

Social Studies 30-1

Unit Nine: The Viability of Contemporary Liberalism

Assignment 9.1: Unit 9 Worksheet

Section 1: Economic Extremism (?) and alternatives

Economic Extremism

Extremism is also used by some people to characterize economic activities that strictly adhere to a set of principles despite their perceived adverse effects on a population. For example, during the Cold War, the economic practices of communist countries were seen as extremist by the United States government and some other free-market countries.

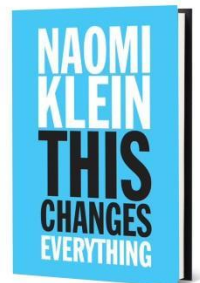
More recently, critics of free-market policies have claimed that some forms of capitalism have become extremist forms of economics. Canadian author Naomi Klein sees the ideas of economist Milton Friedman (about whom you read in chapters 6 and 8) of the Chicago School of Economics as central to this “economic extremism”: “Friedman dreamed of depatterning societies, or returning them to a state of pure capitalism, cleansed of all interruptions—government regulations, trade barriers and entrenched interests.” (Excerpted from *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* by Naomi Klein, p. 50. Copyright © 2007 Naomi Klein. Reprinted by permission of Knopf Canada.)

According to Klein, the Chicago School of Economics, supported by the American government, educated many economists from less developed countries—the countries most likely to lean toward communism. When these economists returned to their native countries, they would then introduce “extreme” free-market economic policies, such as mass privatizations of public companies, agencies, and educational institutions; government deregulation; unrestricted free-market access for foreign corporations; and large cuts in social spending.

Sometimes these policies had devastating effects on local economies, while benefiting entrepreneurs: “Friedman’s free-market rule book...[has] made some people extremely prosperous, winning for them something approximating complete freedom—to ignore borders, to avoid regulation and taxation and to amass new wealth.” (Source: Klein, p. 59.) Friedman encouraged such policies because he was convinced that they were the most effective way to increase economic prosperity and political freedom.

To what extent do you agree with Naomi Klein's premise?

In ***This Changes Everything*** Naomi Klein argues that climate change isn’t just another issue to be neatly filed between taxes and health care. It’s an alarm that calls us to fix an economic system that is already failing us in many ways. Klein builds the case for how massively reducing our greenhouse emissions is our best chance to simultaneously reduce gaping inequalities, re-imagine our broken democracies, and rebuild our gutted local economies. She attempts to expose the ideological desperation of the climate-change deniers and argues why the market has not—and cannot—fix the climate crisis but will instead make things worse, with ever more extreme and ecologically damaging extraction methods, accompanied by rampant disaster capitalism.



“If you have an egalitarian and communitarian worldview, and you tend toward a belief system of pooling resources and helping the less advantaged, then you believe in climate change. And the stronger your belief system tends toward a hierarchical or individual worldview, the greater the chances are that you deny climate change and the stronger your denial will be. The reason is clear: it’s because people protect their worldviews. We all do this.”

RESEARCH- Visit the following website and choose ONE of the solutions suggested.

<https://solutions.thischangeeverything.org/>

Title of solution/theory/article: _____

How does the solution/theory/article challenge the viability of the principles/values/beliefs of liberalism economically/politically/socially? /3

To what extent do you support this solution/theory/article? Defend your answer. /3

Look up **3** of the following ideas and detail your position on each:

1. Tobin tax
2. TAA (trade adjustment assistance)
3. maximum wage
4. sumptuary laws/legislation
5. consumption tax(es)
6. climate debt
7. Brazil's city of *Porto Alegre* (participatory budgeting/see *Out of the Wreckage* by George Monbiot pg. 128-29)
8. timebanking (*Out of the Wreckage* by George Monbiot pg. 77)
9. Food Assemblies (*Out of the Wreckage* by George Monbiot pg. 77)
10. Transition towns (*Out of the Wreckage* by George Monbiot pg. 77)
11. Men's sheds (*Out of the Wreckage* by George Monbiot pg. 77)
12. properly incentivizing capitalism (<https://reason.com/2018/03/12/climate-change-problems-will-be-solved-t/>)

Section 2: READINGS/ARTICLES- Read the following articles and complete the Q&A.

Article #1

What do these PMs know that economists don't?

By Munir Sheikh

Published Friday, Jul. 18 2014

During Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott's recent visit to Canada, Prime Minister Stephen Harper commented on climate change: "No matter what they say, no country is going to take actions that are going to deliberately destroy jobs and growth in their country. We are just a little more frank about that." Mr. Abbott, having abolished Australia's **carbon tax**, added: "I've always been against a carbon tax or an emissions trading scheme because it harms our economy without necessarily helping the environment."

These two prime ministers were saying that a theory we economists have studied all our working lives, based on knowledge that has been accumulated for a century, is all wrong.

In 1920, the great economist Arthur Cecil Pigou argued that when an economic activity creates external disservice (such as pollution), a properly designed tax improves, not worsens, resource allocation and makes an economy better. Perhaps the two prime ministers know of empirical evidence that economists have ignored.

I've examined the performance of a number of countries that are known to rely heavily on environmental taxes: Sweden, Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands. I also looked at the average performance of the OECD area (a collection of 34 developed countries), the United States and Canada. To evaluate performance, I looked at the following:

- A number of environmental indicators that include the share of environmental taxes in total taxes, the environmental taxes to GDP ratio, the energy and materials intensity of production and consumption, and the growth of greenhouse gasses over the period from 1990 to 2012;
- Two economic variables, the level of per capita GDP as an indicator of the current standard of living and labour productivity growth over time, as an indicator of potential growth in living standards in the future. I also included income distribution across income groups using the Gini coefficient, which captures income inequality.

In total, I have eight indicators and seven jurisdictions. This is what I found, using standardized data from the OECD.

Canada's reliance on environmental taxes is the lowest among the group, along with the United States. On average, OECD countries rely significantly more on environmental taxes than Canada does. Each of the four European countries in our sample has carbon taxes, as do a number of others in the OECD. Given this, one would expect that Canada would use energy resources and materials much more heavily than others in production and consumption activities, and that is indeed the case. Canada's performance in curbing GHG emissions is the worst in this group.

We find as well that the performance of the countries with high environmental taxes, while the best in our sample for environmental outcomes, is better as well for both economic and social outcomes than Canada's. On GDP per capita, Canada is above average, with Norway at the top. On labour productivity growth, Canada is the second worst, with Sweden and Norway at the top.

On income inequality, Canada and the United States are at the bottom, while Denmark and Norway are at the top.

The picture that seems to emerge is that Canada is not doing well in relation to any of the six jurisdictions for environmental, economic or social outcomes. To get a better overall picture, I added the rankings on the eight indicators: With seven countries, the worst possible score would be 56, if a country were at the bottom for each of the indicators. The best possible score would be 8. In this ranking, Canada scores 48, worst of the group. The U.S. scores 44. The best of the group is Denmark, at 20. Even if we were to concentrate on outcome indicators alone – greenhouse gasses, the two economic indicators and income distribution – Canada continues to rank at the bottom.

Let me be clear about what this evidence does and does not show. The evidence does not establish causation – that environmental taxation generates better economic and social outcomes. It does show, however, that environmental goals are achievable at the same time as economic and social goals. I believe that intelligently designed policies would let us realize the outcomes that economic theory predicts.

So, with due respect to Mr. Abbott and Mr. Harper, economic theory is alive and well, and there is evidence to back it up.

Discuss how the solution challenges the viability of the principles/values/beliefs of liberalism economically/politically/socially and detail to what extent you support this solution/theory/article? Defend your answer!

Published on Wednesday, February 20, 2013 by YES! Magazine

The Cooperative Way to a Stronger Economy

Co-ops—just like people—can get more done together than anyone can do alone. They come in many forms, and are more common than you might imagine.

by Sarah van Gelder

Andrew Dwyer and Shawn Seebach are in their first year at Equal Exchange, where they are learning the business of coffee as well as how to work in a cooperative. Our little group of a dozen families was running out of time. After meeting every weekend for three years to plan our hoped-for cohousing community, and after investing much of our savings to acquire a few acres of land, it looked as though our dream would fail. We couldn't find a bank that would finance a cooperative.

It was our local credit union that saved us. "You're owned by your members? What's so odd about that? We're owned by our members," the president of the Kitsap Credit Union mused.

With that financing, we were able to build 30 affordable homes and a common house, and to make space available for gardens, an orchard, a playfield, and a tiny urban forest. In 1992, we moved into Winslow Cohousing, the first member-developed cohousing community in the United States.

Co-ops—just like people—can get more done together than anyone can do alone. The good news is that co-ops come in many forms and are more common than you might imagine. They are owned by workers, residents, consumers, farmers, craftspeople, the community, or any combination. **What they have in common is that they circulate the benefits back to their member-owners, and these benefits ripple out to the broader community.** As [Marjorie Kelly explains](#), cooperative forms of ownership allow the well-being of people, the planet, and future generations to take priority over profits for shareholders and executives.

This is an exciting moment for cooperatives. A growing disillusionment with big banks and corporations is sparking interest in economic alternatives, and new opportunities are opening up:

- The United Steelworkers and other unions are exploring worker-ownership as a means to assure stable, living-wage jobs that can't be outsourced to low-wage regions.
- Communities seeking alternatives to profit-driven corporate health insurance are forming health care co-ops.
- Hundreds of thousands of people who "moved their money" from Wall Street banks to local banks and credit unions now have a say in how their money is used.
- Consumers are turning to co-ops like Equal Exchange for ethically produced goods, and Equal Exchange, in turn, supports co-ops made up of farmers and producers in some of the world's poorest regions.

These cooperatives can be powerful forces for change. Vancity, Canada's largest credit union, targets its investments to local enterprises that have positive impacts. It divested its holdings in Enbridge due to concerns about the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline. And it adopted a living wage policy that applies to its own employees and to service providers.

Cooperative structures can strengthen an economy. For example, Italy's Emilia Romagna region, where about a third of the economy is cooperative and has far less inequality. Most people there can find living wage jobs, and quality of life is high.

Last year, Winslow Cohousing celebrated its 20th year, and the grown sons and daughters of the early members returned to share what it meant to them to grow up in a community, surrounded by love and support.

My hope? That many more children have the opportunity to grow up in cooperative spaces; that more adults get the respect and empowerment that comes from working in cooperatives and buying from co-ops; and that over time, diverse forms of democratic ownership displace predatory capitalism as the foundation for our economy.

Which economic approach/policy would support more: “trickle down” as advocated by neo-Conservative/Neo-Liberals like Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan or “ripple out” as advocated by supporters of collectivist ideals such as cooperatives. Defend your answer.

Restoring civil liberties in Canada post-pandemic a concern, legal experts say

By John Chidley-Hill November 30th 2020

Canadians willingly, unwillingly and sometimes unknowingly, gave up some of their civil liberties over the past eight months to try and slow the spread of COVID-19.

Legal experts who specialize in personal freedoms have spent most of 2020 making sure those public health restrictions didn't go too far, and now they're working to ensure those rights are restored when the pandemic finally comes to an end.

Abby Deshman, the director of the criminal justice program for the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, said that a lot depends on how long COVID-19 remains a general health concern.

"After 9/11 things did not go back to pre-9/11 conditions in terms of civil liberties," said Deshman. "We radically altered our expectations in terms of security at airports, courthouses, government buildings, all kinds of places.

"Part of the reason that has such a long-term impact (is) because there was still the idea that the threat was out there."

COVID-19 will hopefully be different because its impact is measured provincially and regionally on a daily basis, said Deshman.

Experts agree that mandatory masks in public spaces, limits on the number of people that can attend public gatherings, restrictions for worship services and freedom of movement are among some of the public health measures that most clearly infringe upon constitutional rights.

Christine Van Geyn, litigation director for the Canadian Constitution Foundation, said that although all those restrictions are unconstitutional, they are acceptable as long as they are clearly designed to protect Canadians' right to life and security.

"It's a really complicated question," said Van Geyn. "We don't know where the court would say these restrictions have gone too far, there's not a bright line where we can say, 'Aha! You've gone too far!'"

Van Geyn also pointed out that most provincial emergency orders have to be renewed every few months to keep them enforceable. When the pandemic is over, the orders will simply be allowed to lapse.

But just because orders are constitutionally acceptable or temporary doesn't mean they haven't been problematic.

Legal experts who specialize in personal freedoms have spent most of 2020 making sure #COVID19 public health restrictions didn't go too far, and now they're working to ensure those rights are restored when the pandemic finally comes to an end.

Both Deshman and Van Geyn pointed to orders in Atlantic Canada as too restrictive. Deshman said that Nova Scotia's original orders were so broad that they basically forbid people from gathering outside the home, even as it had been proven that limited gatherings in outdoor settings could be safe. Van Geyn pointed to Newfoundland and Labrador's ban on travel, which was challenged in court and subsequently overturned.

Advocates said that the laws and policies created in the early days of the pandemic were more problematic because they were written hastily and were very broad. According to Deshman, that's a concern because the more broadly written a law is, the more it's open to interpretation.

"It enables discriminatory patterns of policing that disproportionately impact Indigenous Canadians, Black Canadians, people that are living on the streets, people with mental health issues and addictions, communities that are already disproportionately policed," she said.

The most notable example of this came in early April, when Ontario passed an emergency order that allowed police services to obtain the names, addresses and dates of birth of people who had tested positive for COVID-19. The portal was aimed at helping to protect first responders.

A legal challenge filed by a group of human rights organizations put an end to the practice on Aug. 17.

A CCLA audit of the database's usage found that more than 40 per cent of the 95,000 searches of the database were conducted by police in Thunder Bay and Durham Region.

Thunder Bay police accessed the personal health information in the database more than 14,800 times — a rate of access 10 times higher than the provincial average — even though the area reported a total of just 100 COVID-19 cases while the database was active.

Caitlyn Kasper, a lawyer with Aboriginal Legal Services, said that her organization is asking that police services that abused the database be penalized.

"There were widespread entire postal code area searches, there were searches done for individuals who did not call in for a service request, there were searches done by police services that were outside the jurisdiction of the service that accessed it," said Kasper.

Fareeda Adam, staff lawyer at the Black Legal Action Centre, agreed with Kasper that emergency measures disproportionately impacted racialized communities. However, she hoped that the use of online streaming platforms to broadcast high-profile court cases would continue after the pandemic.

Adam pointed to the thousands of people who watched the trial of a Toronto police officer convicted of assault in the brutal beating of a young Black teen in Oshawa, Ont.

"The number of people who accessed that broadcast, who watched what was happening in real time, the decision of the judge, that's so important to participate in that," said Adam. "To have it available and accessible at a widespread level, that's so important."

Kasper agreed that broadcasts of court proceedings helped elevate some cases, like an ongoing land dispute between residents of Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation and a land development corporation. But she also pointed out that Canada's jump to online education and justice services has further disenfranchised remote Indigenous communities in the north that do not have reliable access to the internet.

"You don't have a connection, you don't even have a dial-up connection that is reliable and that you can access any kind of video feed," said Kasper.

Discuss how the solution challenges the viability of the principles/values/beliefs of liberalism economically/politically/socially and detail to what extent you support this solution/theory/article? Defend your answer!

Section 3: Aboriginal Perspectives and Ways of Thinking - read the following sources and then complete the activity on the following page.

Source 1

Aboriginal Perspectives and Ways of Thinking

As you read in Chapter 9, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples emphasized the importance of the collective, whereas the Europeans emphasized the importance of the individual. Where First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples emphasized shared stewardship of the land, the Europeans emphasized private ownership of it. Thus, for some First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples Aboriginal collective thought and ways of thinking reflected valuing the group more so than the individual, and viewing all living things as interconnected.

The belief that collective interest is more important than the individual could be seen as challenging to most early European explorers' ways of thinking. Their beliefs and values were largely based on individualism—seeing society as a collection of individuals with opportunities to work toward their own self-interest. Aboriginal collective thought also challenged some European-led government policies, laws, and practices that did not recognize Aboriginal collective rights as the first peoples in Canada. It also challenged European views that did not consider Aboriginal collective social and cultural knowledge, practices, and traditions as valid. These challenges to European-based liberal ways of thinking arose because of former government policies and practices, resulting in what some have called a legacy of intergenerational trauma. This legacy is part of the collective memory, or identity, of many Aboriginal peoples.

Source 2

Aboriginal Collective vs. Enlightenment Principles of Individualism

Which brings us to *A Fair Country: Telling Truths about Canada*. According to John Ralston Saul, Canada is not a “European country” made in the image of Enlightenment values inherited from France and Great Britain. Instead, he argues that we are actually a Métis nation, our ideas and institutions shaped by the original and ongoing interaction between the English- and French-speaking immigrants and the First Nations who were running things when the white men arrived. Indeed, Saul goes even further and claims that we are far more aboriginal than we are European, and our failure to recognize this is what prevents us from becoming the strong, confident and progressive country that is our birthright.

Canada's real problem, then, is that we do not know who we are. We imagine that we are a European offshoot, a Siamese twin born of English and French parents, and as a result we constantly look for guidance to European principles. But the fit is always awkward, because these European influences are in many ways at odds with the aboriginal spirit that animates our real identity. So we are alienated from our true national self, and virtually every problem that afflicts Canada right now—poisonous federal-provincial relations, an ineffectual foreign policy, excessive poverty rates and an underfunded healthcare system—is a consequence of that alienation. What Canada needs more than anything is psychotherapy. We need to get back in touch with our aboriginal identity, and only then will all be right in the peaceable kingdom.

Aboriginal collective rights were specifically included in **Section 35 of the Constitution Act**, referred to as the Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada, and in Section 25 of the Constitution Act within the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Constitution Act reflected a shift in thinking by governments in Canada and provided First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples with recognition of their **collective rights** and the legal grounds to challenge the denial of their rights by governments in Canada. Since that time, Aboriginal peoples have seen the Supreme Court of Canada rule in their favor over disputes about land, fishing, hunting, and logging.

Websites/sources here: and https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/sparrow_case/ and <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/sparrow-case>

BACKGROUND ON THE SPARROW CASE

RESULTS OF THE SPARROW CASE

MY POSITION ON THE SPARROW CASE