate instruments rather than “observers,” perhaps this strained relationship between quantum and mind would not have been drawn. For, nothing in quantum mechanics requires human involvement.

Quantum mechanics does not violate the Copernican principle that the universe cares not a whit about the human race. Long after humanity has disappeared from the scene, matter will still undergo the transitions that we call quantum events. The atoms in stars will radiate photons, and these photons will be absorbed by materials that react to them. Perhaps, after we are gone, some of our machines will remain to analyze these photons. If so, they will do so under the same rules of quantum mechanics that operate today.

#### Fear of extinction is a legitimate and productive response to the modern condition---working through it by validating our representations is the only way to create an authentic relationship to the world and death

Macy 2K – Joanna Macy, adjunct professor at the California Institute of Integral Studies, 2000, Environmental Discourse and Practice: A Reader, p. 243

The move to a wider ecological sense of self is in large part a function of the dangers that are threatening to overwhelm us. We are confronted by social breakdown, wars, nuclear proliferation, and the progressive destruction of our biosphere. Polls show that people today are aware that the world, as they know it, may come to an end. This loss of certainty that there will be a future is the pivotal psychological reality of our time.

Over the past twelve years my colleagues and I have worked with tens of thousands of people in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia, helping them confront and explore what they know and feel about what is happening to their world. The purpose of this work, which was first known as “Despair and Empowerment Work,” is to overcome the numbing and powerlessness that result from suppression of painful responses to massively painful realities. As their grief and fear for the world is allowed to be expressed without apology or argument and validated as a wholesome, life-preserving response, people break through their avoidance mechanisms, break through their sense of futility and isolation. Generally what they break through into is a larger sense of identity. It is as if the pressure of their acknowledged awareness of the suffering of our world stretches or collapses the culturally defined boundaries of the self.

It becomes clear, for example, that the grief and fear experienced for our world and our common future are categorically different from similar sentiments relating to one’s personal welfare. This pain cannot be equated with dread of one’s own individual demise. Its source lies less in concerns for personal survival than in apprehensions of collective suffering – of what looms for human life and other species and unborn generations to come. Its nature is akin to the original meaning of compassion – “suffering with.” It is the distress we feel on behalf of the larger whole of which we are a part. And, when it is so defined, it serves as a trigger or getaway to a more encompassing sense of identity, inseparable from the web of life in which we are as intricately connected as cells in a larger body.

This shift in consciousness is an appropriate, adaptive response. For the crisis that threatens our planet, be it seen in its military, ecological, or social aspects, derives from a dysfunctional and pathogenic notion of the self. It is a mistake about our place in the order of things. It is the delusion that the self is so separate and fragile that we must delineate and defend its boundaries, that it is so small and needy that we must endlessly acquire and endlessly consume, that it is so aloof that we can – as individuals, corporations, nation-states, or as a species – be immune to what we do to other beings.

#### Reject Lanza’s model of consciousness---it’s non-falsifiable and shouldn’t even be considered science

Wadhawan & Kamal 9 – Vinod K., Fellow at the Babha Atomic Research Center in Mumbai, & Aijta, December 14, 2009, “Biocentrism Demystified: A Response to Deepak Chopra and Robert Lanza’s Notion of a Conscious Universe,” online: http://nirmukta.com/2009/12/14/biocentrism-demystified-a-response-to-deepak-chopra-and-robert-lanzas-notion-of-a-conscious-universe/

In the first case Lanza seems to state that motion is logically impossible (which is a pre-relativistic view of the paradox) and in the next case he mentions that uncertainty is present in the system (a post-relativistic model of motion). In both cases, however, Lanza’s conclusion is the same - biocentrism is true for time. No matter what the facts about the nature of time, Lanza concludes that time is not real. His model is unfalsifiable and therefore cannot be a part of science. What Lanza doesn’t let on is that Einstein’s special-relativity theory removes the possibility of absolute time, not of time itself. Zeno’s Arrow paradox is resolved by replacing the idea of absolute time with Einstein’s relativistic coupling of space and time. Space-time has an uncertainty in quantum mechanics, but it is not nonexistent. The idea of time as a series of sequential events that we perceive and put together in our heads is an experiential version of time. This is the way we have evolved to perceive time. This experiential version of time seems absolute, because we evolved to perceive it that way. However, in reality time is relative. This is a fundamental fact of modern physics. Time does exist outside of the observer, but allows us only a narrow perception of its true nature.

#### Linearity might not be true but complexity isn’t 100% true either

Dr. Sebastian L. V. Gorka et al 12, Director of the Homeland Defense Fellows Program at the College of International Security Affairs, National Defense University, teaches Irregular Warfare and US National Security at NDU and Georgetown, et al., Spring 2012, “The Complexity Trap,” Parameters, <http://www.carlisle.army.mil/USAWC/parameters/Articles/2012spring/Gallagher_Geltzer_Gorka.pdf>

These competing views of America’s national security concerns indicate an important and distinctive characteristic of today’s global landscape: prioritization is simultaneously very difficult and very important for the United States. Each of these threats and potential threats—al Qaeda, China, nuclear proliferation, climate change, global disease, and so on—can conjure up a worstcase scenario that is immensely intimidating. Given the difficulty of combining estimates of probabilities with the levels of risk associated with these threats, it is challenging to establish priorities. Such choices and trade-offs are difficult, but not impossible. 30 In fact, they are the stock-in-trade of the strategist and planner. If the United States is going to respond proactively and effectively to today’s international environment, prioritization is the key first step—and precisely the opposite reaction to the complacency and undifferentiated fear that the notion of unprecedented complexity encourages. Complexity suggests a maximization of flexibility and minimization of commitment; but prioritization demands wise allotment of resources and attention in a way that commits American power and effort most effectively and efficiently. Phrased differently, complexity induces deciding not to decide; prioritization encourages deciding which decisions matter most. Today’s world of diverse threats characterized by uncertain probabilities and unclear risks will overwhelm us if the specter of complexity seduces us into either paralysis or paranoia. Some priorities need to be set if the United States is to find the resources to confront what threatens it most. 31 As Michael Doran recently argued in reference to the Arab Spring, “the United States must train itself to see a large dune as something more formidable than just endless grains of sand.”32¶ This is not to deny the possibility of nonlinear phenomena, butterfly effects, self-organizing systems that exhibit patterns in the absence of centralized authority, or emergent properties. 33 If anything, these hallmarks of complexity theory remind strategists of the importance of revisiting key assumptions in light of new data and allowing for tactical flexibility in case of unintended consequences. Sound strategy requires hard choices and commitments, but it need not be inflexible. We can prioritize without being procrustean. But a model in which everything is potentially relevant is a model in which nothing is.