# Individualism K - Aff Answers

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## Impact Defense

### Coercion

#### No impact -- coercion isn’t inherently bad.

Glaeser, 7—the Fred and Eleanor Glimp Professor of Economics at Harvard University (Edward, “Coercive Regulation and the Balance of Freedom”, Cato Unbound, 5/11/7, http://www.cato-unbound.org/2007/05/11/edward-glaeser/coercive-regulation-and-the-balance-of-freedom/)//

Daniel Klein has written an elegant essay arguing that minimum wage laws are coercive. He is obviously right. These laws threaten employers with state-sponsored violence if they have a contractual relationship with wages that are too low. To me, the most striking fact in the essay was that more than fifty percent of a survey of economists said that these laws are not coercive in any significant sense. That’s just silly. Minimum wage laws, like most restraints on trade and like tax laws, are enforced with the power of the state. Coercion lies at the core of almost all government policies. Rarely is voluntary participation a reliable tool for enforcing rules. If we could count on voluntary participation, we probably wouldn’t need the government involved in the first place. But, as Klein notes, just because something is coercive, doesn’t mean that it is wrong. The coercive power of the state is useful when it protects our lives and property from outside harm. If we think that state-sponsored redistribution is desirable, then we are willing to accept more coercion to help the less fortunate. We also rely on state-sponsored coercion regularly when writing private contracts. The ability of creditors to collect depends on the power of the state to coerce borrowers. The great difficulty is that coercion is both necessary and terrifying. For millenia, governments have abused their control over the tools of violence. The historical track record insists that we treat any governmental intervention warily. What principles help us decide on the appropriate limits to government-sponsored coercion? Are minimum wage laws acceptable coercion or do they fall outside of the pale?

## Impact Turns

### Family Turn

#### Individualism ruins the family

Hahm Chaibong, associate professor of political science at Yonsei University and director of the Comparative Cultural Studies Center at Yonsei University's Institute for East & West Studies, 2000, “The Cultural Challenge to Individualism,” Journal of Democracy, Volume 11, Number 1

In a democracy, on the other hand, family bonds are relaxed: "Those who went before are soon forgotten; of those who will come after, no one has any idea: the interest of man is confined to those in close propinquity to himself." As a result, "not only does democracy make every man forget his ancestors, but it hides his descendants and separates his contemporaries from him; it throws him back forever upon himself alone and threatens in the end to confine him entirely within the solitude of his own heart" (II, 99).

### Civil Society Turn

#### Individualism hinders civil society, leads to depotism

Hahm Chaibong, associate professor of political science at Yonsei University and director of the Comparative Cultural Studies Center at Yonsei University's Institute for East & West Studies, 2000, “The Cultural Challenge to Individualism,” Journal of Democracy, Volume 11, Number 1

Democratic individualism also poses an obstacle to civil society because it "disposes each member of the community to sever himself from the mass of his fellows and to draw apart with his family and his friends . . . [leaving] society at large to itself." It "saps the virtues of public life" and eventually degenerates into "downright selfishness" (II, 98). This leaves the society vulnerable to despotism, as "the vices which despotism produces are precisely those which equality fosters." The individualism produced by democracy predisposes men "not to consider their fellow creatures," while despotism "makes general indifference a sort of public virtue." As such, "despotism . . . which is at all times dangerous, is more particularly to be feared in democratic ages" (II, 109).

### State Turn

#### Turn- The libertarianism and private transportation of the critique has crushed our freedom of movement and increased state power

#### Gapers Block Merge 08 (Newstex, “The Atomization of Transportation”, L/N, Aug 13th)

If the early part of the 20th century was an ongoing effort by the left to bust the private trusts that kept so many people in misery, the last part of the 20th century was an ongoing effort by the right to bust the public trusts that kept so many people financially and physically safe. And one of those was the public trust of commonly-owned transit that allowed supreme freedom of movement. And has the conservative assault on publicly owned transit made Americans more free? It has made us dependent on automobile manufacturers, oil companies and insurers. It has created a massive public-private complex that compulsively fleeces taxpayers to build roads. It has made it easier for the government and private entities to track our movements .Cars must be registered to the state; if we don't want a transponder in our car that keeps a record of where we've traveled, we have to pay double the toll as a tax; cameras at intersections snap our pictures. Cops driving behind us can just run our plates and get our histories. While you can drive wherever you want, you cannot do so with freedom, and you can only really do so if you can afford it - the core conservative principle of freedom for those who can afford it. There is a tiered system of movement here - the wealthy can afford to move at their leisure (though still ultimately trackable) while the working people are confined to wherever a few "leisure" gallons of gas per week can take them. Compare that with travel by rail, where a ticket can be purchased with cash. You can hop on and off wherever you choose, without presenting identification; you can go from one end of the country to the other in complete anonymity. There is nobody to track or follow you; if there is a problem with the train, it is somebody else's problem. Once you step off the train, you don't need to worry about where it will park, whether it will be broken into, or stolen. You don't have to insure it. The conservative and libertarian narrative is of course the opposite of the truth: the assault on public transportation has made movement more difficult, more expensive and less free. But the purpose of busting public trusts was never to make things easier, cheaper and more democratic, but to make a small group of people much more wealthy. And that is exactly what has happened. The car makers, the road builders, the petrochemical producers, the insurance companies have all made enormous fortunes as the options for public travel are slowly eliminated and a car has become a necessity for moving around

### **Privatization Turn**

#### Turn- Travel by car is subject more state control and less freedom than public transportation

#### Gapers Block Merge 08 (Newstex, “The Atomization of Transportation”, L/N, Aug 13th)

Conservatives wasted no time in going after Amtrak in the 1970s right at its inception. It was one of the earliest targets of so-called "movement conservatism" and the Reagan public trust busters gleefully halved its budget. The White Flight happening simultaneously made sure that the lion's share of public money went to building highways rather than strengthening public transportation. Cars consume huge amounts of public resources - state, local and federal agencies are constantly subsidizing expansions, paying cops to police the roads (Amtrak pays for its own security), and generally sustaining losses in revenue due to the inefficiency of traveling everywhere by car. But it is easy to make private profits off of course, when we atomize transportation. So we'll keep the leisure class at the public teat, milking us for every last penny before we finally shake them off. Air quality in the suburbs, where congestion on surface streets is worse because cars have to move slower, is seriously declining. The roads are more and more full. At a time when the average working American is forced to be more and more productive, we are losing an ever increasing amount of our precious personal time in getting to and from our employers. According to the Metropolitan Planning Council, congestion on our highways costs employers and individuals - billion - a year. Money wasted. Money thrown away. But why? What is more "privatized" than travel by car? Nothing! So why isn't it "peak efficiency?" Because, of course, privatization as a magical key to "efficiency" is a fairy tale .That our city is even considering an Olympics here when problems like this are affecting working people is not unconscionable, it is criminal. Well, sort of - inasmuch as cowardice can be criminal. The American political class has been brought completely to heel by a Free Market Fundamentalism where up is down, and congestion is freedom.Carve up the highways. Replace them with rail. Dedicate city streets to buses; incentivize community car liveries. Cars don't make us free. They tie us down; they make us trackable units in an atomized society where the most favored have the most freedom, and working people - the mud people who so get in the way of your average libertarian - spend more to move less.

### **Car Turn**

#### The culture of American Individualism led to our current car culture, your alt links to the entirety of our Aff

#### Gapers Block Merge 08 (Newstex, “The Atomization of Transportation”, L/N, Aug 13th)

The decisive victory of the automobile in the United States--and the entrenchment of the country's suburbanization--came in 1956, when President Dwight Eisenhower signed the Highway Act, authorizing the construction of more than 40,000 miles of highways at a cost of $ 40 billion. Since then, the nation has poured hundreds of billions of dollars into the interstate highway system. Today, local, state and federal governments spend $ 70 billion annually on road construction and maintenance.¶ This policy has displaced communities, pushed growth into open spaces, and spawned a culture of low-density development organized around the car: subdivision housing with prominent two-car garages, business parks located in cow pastures, and shopping malls dominated by parking lots. The trend shows few signs of reversing. According to the Eno report, 23 million more people drove alone to work in 1990 than in 1980, while carpooling dropped by a third. The report attributed these numbers to the continuing movement of jobs and population to the suburbs.¶ Government policy encourages sprawl not only by providing new roads and other public services such as utilities and sewers, but also through tax breaks for new developments, and zoning laws that encourage housing, shops and offices to be in separate locations. The car's status as preeminent symbol of American individualism and the free market notwithstanding, auto-related expenses consume an estimated $ 400 billion annually in government subsidies. Numerous studies show that only a fraction of the costs of driving--from road maintenance to foreign oil--are paid by motorists via gas taxes, vehicle registrations and the like. The bulk of the bill is covered by taxpayers at large.

### **Neoliberalism Turn**

#### Individualist transportation empower neoliberalism and increases inequality

#### Miller 7/17 (Austin, Equity and Transportation in Buenos Aires, “Neoliberalism, the Car and the Atomization of Everyday Life”, Global Conversation, 2012)

The car allows the wealthiest individuals to live a life that portends to be one based on apolitical individuality. By performing individualism through transport, it begins to seem true that one can arrive at such wealth without systemic support. The separation provided by the windshield, the highway and gated communities allows the individuals inside the walls to forget about the poverty and the lives of those outside the security fences. The steep decline in public and collective transportation options, has reduced our interaction with our neighbors, leading to dehumanization and thwarting the potential for collective action. The car is an important product and facilitator of the vast inequality wrought by neoliberalism.

### Generic Violence Turn

#### Individualism Does not bring fulfillment and only brings negative effects.

Claire Andre and Manuel Velasquez 1992 Creating the Good Societyhttp://www.scu.edu/ethics/publications/iie/v5n1/homepage.html

In the Good Society, sociologist Robert Bellah and his coauthors challenge Americans to take a good look at themselves. Faced with growing homelessness, rising unemployment, crumbling highways, and impending ecological disaster, our response is one of apathy, frustration, cynicism, and retreat into our private worlds. The social problems confronting us today, the authors argue, are largely the result of failures of our institutions, and our response, largely the result of our failure to realize the degree to which our lives are shaped by institutional forces and the degree to which we, as a democratic society, can shape these forces for the better. What prevents Americans from "taking charge" is, according to the authors, our long and abiding allegiance to "individualism" -- the belief that "the good society" is one in which individuals are left free to pursue their private satisfactions independently of others, a pattern of thinking that emphasizes individual achievement and self-fulfillment. As the authors point out, this way of thinking about ourselves and our society can be traced back to our country's eighteenth century founders, most notably John Locke: "Locke's teaching was one of the most powerful ideologies ever invented, if not the most powerful. It promised an unheard of degree of individual freedom, an unlimited opportunity to compete for material well-being, and an unprecedented limitation on the arbitrary powers of government to interfere with individual initiative." Our nation's founders, however, assumed that the freedom of individuals to pursue their own ends would be tempered by a "public spirit" and concern for the common good that would shape our social institutions: "The Lockean ideal of the autonomous individual was, in the eighteenth century, embedded in a complex moral ecology that included family and church on the one hand and on the other a vigorous public sphere in which economic initiative, it was hoped, grew together with public spirit...The eighteenth century idea of a public was...a discursive community capable of thinking about the public good." It is precisely this sense of common purpose and public spirit crucial to the guidance of institutions in a democracy that is absent from our society today. A ruthless individualism, expressed primarily through a market mentality, has invaded every sphere of our lives, undermining those institutions, such as the family or the university, that have traditionally functioned as foci of collective purposes, history, and culture. This lack of common purpose and concern for the common good bodes ill for a people claiming to be a democracy. Caught up in our private pursuits, we allow the workings of our major institutions -- the economy and government -- to go on "over our heads." One way of summing up the difficulty Americans have in understanding the fundamental roots of their problems is to say that they still have a Lockean political culture, emphasizing individual freedom and the pursuit of individual affluence (the American dream) in a society with a most un-Lockean economy and government. We have the illusion that we can control our fate because individual economic opportunity is indeed considerable, especially if one starts with middle class advantages; and our political life is formally free. Yet powerful forces affecting the lives of all of us are not operating under the norm of democratic consent. In particular, the private governments of the great corporations make decisions on the basis of their own advantage, not of the public good. The federal government has enormously increased its power, especially in the form of the military industrial complex, in ways that are almost invulnerable to citizen knowledge, much less control, on the grounds of national defense. The private rewards and the formal freedoms have obscured from us how much we have lost in genuine democratic control of the society we live in. The authors see hope, however, in renovating our institutions in a way that will revitalize and transform our democracy. In a culture of individuals possessed by individualism, such a transformation will not be easy. First and foremost, we will have to shed our individualistic blinders and learn to "pay attention" to ways in which we are dependent on and collectively responsible for the institutions that shape our common life. Second, we will need to find or create spaces in our lives where we can "practice" democracy -- beginning with our families (responsibilities shared equitably between parents) and our places of work (increased worker participation). Educational and religious institutions, as bearers of our moral ideals, will also play a vital role in preparing us for active and intelligent participation in public life. Our larger political and economic institutions can be redesigned to encourage and nurture citizen participation. More government policy and planning decisions, for example, can bc relegated to local levels, encouraging wider citizen participation and responsibility for government policy. Underlying these proposals is a belief that as we begin to participate in public projects, our perspectives and concerns will broaden. From a focus on self and a view of society as unrelated autonomous individuals, we will come to look beyond ourselves and come to view ourselves as members of a larger community concerned not only about ourselves but about our fellow Americans, peoples of other nations, future generations, and non human life. "When citizens are engaged in thinking about the whole, they find their conceptions of their interests broadened, and their commitment to the search for a common good deepens." The result: an informed and morally sensitive public active in discussing and debating issues ranging from international financing to day care, within a framework informed by a shared vision of a good society; and a citizenry capable of instituting reforms in our economic and political institutions so that they work for the common benefit of all peoples. This reinvigoration of democracy is not proposed as an idealistic project but as a practical necessity. The authors write that nowhere is the need more evident than in the international sphere, where problems are beyond the capacity of any single nation to solve. Our economic life is dominated by the dynamics of a vast world market that cannot be controlled by the action of any single nation-state. Problems of environmental pollution transcend national boundaries. The proliferation of nuclear weapons threatens the security of all. Vast disparities in global wealth and power lead to petering conflicts that endanger economic health and political security around the world. In a world of increasing complexity and interdependence, we can no longer afford "to go our own way." Rather, we need to exercise our capacity for developing institutions that recognize our interconnectedness, moving toward the creation of "the good society," "where the common good is the pursuit of the good in common."

#### Individualism is bad for individuals

August 12, 2006 Individualism is Bad for You <http://onsociety.blogspot.com/2006/08/individualism-is-bad-for-you.html>

Can the cornerstone of American life really be a problem? Say it ain't so! Inidividualism is valuable to a degree. In this sense, individualism is just like science, religion, and lots of other things. The problems start when individualistic thinking gets carried to extremes. Of course this happens all the time as a desire to have our inidividual selves recognized and respected gets twisted in dangerous ways. Huh? Consider social policy - We come up with stupid ideas and vote on stupid policies because we:(1) Only care about our taxes not going up, not even a penny, (2) we assume that people have more control over their behavior than they actually have. Consider self-help - How many millions of hours and billions of dollars are wasted by people who have nothing wrong with them. Of course, being OK is not OK. We have to discover our inner selves and blah, blah, blah. (Self-improvement books can be helpful but, really, how much imporvement do most of us need?) Consider relationships - What do you suppoe is going to happen to marriage, and general relations between the sexes, if all we care about is our almighty egos? Maybe there will be more cheating, more beating, and more dislike of the opposite sex (same sex for gay people of course) I wonder how much money and time we waste each year protecting ourselves from amoral individuals who we know are going to take advantage of us if they can? And why are those inidivudals amoral, you ask? Because they grew up being taught to honor their egocentric desires above all else.

#### Individualism makes a every man for himself mentality

Elliot Temple Individualism http://fallibleideas.com/individualism

Individualism is a tradition about valuing individual people. It says people are more than a social group, an ethnicity, a nationality, a religion, an educational level, a profession, an income, a marital status, and other broad demographic data. People have unique ideas, traits and preferences. As you can't judge a book by its cover, you can't judge a person without getting to know him. Individualism says people should put themselves first. That doesn't mean to hurt others in any way. It just means everyone is responsible for their own life and own success, and should make that a high priority. Help others after you have your own house in order and have something to spare. This approach means no one is reliant on anyone else. It means if my life doesn't work out, that's my own responsibility. No one else is to blame and I am not a victim. This approach of personal responsibility is empowering because it means I can take initiative without waiting on someone else to help me.Individual responsibility and individual success has another valuable aspect. It means people who make good decisions come out ahead, and people who make bad decisions don't. If everyone pooled all their effort, thought, resources and so on, then everyone would come out equally well no matter how good or bad their lifestyle. When good ideas result in success, that is useful feedback. It helps people know they are on the right track. It helps them know what to do more of. As a result, good ideas are repeated and spread. And on the other hand, when bad ideas fail people learn not to do that. They get useful feedback and can learn from their mistakes. Individual responsibility helps knowledge be created about which ways of life do and don't work well, and it helps errors be corrected.

#### Because of the inherent nature of individualists furthering only their own interests they establish a kill to live mentality

2009 Individualism http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Individualism#Individualism\_and\_society

An individualist enters into society to further his or her own interests, or at least demands the right to serve his or her own interests, without taking the interests of society into consideration (an individualist need not be an egoist). The individualist does not lend credence to any philosophy that requires the sacrifice of the self-interest of the individual for any higher social causes. Jean-Jacques Rousseau would argue, however, that his concept of "general will" in the "social contract" is not the simple collection of individual wills and precisely furthers the interests of the individual (the constraint of law itself would be beneficial for the individual, as the lack of respect for the law necessarily entails, in Rousseau's eyes, a form of ignorance and submission to one's passions instead of the preferred autonomy of reason).[citation needed]

#### Individualism has led to various groups that were bad for society and individualists never change unless they feel the need putting barriers on society

2009 Individualism http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Individualism#Individualism\_and\_society

Individualism, sometimes closely associated with certain variants of anarchism or liberalism, typically takes it for granted that individuals know best and that public authority or society has no right to interfere in the person's decision-making process, unless a very compelling need to do so arises (and maybe not even in those circumstances). This type of argument can occur in policy debates regarding regulation of industries, as well as in relation to personal choice of lifestyle.

#### Individualism is a type of social decay: if we only help ourselves there will be no way to help our nation or any group we belong to group

Ruut Veenhoven 1999 <http://repub.eur.nl/res/pub/16330/99a-full.pdf>

Opinions on the consequences of individualism differ widely. Some see it as a liberation from archaic restrictions that long inhibited self-actualization. Others observe social decay in the first place and see that result in isolation and anomy. The negative view is that individualism entails unscrupulous competition and atomistic self-containment. As such, individualization would result in alienation from society, and ultimately from oneself. This view has a long tradition in conservative thought. The underlying view of human nature is reserved, if not negative. Man is seen as basically dependant.

#### Individualism destroys relations both personal and public

Ruut Veenhoven 1999 <http://repub.eur.nl/res/pub/16330/99a-full.pdf>

Over the years these views have manifested in different shapes. Currently, the positive view is

embodied in 'neo-liberalist' creed, while the negative view is part of the 'communitarist' ountermovement. At this moment, communitarists have taken the offense. For instance, Etzioni (1993) argues that the surge in individual rights conflicts with the needs of community. Individualism

would destruct vital institutions such as family and neighborhood, and thereby create misery.

Etzioni pleas for a 're-invention of society'. Another spokesman is Lane (1994). Lane sees an

unholy alliance of individualism and market, which would destroy trust and friendship. He notes

growing mass dysphoria. These views echo 19th century concern about shift from pre-modern

'Gemeinschaft' to industrial 'Gesellschaft' (Tönnies 1887).

Modern Individualism will inevitably have a negative effect

Ruut Veenhoven 1999 <http://repub.eur.nl/res/pub/16330/99a-full.pdf>

Contradictory findings Several cross-cultural comparisons suggest that deviant behavior and psycho-pathology are more typical of industrialized nations than of traditional society. On that basis it is concluded that individualization works out negatively. For instance, Naroll (1983) claims that close knit

pre-modern societies have low rates of homicide, suicide, delinquency, divorce, child abuse and

wife-beating and are characterized by good mental health. Likewise, Waldron et al (1982)

observe better (lower) blood-pressure in pre-modern societies, in particular in hunter-gatherer

communities5. In the same line, a lot of studies suggest that mental disturbance is more frequent

in modern western society. For example, Jenkins et all (1991) claim that depression is more

common in Westernized cultures.

#### Individualism leads to increased violence

Ruut Veenhoven 1999 <http://repub.eur.nl/res/pub/16330/99a-full.pdf>

Cross temporal studies have yielded different conclusions as well. On one hand there is a

longstanding tradition of social indicator research that documents increasing rates of homicide,

divorce and suicide in modernizing (individualizing) societies. These trends are interpreted as

manifestations of growing despair and interpreted in an Durheimian perspective of disruptive

anomy. An example is Seligman's (1988) claim that Americans born after 1945 are 10 times

more likely to suffer depression than people born 50 years earlier. Seligman attributes that

change to "individualism" which "erodes commitments to others".

## Perm

### Individualism/Socialism

#### There is a balance to be achieved between individualism and socialism

Hahm Chaibong, associate professor of political science at Yonsei University and director of the Comparative Cultural Studies Center at Yonsei University's Institute for East & West Studies, 2000, “The Cultural Challenge to Individualism,” Journal of Democracy, Volume 11, Number 1

America's democratic institutions have succeeded in holding the society together by producing a simulacrum of aristocratic and public virtues that Tocqueville calls "self-interest rightly understood." The [End Page 129] combination of individualism and free institutions enables Americans "to combine their own advantage with that of their fellow citizens" (II, 121). A democracy, Tocqueville argues, does not require the great acts of sacrifice or virtue often found in an aristocratic society. It suffices for citizens to have an "enlightened regard for themselves [that] constantly prompts them to assist one another and inclines them willingly to sacrifice a portion of their time and property to the welfare of the state" (II, 122).

### Automobility

#### Automobilism achieves individualism

Kari Hensley, doctoral candidate at New York University in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication, March 2010, “One Nation Behind the Wheel: Automobility in U.S. Culture,” American Quarterly, Volume 62, Number 1

When President Obama referred to the U.S. auto industry as the very "emblem of the American spirit," he may have been half right.1 Americans certainly love cars; they just don't love American cars. Recent sales numbers for the "Big Three" automakers have shown anything but U.S. consumer loyalty to Detroit. Or perhaps Americans love the idea of driving—its promises of freedom, speed, adventure, and independence. It is this love affair and the mythical role of the automobile in the American imagination that is the topic of Cotten Seiler's recent book Republic of Drivers: A Cultural History of Automobility in America. But his study is not simply a romance, and it is not merely a story about cars. Seiler, an associate professor of American studies at Dickinson College, takes the role of automobility in the United States as his object of analysis. This term dates back to at least the first years of the twentieth century and refers not simply to the act of driving, but to perceptions shaped by it, attitudes toward it, and knowledge of it, as well as "a broader array of signs, institutions, objects, practices, and feelings" (5). As Seiler argues, automobility is to driving what sexuality is to sex.¶ Automobility is a theme increasingly found in a rich array of scholarly texts, as attested by Robert Buerglener's December 2008 American Quarterly review of five books on the theme of transportation.2 There Buerglener asks, "Just what accounts for a societal obsession with cars and transportation, anyway?"3 Although those five texts were published too late to be referenced in Republic of Drivers, Seiler continues the dialogue on transportation and offers some new and compelling responses to Buerglener's question. In his review, Buerglener discusses the many ways in which the six authors use the lens of automobility (or transportation more broadly) to explore issues as varied as "individual identity, public policy, labor and business history, even the connections [End Page 173] between humans and the nonhuman world."4 Even more than these other books, Republic of Drivers shows that the ubiquity of the automobile in the United States has to do with more than mere transportation.¶ Touching on many of the same themes, such as the role of social power, corporate influence, technology, national identity, and consumerism in the United States, Seiler contributes a valuable and distinct addition to this growing subfield of study. Like David Blanke, who writes that "by 1940, driving was an inescapable ingredient of modern citizenship," he is attuned to the symbolic role of driving in the United States.5 But Seiler not only dates this codification a decade earlier; he develops these ideas further, taking the subjectivity of the driver-citizen as the main focus and offering an in-depth investigation into how the driver came to represent the dominant ideals of American citizenship. The book spans the years from 1895 to 1961, a period of ascendancy for the United States as a world power and a time when, according to Seiler, "automobility emerged as a shaper of public policy and the landscape, a prescriptive metaphor for social and economic relations, and a forge of citizens" (3). In approaching these issues, he problematizes many cultural assumptions about the American attachment to the automobile.¶ While Buerglener applauded David Blanke and Tom McCarthy on many points, he critiqued both authors for attributing the American love affair with the automobile to consumers' irrational drives (seen to stand outside intellectual analysis). Seiler's book, a deep and nuanced account of this complex relationship between drivers and autos, offers an elaboration of and a counterpoint to these earlier conversations. For him, the popularity of the automobile during this period arose as a response to the exigencies of the modern era—especially those related to labor, consumption, race, gender, and what it meant to be an "authentic" individual. In a sense, his text amounts to a genealogy of the notion of individualism in U.S. discourse. As Seiler charts the concept of individualism in its many iterations, he shows how such ideologies were mobilized to ultimately shore up a consumer-citizen who supported mass production through individual acts of self-expression, one who valued freedom of movement but tolerated policing and surveillance, privileged self-fulfillment over collective action, and conformed in isolation—in short, a citizen who was destined to drive.

#### Automobile is key to individualism through mobility

Kari Hensley, doctoral candidate at New York University in the Department of Media, Culture, and Communication, March 2010, “One Nation Behind the Wheel: Automobility in U.S. Culture,” American Quarterly, Volume 62, Number 1

Republic of Drivers engages with vast and diverse archives, which include "government documents, middlebrow print media, drivers' manuals and guidebooks, automotive trade magazines, philosophy, advertising, cultural criticism, scholarship in the humanities and social sciences, industrial and commercial films, highway engineering studies, photographs, literary works, and popular music" (10). Offering a fine example of interdisciplinary study, Seiler strategically pulls from a number of areas of scholarship, including automotive history, cultural history, and analyses of the "politics of mobility." The work also benefits from the influences of critical theory and cultural critique: Theodor Adorno's concept of pseudoindividuality, the ersatz individuality articulated through the commodities one consumes; Raymond Williams's insight into capitalism as a mode of production dependent on mobility, as well as his notion of mobile privatization, which speaks to the atomization of individuals in consumer societies (exemplified by products such as the automobile and the iPod); Gilles Deleuze's theory of control societies; Michel Foucault's and Giorgio Agamben's work on apparatuses and technologies of the self (discussed below).¶ Seiler seeks to historicize the rise of the automobile, a commodity that, in the words of scholar Kristin Ross, is so "completely integrated into the banality of the everyday" that it appears as one of those "goods whose habitual use effectively removed them from the discursive realm" (quoted on 36). The car is so mundane and integral to daily existence that most assume utility to be its raison d'être. Of course, other viable options for transportation were available, but they were not developed as thoroughly as the automobile. One of Seiler's strengths is his sensitivity to the many alternatives available to this history, such as mass transit. Just as the language of driving has become an unavoidable and naturalized metaphor for history (for instance, "Karl Marx argued that class struggle is the driving force of history"), the ubiquity of automobility appears as a necessity for life in the United States. [End Page 175]¶ In a democracy, Seiler argues, freedom, specifically freedom of individual movement, is imperative to the definition of the citizen. He writes, "The legitimacy of modern liberal societies depends to a large degree on their capacity not merely to tolerate but to enable performances of self-determination in all those individuals identified as citizens" (130). Thus automobility, seen as a fusion of self-directed mobility and consumerist self-expression, becomes a synecdoche for normative citizenship in the United States.

### Government key

#### Perm solves -- complete libertarianism fails -- the government is required for some regulation.

Glaeser, 7—the Fred and Eleanor Glimp Professor of Economics at Harvard University (Edward, “Coercive Regulation and the Balance of Freedom”, Cato Unbound, 5/11/7, <http://www.cato-unbound.org/2007/05/11/edward-glaeser/coercive-regulation-and-the-balance-of-freedom/)//>

Minimum wage laws, like most restraints on trade and like tax laws, are enforced with the power of the state. Coercion lies at the core of almost all government policies. Rarely is voluntary participation a reliable tool for enforcing rules. If we could count on voluntary participation, we probably wouldn’t need the government involved in the first place. But, as Klein notes, just because something is coercive, doesn’t mean that it is wrong. The coercive power of the state is useful when it protects our lives and property from outside harm. If we think that state-sponsored redistribution is desirable, then we are willing to accept more coercion to help the less fortunate. We also rely on state-sponsored coercion regularly when writing private contracts. The ability of creditors to collect depends on the power of the state to coerce borrowers. I start with the view that individual freedom is the ultimate goal for any government. The ultimate job of the state is to increase the range of options available to its citizens. To me, this is not a maxim, but an axiom that is justified by both philosophy and history. On a basic level, I believe that human beings are the best judges of what is best for themselves. I also believe that the right to make our own decisions is an intrinsically good thing. I also believe that people become better decision-makers through the course of regularly making their own decisions. Moreover, the historical track record looks a lot better for governments that put freedom first. The liberal democracies, defined by their affection for liberty, have been far better for their citizens, than alternatives, whether Communist or Fascist, that enforced state-sponsored visions of how people should live their lives. There is a recent wave of scholarship suggesting that the government can help individuals be happy by reducing their choices. While happiness may be a very nice thing, it is neither the obvious central desiderata for private or public decision-making. On a private level, I make decisions all that time that I expect to lower my level of happiness, because I have other objectives. On a public level, I can’t imagine why we would want to privilege this emotion over all other goals. A much better objective for the state is to aim at giving people the biggest range of choices possible, and then let people decide what is best for them. But putting freedom first doesn’t mean abandoning the state. At the very least, we rely on the government to protect our private property against incursions by others. Even most libertarians think that it is reasonable for the state to enforce contracts. This enforcement increases the range of contractual options and this is, in a way, expands liberty. While these forms of state action are readily defensible, many of the thorniest questions involve tradeoffs between the liberty of one person and the liberty of another. Taking wealth from Peter and giving it to Paul increases the choices available to Peter and decreases the choices available to Paul. Governmental coercion to redistribute income cannot be opposed purely on the grounds that it restricts liberty. Certainly, redistribution reduces the freedom of the taxpayer but it increases the options of the recipient of governmental largesse.

### Not Zero Sum

#### Competitive ideology forces uneven economic growth – zero-sum mindset ensures widespread exploitation

Taylor 10 - Assistant Professor in the Department of Global Development Studies (Marcus, Conscripts of Competitiveness: culture, institutions and capital in contemporary development, Third World Quarterly, Vol. 31, No. 4, 2010, pp 561–579)

By enshrining the notion of utility maximisation as universal and unbending across time and space, economic rationality could be represented as transcending history, culture and difference. It was posed as a universal characteristic of humanity prior to the particular social institutions that might be superimposed upon it. For neoliberals the existence of difference in the way that societies or communities organised social production and consumption, and the specific ends that these processes were oriented towards, were indicative of political or cultural constraints upon individual and, ultimately, social rationality. This essentialism, moreover, facilitated the representation of historically specific capitalist institutions—from private property and the rule of law, to the division of labour—as technical instruments to facilitate the innate rationality of individuals and the natural evolutionary trajectory for all societies.[8](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436591003701083#EN0008) The divergence between neoclassical theory and reality was therefore conceptualised as a policy challenge and reformers prescribed the necessity of profound social engineering in order to coerce society into the rational axioms of neoclassical theory.

The initial target of the neoliberal reformers, however, was not the absence of capitalist social institutions within the global South but the perceived inadequacy of existing ones. In particular, they attributed the failures of capitalism in the postcolonies to the institutional forms that had coalesced historically around what has been termed the ‘national-developmentalist’ state. From industrial policy and trade protectionism through to price subsidies and tripartite labour institutions, the national-developmentalist state form was chided for simultaneously restricting and distorting the rational calculation of economic agents. By interrupting equilibrating market signals, such misguided institutions politicised the technical sphere of the market and gave rise to a suffocating cycle of cronyism, inefficiency, stagnation and debt. As a response, structural adjustment programmes were established under the auspices of the international financial institutions to initiate a process of creative destruction by which the dull compulsion of economic forces could, in the form of shock therapy, be transformed into the heavy artillery of social engineering to obliterate the ossified institutional forms of national developmentalism. Despite the recognition that such programmes would involve short-term pain while market forces redistributed resources in accordance with economic rationality, they were nonetheless heralded as a singular cure for societies that had for too long, and to their great detriment, been treated as qualitatively distinct social formations.

Notwithstanding the claims of their proponents, however, the spontaneous rise of competitive market economies that could drive sustained growth and poverty reduction failed to emerge from the ashes of the national-developmentalist state. While structural adjustment programmes rapidly liberalised trade and financial flows and retrenched various state functions, this led not to a rational reordering of society but to a period of intensely uneven development. Across Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa income polarisation and impoverishment was exacerbated over the ‘lost decade’ of the 1980s and such features proved largely intractable during the 1990s.[9](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436591003701083#EN0009) Furthermore, a number of the outcomes of reform stood in direct opposition to the predictions of its proponents. Not least of these was that, far from an increase in formal employment and wages for unskilled labour, restructuring programmes tended to create greater cleavages between skilled and unskilled work, and were accompanied by mounting underemployment and a dramatic expansion of the informal sector.[10](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436591003701083#EN0010) Similarly, structural adjustment undoubtedly reshaped the distribution of resources among social classes and class fractions, yet it did little to curtail the forms of corruption, patronage and clientelism that had been represented as failures intrinsic to import-substitution strategies and the institutions of national developmentalism.[11](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436591003701083#EN0011)

The disjuncture between the rhetoric of strong and stable growth and the realities of profoundly uneven development led to a shift in the theoretical traditions mobilised by the World Bank. Drawing heavily on the new institutional economics, as pioneered by Douglass North and others, the emphasis of policy prescription moved from liberalisation to building institutions that provide the appropriate legal, political and social foundations for competitive market societies. In distinction to the early neoliberal reformers, neo-institutionalists argued that the achievement of an efficient market society could not be entrusted to the spontaneous advance of individual rationality because ingrained institutional structures could impede the necessary calculative practices and social values.[12](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436591003701083#EN0012) While individuals could indeed be assumed to act rationally in order to maximise utility, the specific actions that such optimising individuals undertake are framed by the natural and institutional constraints that structure their incentives.[13](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436591003701083#EN0013) Differences between socioeconomic structures, therefore, could be related to the path-dependence of institutional structures and the incentives they provide for social action. At the heart of this practice is an attempt to provide security for the conceptual and material construct of ‘the economy’ as a separate and autonomous domain of society in which rational economic action can operate unhindered through formalised market exchange. The key social institutions necessary for instrumental rationality to flourish are heralded to be those of Western capitalism, specifically the rule of law and the formalised extension of property rights. By crafting suitable institutional structures that establish rules and incentives to govern individual and collective behaviour in a way that facilitates the rationality of individual utility maximisation through market exchange, the ‘economy’ can be demarcated and its boundaries protected from becoming ‘polluted’ by alternative logics, values and practices. Such institutional fortitude, therefore, is aimed to cleanse precisely the kind of ‘pollutants’ Ritu Birla calls ‘vernacular capitalisms’ in which institutional forms, values, identities and relationships that do not fit the idealised notion of universal capitalist social relations have become interlaced with processes of capital accumulation, leading to decisively hybrid social formations.[29](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436591003701083#EN0029) The implications of the Bank's standpoint are clear: development is a series of interventions from above to forge an institutional framework that can govern socioeconomic life through a formalised technocratic neutrality in order to establish rules and norms that can impart a formal equality of citizens who freely contract as market individuals.

### Solves the Impact

#### Living in closer societies can help people differentiate between right and wrong

2009 Individualism http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Individualism#Individualism\_and\_society

Societies and groups can differ in the extent to which they are based upon predominantly "self-regarding" (individualistic, and arguably self-interested) rather than "other-regarding" (group-oriented, and group, or society-minded) behavior. Ruth Benedict made a distinction, relevant in this context, between "guilt" societies (e.g., medieval Europe) with an "internal reference standard", and "shame" societies (e.g., Japan, "bringing shame upon one's ancestors") with an "external reference standard", where people look to their peers for feedback on whether an action is "acceptable" or not (also known as "group-think").

## Alt Offense

### **Alternative-Break Down of Society**

#### The alternative results in the break down of society

#### Bakunin 77 (Dr. Jack, historian specializing in the history of social thought, ”The Failure of Individualism”, *Christian Century,* Sept. 21

People move to the suburbs in order to live in a strategic position midway between the city and the country so that with their automobile they can gain the benefits of both urban and rural life. As more and more people make the same move, suburban dwellers find it ever more difficult to enjoy a city whose tax base has been fatally undercut by the flight of its more affluent residents, and a countryside becoming more cluttered and distant with the advance of suburban sprawl. And suburban living based on widespread use of the automobile makes virtually impossible the support of a good public transportation system, which to be practical must be based upon travel between relatively dense population centers.¶ Society becomes more and more the arena of frantic competition as men and women pursue positional goods which only a few can attain or which lose much of their attractiveness as possession becomes more widespread. Many had expected that affluence would make people more generous -- that altruistic behavior would become more common with the taking for granted of elementary material needs. Instead, as more people compete for goods which are by their nature limited in quantity, each generation must have a higher income to achieve the same level of satisfaction; thus there is growing resistance among the middle classes in advanced countries to an income redistribution that would help those left out of the affluent society -- the poor and the minorities. The cost of generosity rises with the price of luxuries taken for granted by the well-to-do and with the escalation of the cost of placing one’s offspring in a suitable profession. At the same time, those lower on the economic pyramid become increasingly restive with the growing realization that the path to their advance has been substantially blocked by the advantages enjoyed by the already prosperous. The resulting conflicts threaten a catastrophic breakdown of the social order.

### **Alternative- Destroys Environment**

#### The alternative’s sole focus on the individual completely destroys the community and causes environmental degradation

#### Chelstowski 12 ( Alex, University of New Hampshire, “Individualism, Environmentalism, and Social Change”, online, 2012)

Being a part of the larger society forces people to look past their own individual needs. It focuses on the collective and what each community views as the greater good. What the current social structure does is fragment our everyday lives, as well as increases our mobility. People are less connected to their surroundings, neighborhoods, and communities, which affect the ability to fully participate as citizens of a community (Maniates 2001). There needs to be a change in our social mentality that focuses less on the individual and more on the collective. When people have a closer relation to problems they are more likely to be conscientious of their actions that are link to environmental degradation (Brueggemann 2010). Individuals who feel as though they belong whether to a group or community are more likely to have higher social interest (Curlette & Kern 2010) and overall more invested in the community and the problems it faces. Also, connection to a community will generate a greater interest in long-term viability and builds relationships as opposed to a “one night stand” economy that lacks in accountability for environmental and social justice (PBS NOW 2010). Strong communities are going to want to stay strong, for the benefit of themselves as well as future generations.

#### **Pure individualism causes a lack of social conscious and environmental destruction**

#### Chelstowski 12 ( Alex, University of New Hampshire, “Individualism, Environmentalism, and Social Change”, online, 2012)

The environmental crisis consists of much more than what many people seem to recognize and requires societal changes, not just altering consumption habits. Market logic’s role in commodifying environmentalism has led people to believe that environmental issues can be solved with more conspicuous consumption. Also, market logic’s stress on individuality has created a hyper individualistic society that fails to recognize the importance of community action in creating social change. Individualization has only added to the stress applied to earth’s ecosystems through urban sprawl, increased consumption, and the alienation of people from natural and social environments. By individualizing environmental issues people fail to address the fact that it is the larger institutions that shape our culture that have led to these problems.

### Alternative Destroys Common Good

#### The Hyper-Individualism of the alternative eviscerates any concept of the common good

#### Chelstowski 12 ( Alex, University of New Hampshire, “Individualism, Environmentalism, and Social Change”, online, 2012)

The problem with attempting to facilitate broader social change that will focus on more sustainable alternatives is that our society has become highly individualized. Modern society has alienated people from not only the environment but also their communities to the point where it creates a “hyper- individualist” society (McKibben 2007). We are increasingly seeing ourselves as separate, from other people and from the environment. ¶ One characteristic of market logic that has spread outside of the economic realm and into other aspects of society is competition. Competition creates narrow views in an attempt to advance one’s social position, status, and wealth, “We’ve gotten so used to the idea that our own individual selves should be the center of our lives that we’ve taken to calling it “human nature” (Mckibben 2007:30). In the famous words of Michael Douglas in Wall Street, “Greed for the lack of a better word, is good”. Consumer culture encourages individuals to feel the need to accumulate more and out-do the neighbors. This idea of competition is fed to us through socialization, advertising, media, and technology encouraging an individualized culture. Competition does not foster a common identity; it puts people against one another, weakening the chances of creating strong social ties and change for a common good.

## Framing

### Consequentialism

#### Policy must be viewed through a consequentialist framework- slipping into the libertarian mindset only recreates the root cause of the affirmative harms

Friedman 97 (Jefferey, Political Science at Bernard University, "What's Wrong with Libertarianism," Critical Review, Volume: 3. pg 458-459)

On the one hand, the reclamation of the Enlightenment legacy can lead in far more directions than the political—science path I have suggested. It is surely important to launch anthropological, economic, historical, sociological, and psychological investigations of the preconditions of human happiness. And post-libertarian cultural historians and critics are uniquely positioned to analyze the unstated assumptions that take the place of the requisite knowledge in determining democratic attitudes. A prime candidate would seem to be the overwhelming focus on intentions as markers for the desirability of a policy. If a policy is well intended, this is usually taken to be a decisive consideration in its favor. This heuristic might explain the moralism that observers since Tocqueville have noticed afflicts democratic cultures. To date, this phenomenon is relatively unexplored. Analogous opportunities for insightful postlibertarian research can be found across the spectrum of political behavior. What is nationalism, for example, if not a device that helps an ignorant public navigate the murky waters of politics by applying a simple “us-versus-them” test to any proposed policy? Pursuit of these possibilities, however, must be accompanied by awareness of the degeneration of postwar skepticism into libertarian ideology. If the post-libertarian social scientist yields to the hope of re-establishing through consequentialist research the antigovernment politics that has until now been sustained by libertarian ideology; she will only recreate the conditions that have served to retard serious empirical inquiry. It is fashionable to call for political engagement by scholars and to deny the possibility that one can easily isolate one’s work from one’s political sympathies. But difficulty is no excuse for failing to try. Libertarians have even less of an excuse than most, since, having for so long accused the intellectual mainstream of bias and insulation from refutation, they should understand better than anyone the importance of subverting one’s own natural intellectual complacency with the constant reminder that one might be wrong. The only remedy for the sloppiness that has plagued libertarian scholarship is to become one’s own harshest critic. This means thinking deeply and skeptically about one’s politics and its premises and, if one has libertarian sympathies, directing one’s scholarship not at vindicating them, but at finding out if they are mistaken.

#### Role of the ballot is to maximize the lives saved. We should never sacrifice individuals for abstract market values.

Cummisky 96 (David, professor of philosophy at Bates College, Kantian Consequentialism, pg. 145)

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. Robert 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.” But why is this not equally true of all those whom we do not save through our failure to act? By emphasizing solely the one who must bear the cost if we act, we fail 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? A morally good agent recognizes that the basis of all particular duties is the principle that “rational nature exists as an end in itself” (GMM 429). Rational nature as such is the supreme objective end of all conduct. If one truly believes that all rational beings have an equal value, then the rational solution to such a dilemma involves maximally promoting the lives and liberties of as many rational beings as possible (chapter 5). In order to avoid this conclusion, the non-consequentialist Kantian needs to justify agent-centered constraints. As we saw in chapter 1, however, even most Kantian deontologists recognize that agent-centered constraints require a non-value-based rationale. But we have seen that Kant’s normative theory is based on an unconditionally valuable end. How can a concern for the value of rational beings lead to a refusal to sacrifice rational beings even when this would prevent other more extensive losses of rational beings? If the moral law is based on the value of rational beings and their ends, then what is the rationale for prohibiting a moral agent from maximally promoting these two tiers of value? If I sacrifice some for the sake for others, I do not use them arbitrarily, and I do not deny the unconditional value of rational beings. Persons may have “dignity, that is, an unconditional and incomparable worth” that transcends any market value ( GMM 436)., but persons also have a fundamental equality that dictates that some must sometimes give way for the sake of others (chapter 5 and 7). The concept of the end-in-itself does not support th 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, the equal consideration suggests that one may have to sacrifice some to save many.