# 2AC DRR R6

## Case!

### Overview---2AC

### LBL---2AC

Util not responsive. We said neolib is bad and cause sexvery impact

### AT: Cosmo K---2AC

#### The alt fails. Theory isn’t praxis.

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Jelena Belic and Zoltan Miklosi, “Cosmopolitanism and unipolarity: the theory of hegemonic transition,” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 2020, pp. 7, https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230.2020.1766815.

From the point of view of normative analysis, the problem of transition presents theoretical challenges of its own. The crucial challenge is the following. Various agents are under moral obligations to take steps towards the realization of the cosmopolitan ideal which we identified as the Global Political Union, but there are multiple (morally equivalent) transitional paths that they may pursue.15 For a successful transition to the GPU to take place, however, all or at least most relevantly placed agents have to adopt the same transitional path. In other words, they have to coordinate their actions, but their moral obligations do not single out any particular coordination point. Note that this holds irrespective of the motivations they might have – coordination problems can occur even among well-motivated agents ready to do what they morally ought to do. In a nutshell, the problem of cosmopolitan transition can be characterized as a moral coordination problem.16 It is moral since it concerns the creation of a morally desirable cosmopolitan world order, rather than the pursuit of self-interest. These considerations reveal the difficulty of reforming the existing order: while global institutions are needed to resolve coordination problems among different agents, the creation of such institutions triggers coordination problems of its own.

One might immediately object that the existing international institutions, most notably the UN, can provide salient coordination points in transitioning toward the GPU.17 To be sure, the role of the existing international institutions should not be underestimated since they provide important channels of communication and consultation among states, and also facilitate their cooperation. This is, however, not enough to establish that they can also secure salient coordination points for their own reform. Reform proposals and the political momentum to implement them typically originate from the states. Despite the existence of several international institutions, coordination problems among states are still prevalent and especially pressing in the context of global institutional reforms.18 It follows that the coordination problem that is at the heart of the cosmopolitan transition is to be resolved by states themselves. It is in this regard that the IR literature on how international orders emerge and how transitions in the order take place becomes relevant. We turn to this now.

#### Strong state power prevents catastrophic risks.

Calhoun 7 – Professor of Social Science, NYU

Craig Calhoun, also President of the Social Science Research Council, Nations Matter: Citizenship, Solidarity and the Cosmopolitan Dream, pub. 2007, pp. 4-6.

And yet, the nation-state neither can be nor should be wished away. Source of so many evils, it is also the framework in which the modern era produced history’s most enduring and successful experiments in largescale democracy. It continues to shape not just the fact of democracy but diversity in its forms (as Chapter 7 suggests). It is basic to the rule of law, not only because most law remains a domestic matter of nation-states but because most international law is literally that: structured by agreements among nation-states. Not least of all, while globalization has produced innumerable paths across state borders, it has opened these very unevenly and disproportionately to the benefit of those with access to high levels of fluid capital. Conversely, it has made belonging to a nation-state and having clear rights within a nation-state more, not less, important. The fact that Hannah Arendt observed more than half a century ago remains true: human rights are secured mainly when they are institutionalized as civil rights.1 In the 1990s, optimistic after the end of the Cold War, a number of enthusiasts for globalization suggested that sovereign states were obsolete. Money, media, and human migrations all flowed across borders; Why should military and political power maintain borders? States bolstered by nationalist passions – and nationalists eager to gain state power – were behind many of the twentieth century’s bloody wars. Surely there was – and remains – a good prima facie case for hoping nation-states might organize less of human loyalty, power, and conflict. And of course new reasons for hating abuses of state authority merged with ancient resentments of state power. But it is one thing to seek limits on the exercise of state power and another to contemplate transcending it. It is one thing to encourage a cosmopolitan pluralism of perspectives and another to regard nationalism as merely a fading inheritance and not a recurrently renewed source of solidarity. It is one thing to seek to advance global civil society and another to imagine democracy can thrive without effective states. The many evils of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries called forth a widespread indignation and, among many, a determination to act. The idea of human rights moved to the forefront not only of discussion but of court cases and treaties. Humanitarian interventions were proposed and implemented in a widening range of circumstances. Ethnic cleansing and genocidal nationalism made the notion that sovereignty should be a barrier to international efforts to do good ring hollow. An international criminal court was created (if not universally recognized). Indeed for a time there seemed no occupation more virtuous than that of a human rights activist or humanitarian aid worker. Almost imperceptibly these shifted from volunteer pursuits and accidental careers for physicians and pacifists to new professional roles, complete with academic courses and credentials, funding from major foundations and national governments, and increasing bureaucracy. And humanitarian action became increasingly intertwined with military interventions, whether for peacekeeping or regime change. At the same time, protesters challenged the dominance of capitalist corporations over the course of globalization. This was misleadingly termed the anti-globalization movement. Though there were some campaigners truly bent on enhancing the autonomy of local populations, most were actually proponents of a different sort of globalization. They objected to environmental depredation, sweatshops, and high prices for necessary drugs but they worked on a global scale and imagined the world in terms of global connections – albeit connections among ordinary people without the powerful mediation of corporations and states. The movement contesting capitalist globalization has not been theory-driven, but its protagonists have shared a general account of the problems of the world in which the twin centers of power – capitalist corporations and nation-states – pursue a logic of self-aggrandizement that neither the natural world nor its human inhabitants can afford. Many have found the language of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri sympathetic: they represent the heterogeneous “multitude” of the world who struggled to be free of a seamless and destructive but nearly exhausted “empire.”2 Something of the same quasi-theory – that states and corporations are both bad and unnecessary – has been widespread among human rights activists and humanitarian aid workers. Both groups, of course, saw first hand the vicious ways in which state elites pursued or held on to power and firms sought or sustained profits. The Sudan is one of the largest scale and longest-lasting examples. Its central government has seldom cared much for the people of Darfur in its west, the non-Arabs of its south, or for that matter most ordinary Sudanese. But the central government has cared about holding the country together and defeating any secessionist movements. It cared all the more when oil was discovered in the south – as did global corporations seeking to extract that oil in “peace.” And it cared all the more when it took on a more pronounced Islamic identity and mission. Despite religious commitment (and partly because of intra-Islamist struggles), it became a peculiarly bad government, but also one too weak to establish peace or prosperity in the Sudan; it unleashed brutal war and civil violence against and among its own people. So there were refugees and internally displaced people, rape as a tactic of war, robber militias, and spreading diseases left untreated. The state did not look very good. INTRODUCTION 5 Yet by the beginning of the twenty-first century, there were not many left for whom the fantasy of overcoming the state was not tinged with anxiety. Yes, state power was often overweaning, often corrupt, and often mobilized in evil ways. But weak states typically failed their citizens and crises in strong states often unleashed violence and disrupted both lives and livelihoods. Pandemic diseases, global crime, human rights abuses, and forced migration all revealed the dark side to globalization – yet all seemed to call at least in part for better states, not an end to states. Could outsiders make peace in Sudan or would that depend on a more representative, honest, and competent Sudanese government? Or in a range of other African countries, could outside interventions contain the spread of AIDS unless states joined the struggle? And yet, partly because of structural adjustment programs pushed with fiscal good intentions and disastrous human consequences by the World Bank and others, most African states had neither money nor personnel nor health care systems to address AIDS – or for that matter malaria and other diseases. The “failed state” seemed as problematic as the abusive state.

### AT: Fiat K---2AC

## T

### T Should---2AC

#### CI: Should expresses desirability.

Cambridge Dictionary n.d.

Cambridge Dictionary, “should,” no date, https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/should

should modal verb (DUTY)

used to say or ask what is the correct or best thing to do:

If you're annoyed with him, you should tell him.

You should take the subway - it's the easiest way to get there.

## PIC

### PIC---2AC

### Condo---2AC

## CP

### CIL CP---2AC

#### Other Issues Perm: do the plan and declare something imperssible.

The United States federal government should:

---declare [that the United States federal government should substantially strengthen rights for workers in at least the United States.

] impermissible on the basis that it violates international custom.

#### The internal is an add on. They said U.S. signal is key AND that one instance spills over. They then said that’s existential. The plan solves!!!

University of Oklahoma 25

“Labor Union Law Research Guide - International Law”, Last Updated 5/15/25, https://guides.ou.edu/c.php?g=1458053&p=10867803

There are several international laws and conventions that govern labor unions and worker's rights. The most relevant ones come from the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other international agreements. Relevant laws and conventions are listed below. International Labour Organization (ILO) The International Labour Organization (ILO) is devoted to promoting social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights, pursuing its founding mission that social justice is essential to universal and lasting peace. The only tripartite U.N. agency, since 1919 the ILO brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 Member States, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men. Relevant Conventions: ILO Convention No. 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948)Opens in new window Establishes the right of workers and employers to form and join organizations without government interference. ILO Convention No. 98 (Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining, 1949)Opens in new window Ensures unions can engage in collective bargaining without employer interference. ILO Convention No. 151 (Labour Relations in Public Service, 1978Opens in new window) Extends collective bargaining rights to public sector employees. All ILO Conventions can be found hereOpens in new window. Universal Declaration of Human Rights The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a foundational international document that sets out fundamental human rights and freedoms to be universally protected. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948, in the aftermath of World War II. Article 23 protects the right to join and form trade unions. The entire Declaration can be found hereOpens in new window.

## CP

### UCF CP---2AC

#### AND united state action is the federal government---anything else is arbitrary and ahistorical. Wrecks fairness.

US Congress 3 – Legislative Branch of the United States.  
United States Congress, Our American Government, 2003 Edition, https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CDOC-108hdoc94/pdf/CDOC-108hdoc94.pdf

The United States, under its Constitution, is a federal, representative, democratic republic, an indivisible union of 50 sovereign States. With the exception of town meetings, a form of pure democracy, we have at the local, state, and national levels a government which is: ‘‘federal’’ because power is shared among these three levels; ‘‘democratic’’ because the people govern themselves and have the means to control the government; and ‘‘republic’’ because the people choose elected delegates by free and secret ballot.

#### Trump says no. States have no leverage. That means no net benefit AND it causes civil war.

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William G. Gale and Darrell M. West, “The war over federalism,” Brookings Institution, 09-17-2025, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-war-over-federalism/

For several years, disputes over undocumented immigrants have led some border-state governors to put migrants on buses to Northern cities such as New York, Chicago, and Washington, D.C., often without even notifying local officials. In some cases, refugees have arrived with no accommodations or support to help them navigate unfamiliar surroundings. Additionally, citing Boston’s status as a “sanctuary city,” the U.S. Department of Justice recently filed a lawsuit against city officials for failing to assist with federal immigration crackdowns.

The most recent intergovernmental confrontation involves the deployment of National Guard troops and the militarization of local police, with Republican-led states sending forces to Democratic-led cities. In Washington, D.C., the presence of troops from Alabama, Texas, South Carolina, and other states prompted strong local opposition: A Washington Post/George Mason University survey found that 79% of residents opposed the policy, and 61% reported feeling less safe with the troops on the streets. Los Angeles faced similar intrusions but prevailed in court when a federal judge ruled that sending military forces for law enforcement purposes without local or state consent was unlawful.

Despite that legal setback, President Trump has threatened to deploy federal law enforcement personnel and/or National Guard troops to cities such as Chicago, New York, Baltimore, and elsewhere. If the D.C. experience is any indication, many residents in these cities could react strongly to the sight of delivery workers, domestic staff, construction workers, and firefighters being removed from public spaces by masked agents and transported in unmarked vehicles to undisclosed locations.

These issues—and likely others to follow—pit Republican-led states against Democratic-led cities and states. They have disrupted the traditional function of federalism, which allows for differing approaches across jurisdictions while providing a mechanism to challenge the national government. Such interventions are generating widespread concern and anxiety about legal rights and the prerogatives of state and local authorities. Escalations and political brinkmanship that would have been unlikely in previous years have now become increasingly common.

Acknowledging that many large Democratic-led states contribute more in federal taxes than they receive in federal grants, some state leaders have proposed what they term “soft secession”—withholding federal tax payments as a form of protest against Trump administration policies they consider unlawful.

As shown in Tables 1 and 2, states such as New York ($89 billion), California ($78 billion), New Jersey ($70 billion), and Texas ($67 billion) contribute far more in federal taxes than they receive in federal grants. In contrast, states such as Alabama ($41 billion), Arizona ($40 billion), and South Carolina ($37 billion) receive more from the federal government than they contribute. These budgetary imbalances give “donor” states potential leverage over federal policy, as some leaders have suggested using this fiscal influence to counter what they perceive as punitive actions by the Trump administration toward their states, as well as preferential treatment of conservative “recipient” states. Note that with the exception of Texas, the donor states are all blue states, and with the exception of Maryland and New Mexico, the recipient states are all red states.

This is the second time that President Trump’s governing style has prompted a renaissance in state actions; the president’s uneven response to COVID-19 frequently led states to take matters into their own hands and develop their own pandemic responses. In the current period, the unprecedented attacks on states’ rights jeopardize American federalism and the separation of powers across political jurisdictions. Given the GOP’s historic emphasis on states’ rights, it is notable how expansive the party’s stance is on national prerogatives. If Trump’s expansion of executive power and national authority continues, it could fundamentally reshape federal-state relations. Taken to an extreme, conflict over these issues could escalate into a financial or law enforcement equivalent of a contemporary Civil War. It is a dangerous usurpation of state and local rights that may lead to a contentious confrontation.

## K

### Lacan K---2AC

#### Psychoanalysis is useless.

Ferreira 21 – Vice President of the Brazilian Evidence Based Psychological Association.

Clarice de Medeiros Chaves Ferreira, “Is psychoanalysis a pseudoscience? Reevaluating the doctrine using a multicriteria list,” *Debates em Psiquiatria*, vol. 11, September 2021, pp. 5-26, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355493559\_Is\_psychoanalysis\_a\_pseudoscience\_Reevaluating\_the\_doctrine\_using\_a\_multicriteria\_list.

Although anecdotal evidence is still being used, in most cases, as the major means of psychoanalysis dissemination and production [14], important obstacles are placed when they are employed. A psychoanalytical clinical case is a type of process that cannot be replicated because it addresses a single subject individually. However, as Schmidt [15] argues, replication is one of the most central processes within empirical sciences, and sadly not even psychology gives proper attention to the matter. It possesses five major functions: control sampling errors, by verifying if the results obtained happened by chance alone; control internal validity, that is, if the procedures adopted were adequate to answer the research’s question; control the possibility of scientific fraud; allow a generalization of the findings to a larger/different population; and finally, verify if the first hypothesis of the experiment was correct. In the case of an unrepeatable experiment, the possibility of performing these analyses is thrown away.

Besides the impossibility of replication, there are other problems, now related to human psychology: People are commonly victims of cognitive bias that distorts their judgment and leads to irrational interpretations more frequently than they usually notice [16], and therapists are not immune. An example could be confirmation bias: someone’s initial belief significantly impacts how they remember situations and how they interpret them, giving more importance to what apparently confirms their world view rather than paying attention to what could contradict it. In the case of a psychoanalyst, this could bring them to understand exactly what they yearned to, that is, what would supposedly confirm the analytic hypothesis, regardless if that was or was not the case [14, p. 139-140]. Even if a case report is not a good evidence, it would sound like a source of theoretical confirmation for an adept, as it is expected that it would reflect their own preconceptions.

As Spence [17] shows, even if someone wished to analyze the veracity of the reported clinical phenomena, the person still has to face the fact that they are frequently replaced by fictional narrative. Their contents could be partially reported, omitted, distorted, and mixed with other case contents, even in a non-intentional way, precisely because they are based on the therapist's memory. Psychoanalytical clinical case reports are not sufficiently controlled, so when they aim to support a human psychological theory, they end up being just fuel for a system of self-confirmations. There is no way to generalize a human psychological theory based on anecdotal clinical evidence, neither to guarantee its reliability, because a nonsystematized process does not aim to control variables that can interfere with the conclusions. At the same time, there are reasons to expect that distortions are going to happen.

Handpicked examples

As already discussed in previous sections, the widespread use of anecdotal evidence would be an excellent example to fulfill this third criterion, precisely because those cases are isolated and exposed to bias. However, along with them, another endeavor of contemporary psychoanalysis is neuropsychoanalysis. Neuropsychoanalysis is a movement that looks for an integration between neuroscience and psychoanalysis, and despite being rejected by part of the psychoanalytic community that wants no part in it, some others consider it to be a contemporary version of the theory.

Callegaro [18, p. 207-20] argues that, instead of what the neuropsychoanalytical movement declares, the scientific literature shows something opposite to union: The evidence from neuroscience either refutes or directly conflicts with psychoanalysis. It is not as if it was plausible to use psychoanalysis as a reference model; it is in the new unconscious model that neuroscientists rely on, and not on the psychodynamic one.

Paris [14, p. 94-99] argues that neuropsychoanalysis is not operating in order to evaluate Freudian and neuroscientific theories in an unbiased way, but rather starts from the principle of validating Freud's model beforehand, even though it showed not to have a consistent hypothesis with modern neuroscience. The author lists some reasons that show why neuropsychoanalysis is far from science: In this doctrine, it is previously assumed that Freud was right, and research would serve the only purpose of proving what was already obvious from the psychoanalytic point of view; the majority of neuropsychoanalysis papers do not present concrete data, but theoretical speculations; methods used to measure basic psychoanalytic concepts are still pretty rudimentary; and, finally, there are many difficulties and problems, even in neuroscience itself, to adequately locate mental functions in specific brain areas.

In the end, it is noticeable that neuropsychoanalysis consists in a great cherry picking of data, in which its proponents “attempt to systematically associate almost every neuroscientific concept or finding with a quote from Freud” [19, p. 170], giving the impression that when neurological phenomena such as anosognosia, memory problems, brain damage and others are associated with concepts from the Freudian model, that would mean that they were, from the beginning, an adequate theoretical explanation given by its founder, but that is not the case.

Unwillingness to Test

Most psychoanalysts assume as true that human subjectivity is above all possible scientific analysis [20-21]. Thus, since the foundation of psychoanalysis and until the present day with its contemporary version, psychoanalysts carry on the tradition of being resistant to testing their hypothesis, whether they are about clinical effectiveness or theoretical constructs. Melanie Klein, for example, can be “dismissed (…) from the point of view of empirical science (…) while many of Klein’s ideas were based on what she called ‘infant observation’, they actually consisted only of speculations about what infants might be thinking” [14, p. 55]. Also, “there has never been empirical research on any of the constructs that Lacan proposed” [14, p. 122], and “neither neo-Freudian models, nor ego psychology, nor relational psychoanalysis, nor self-psychology, have ever conducted empirical investigations of their theories, or of the process and outcome of the treatment approaches derived from these ideas” [14, p. 55-56].

Despite the different opinions in the psychoanalytic community about the scientific status of the doctrine, it is possible to observe that the majority of adepts have great resistance towards the adoption of systematized tools and processes for data collection, under the argument that their object of study, humans, are too singular and unique to be understood by a supposed “positivistic science”, in which only empirical experiments are allowed [22]. It is explicitly said by psychoanalysts, for example, that they believe “that today it is essential to demonstrate that psychoanalysis does not need new scientific foundations that would be provided in a 'systematic' and 'safe' way” [23, p. 15], that the psychoanalytic cure could not be apprehended in terms of efficacy criteria, as would be done in psychiatry [24], and that the establishment of criteria for assessing psychotherapeutic effectiveness would be considered a threat to subjectivity [20]. There is even a clear opposition to those who seek these objectives:

“What we can perceive in contemporary times, is that many professionals in the psi field, when they come across the symptom presented by the individual, seek to annihilate it, not taking into account the ethical dimension through which the symptom manifests itself. This means that the vast contemporary psychotherapeutic proposals that announce to the world a way of treatment increasingly supported by science, in addition to the current proposal in the field of mental health that plays insistently with the possibility of defining a common norm, are not committed to the experience revealed by psychoanalysis (...). We will see that psychoanalysis poses itself as an obstacle to this psychological and medical attitude” [25, p. 242].

As previously seen, using the broad definition of science, disciplines such as philosophy, history, linguistics, and other humanities can be considered sciences, even without using traditional experimentation, because the most adequate methods to look for truth in those particular circumstances are being employed. However, psychology and psychiatry are not in the same situation: There is no reliable way to acquire the most epistemically justified beliefs about human behavior without resorting to systematic empirical methodologies. Humans do not have the ability to, using only speculation, develop reliable enough beliefs about these topics. Therefore, while psychoanalysis rejects those methods, it cannot be the most reliable psychological doctrine of our time.

Instead, some of its adepts are aligning it to relativistic positions. This fuels the notion that science is only one more discourse, and it could not claim to have better interpretations about reality than any other:

“The fact remains that science is a discourse. As banal as that statement may seem, it implies a dethroning of Science and a reassessment of science as one discourse among many. Freud may be interpreted as translating ‘rationality’ into ‘rationalization’, and Lacan's discourse theory suggests that there are as many different claims to rationality as there are different discourses” [26, p. 138].

Science is accused of being the real dogma, and psychoanalysis then comes to break it [27]. Therefore, it does not have to bow to its methods, including systematic testing [22]. In fact, some aspects of the psychanalytic doctrine have the stated purpose of serving “as an epistemological obstacle to the attempt of scientifically addressing the psyche” (p. 237), and also to the evidence based treatments of mental health disorders [25]. Psychoanalysis requires the unreasonable: it demands special protection and would not admit being judged like any other scientific doctrine should be, while also aims to have a similar status that any other would have. However, if the same level of recognition and appreciation is demanded, then it must be evaluated by similar requirements for rigor and presentation of evidence.

Despite the majority of the community being averted to hypothesis testing, there are some exceptions to this rule. Attachment theory is probably the most promising contemporary revision of psychoanalytic theory, for being the only one that is more open to the testing of hypothesis and empirical research [14, p. 62], and for the same reason it is rejected by other psychoanalysts as something that is not legitimately part of the doctrine [14, p. 56-57]. Unfortunately, attachment theory does not consider genetic and temperamental aspects [14, p. 58], and its predictions between child attachment patterns and adulthood are very weak [28], while psychoanalysis places the major causes of adult psychopathologies precisely in the childhood.

About psychoanalysis as a treatment: even though there was great resistance from the community, some studies on its psychotherapeutic efficacy were conducted. Nowadays, long-term psychotherapies usually do not have convincing evidence for their effectiveness, and in this category long-term psychodynamic psychotherapy is included [14]. One example can be observed with the Leichsenring and Rabung meta-analysis [29]. Despite being one of the most cited works done to evaluate this kind of psychotherapy, it was severely criticized for failing in all the quality criteria required of meta-analyses [30]. One of the common strategies that psychoanalysts adopt to deal with the lack of good evidence is turning to their personal experiences, and this can be observed in the following report published by the International Psychoanalytical Association:

“It is easy to be critical of psychoanalytic studies. There are no definitive studies which show psychoanalysis to be unequivocally effective relative to an active placebo or an alternative method of treatment. There are no methods available that might definitively indicate the existence of a psychoanalytic process. Most studies have major limitations which might lead critics of the discipline to discount their results. Others have limitations that are so grave that even a sympathetic reviewer might be inclined to discount the findings. (...) As psychoanalysts we all know that psychoanalysis works. Our own analytic experience is probably sufficient in most instances to persuade us of its effectiveness” [31, p. 283].

When compared to long-term psychodynamic psychotherapy, the shortterm psychodynamic one has a higher number of studies reported in the literature, with mostly favorable results [14]. However, psychotherapy in general faces problems with higher complexity than this article can cover. The majority of results on the topic, no matter what type of psychotherapy is investigated, tend to show positive effects, with few exceptions. Although, there is evidence that, in many cases, those results are biased or have questionable methodology.

Dragioti [32] conducted an umbrella review of meta-analyses about various types of psychotherapy (including psychodynamic). They realized that only 16 of 247 meta-analyses (7%) were capable of providing good evidence without bias, and none were from psychodynamic or psychoanalytic approaches. Besides the discussion about psychoanalysis's scientific status, this is undoubtedly a topic that requires more attention from clinical professionals, psychologists and psychiatrists.

Disregard of refuting information

There is evidence that many of the key concepts of psychoanalysis are wrong, but notwithstanding, they keep being adopted in Brazilian universities and as a theoretical basis for clinical practice. The empirical literature did not support the psychoanalytical theory about dreams [33], memory or repression [34]. The brain does not work making permanent recordings about situations that are then repressed [14, p. 30]. Despite recognizing that unconscious processes exist and significantly impact human beings, the psychodynamic unconscious that is governed by repressed desires and drives does not receive empirical support [14, p. 29- 30]. As an alternative, the new unconscious theory is more coherent with contemporary discoveries in the field of neuroscience [14, p. 29-30; 18].

Psychoanalysis ignores other possible variables, like genetics, social class, and more, treating a single and specific traumatic event that happened during the subject’s childhood as the causation of present disorders. However, there is no good evidence of causal links between specific, traumatic childhood experiences and disorders in adult life [35]. Other stressing events that happen during an individual's life are much more impactful than the infancy ones, and social disadvantages could better explain the worse mental health outcomes of these groups [35]. There is no good evidence that remembering past events would be a good route to cure psychopathological symptoms, despite it being the usual route of analysis [14, p. 107]. Even with all those disparities between scientific data and the analytic view, those concepts are kept alive until the present day.

Built-in subterfuge

This item covers similar aspects to Popper’s criticism. However, it is not the same as the falsifiability criterion, since what matters for falsifiability is the possibility of a given theory to be proven false. For Popper, there is no such thing as “confirmation” by induction. This item proposed by Hansson better encompasses theory designs that are always confirming, or that can only confirm the original hypothesis, in which alternative outcomes are not possible. About the topic, Rillaer [36] provides a group of examples of why psychoanalysis cannot be disconfirmed, only continuously confirmed. With it, everything could be explained in the light of unconscious processes, and finding contrary evidence would be inconceivable:

“Have you forgotten your umbrella in a friend's house? You want to come back to his house. (…) Does he react badly to your interpretation? ‘He is defending himself’, he is resisting to the ‘id’ that talks inside him, ‘without the ego noticing’. Does he criticize Freud or Lacan? He is revolting against the Father. (…) Does your son fear horses? He fears being castrated by his father because he desires his mother. Does your analysis make you suffer more each day? You are finally entering the deepest layers of your unconscious. Do the analyst's prices seem excessive? You are having a ‘negative transference’ or a ‘regression to the analsadistic stage’. After five years of analysis, do you still feel painful symptoms? You have not dug deep enough, you desire to suffer because your superego is excessively strong” [36, p. 154].

A psychoanalyst could counterargue that this would be a case of wild psychoanalysis, and within the clinical context they would not impose interpretations, but instead would build them in a unique relationship between therapist and client, reserved for the clinical environment [37]. However, this does not refute the objection that psychoanalysis is a system that operates by those rules. It is not for the depth of the dialogue or the time of interaction that it would happen differently.

Boudry and Buekens [38] argue that psychoanalysis operates similarly to a conspiracy theory, in which criticism can always be labeled as derived from resistance, and in the case of psychoanalysis, it is an unconscious resistance. Not even a critic or patient’s rejection of the analytic explanations could be seen as a possible counterexample: It would only be a major confirmation that unconscious and unobservable processes are happening. Also, if they agree with the offered interpretations, the explanation stays the same: It was a process originated from the unconscious. In the end, when dealing with the psychodynamic unconscious, there is no possibility to accept contrary evidence. In relation to psychoanalysis, for all circumstances “interpretation can be a weapon” [39, p. 12].

Therefore, the excessive number of explanations that would fit all the possible cases is not really explicative; it only seems to be. The chosen interpretations to deal with the variety of human psychological phenomena are not based on good and carefully collected scientific evidence. Instead, those are concepts that lack empirical support, used to explain every behavior and also its opposite. "Psychoanalysis is indeed irrefutable, because it can say everything and its opposite — summoning up the 'servile' unconscious testimonial is enough, as it is always ready to bow to the circumstances’ demands" [40, p. 140]. Explanations are abandoned without replacement The definitions given to the concepts of "cure", "health" and "disease" in psychoanalysis fit this criterion. Neves [23] says that the discussion about the cure in contemporary psychoanalysis cannot occur if it does not start with a critique of the traditional meaning of the term, and the same goes for the other two concepts. The author argues that psychoanalysis understands that, according to medical point of view, which adopts the traditional use of these, a state of health should refer to a harmonious state, completely free of diseases and pathologies. In addition, unlike medical objectives, Priszkulnik [41] states that "psychoanalysis is opposed to the objective of mental health to reintegrate the individual into the social community". Still according to Neves [23], psychoanalysts understand that in medicine “cure” would mean conforming to an idealized mode of operation based on ideas of normality that are socially accepted and expected, starting from the elimination of diseases and the reestablishment of the previously present health state. Or, more succinctly, it would be "the realization of an experience that leads the individual to health through the elimination of the disease" [23, p. 33]. Considering the traditional definition, psychoanalysis would accuse the existence of hidden intentions behind the goal of curing people in distress: this would, in reality, be an attempt to exert social control [23, p. 16]. Therefore, it would make more sense to be helpless instead of cured, since: “We must not forget that being helpless, from both psychoanalytic and political points of view, means to a large extent having crossed the ghost of infinite protection by the instituted power. To be helpless (...) is to sustain the political action as an action that forces the impossible not to cease not writing itself in the situation" [23, p. 28]. For some, like Nasio, it would not even make sense to conceive healing as a concept: “We cannot say that the cure, understood as a reduction or disappearance of suffering linked to symptoms, is a psychoanalytic concept. We also cannot say it is an objective towards which the treatment should aim, or a criterion that allows us to evaluate its progress (...) we cannot make cure a concept, or an objective, or a criterion, and that is equivalent to not giving in to the influence of the medical model, which tends to hypostasize this cure, to give it a status, to elevate it to the dignity of a concept (...) there is no psychoanalytic concept of cure, and that cannot be a goal that the analyst should pursue in their practice, differently from how it happens in medicine” [42, p. 160]. Even with these considerations, some proposals for new definitions were supposedly made, in order to replace the traditional ones; however, they are usually empty and worse than the previous ones. "Health in psychoanalysis can only be understood as a normativity that becomes individualized, so it is impossible to think of it as the expression of an absolute value, that is, of a general norm" [23, p. 28]. It could also be added the observation that "it is true that psychoanalysis does not take health as a constitutive element of its ethics and cure policy" [43, p. 23]. Regarding the definition of disease, we can understand it in psychoanalysis as being "a productive experience of indeterminacy" [23, p. 18], while also considering that "the disease, whether it be psychic or organic, does not mean anything other than the reduction of the tolerance margin for changes in the environment" [23, p. 28]. In fact, they affirm that there is something special within the field of disease: "being sick is, initially, assuming an identity with great performative force" [44, p. 293], and the curative ideal "aims to weaken the power that inhabits the experiences of the pathological, the abnormal, the inhuman and of helplessness" [23, p. 21]. As for the cure, several options are offered in psychoanalysis. Some of them are as follows: "getting cured is, therefore, to build and experience a new order, that is, the cure involves experiencing unprecedented ways of adjusting to the environment" [23, p. 18]. Or also, “to carry out an experiment that is nowhere and cannot be registered in the situation” [23, p. 8]. For psychoanalysts, "the cure in psychoanalytic experience can be defined, fundamentally, by the idea of transformation, that is, the realization of a subjective experience that is not the reestablishment of the norm nor the expected result of performing a treatment method" [23, p. 84]. Dunker and Peron [24, p. 89] argue that the concept of cure can have different interpretations based on Freud's work, in addition to not being related to traditional medicine. One of them could be that the "cure coincides with the knowledge of the causes of the symptoms" [24, p. 86]. In Neves's [23] view, Freud and Lacan's works have as their legacy the definition of cure as an experience that touches the impossible [23, p. 25]. According to Nasio “the cure is an imaginary value, an opinion, a prejudice, a preconception, just as nature, happiness or justice are” [42, p. 160]. Not only that, but according to the definitions given in psychoanalysis, "the cure as the realization of a singular experience will not be identical to anything" [43, p. 24]. In any case, it is important to be aware of the fact that even if it is understood in these ways adapted by the doctrine and even by Freud himself as a “reorganization of the Ego”, it remains as an ideal that is “harmful to the analysis and to the psychoanalyst” [42, p. 167]: a therapist who seeks the cure of his patient would possibly be under the influence of feelings of pride and narcissism [42, p. 168]. Psychoanalysis, even though it is treated as a psychotherapy, does not have curing as a goal as seen in Lacan’s words, quoted by Nasio: "(...) the mechanism (of analysis) is not oriented towards the cure as a purpose. I am not saying anything that Freud has not already powerfully formulated: every inflection towards the cure as a purpose — making the analysis a pure and simple means to a precise end — gives something that would be linked to the shortest path which could only falsify the analysis" [42, p. 159]. For psychoanalysis, the definition of cure as an experience that leads to health must be replaced by an experience that is nowhere, does not concern any possible situation, has nothing to do with the objectives proposed by a treatment, and is impossible. It would not be identical to anything, and if it is not identical to anything, it could not even be identical to itself, and that would constitute a logical contradiction. In psychoanalysis, the cure is imaginary, and even harmful. In the case of health, this would be an individualized normativity that is not included in the ethical demands of the doctrine. Meanwhile, attempts to treat illness are accused of being attempts at social control, and influenced by narcissism and pride. Diseases and pathologies could not, in psychoanalysis, be considered as a deviation from the organic standard, but instead they are classified as sources of some kind of renegade power, instead of suffering. These concepts, in their many variations, are supposedly presented as possible replacements for the traditional concepts of "cure", "health" and "disease". However, even though the traditional definitions can be criticized and have gaps, the definitions adopted in psychoanalysis make these concepts much more vague and distant from reality than their original versions, with some of them to a point where they are no longer comprehensible. This makes the new proposal much less explanatory than the traditional one. In this situation, there are at least two problems: in addition to having explanations (in this case, definitions) abandoned without a good replacement, this is a case of obscurantism. Considering this aspect of the doctrine, which is not restricted to the definitions of the three concepts presented in this section, this may suggest that the seventh criterion in Hansson's list may be insufficient to capture other problems related to the way in which explanations of a pseudoscientific doctrine are treated. Taking this into account, in this article a new item will be proposed, introduced with an eighth item to be added to the original list. It could be described like this: 8. Obscurantism: The theoretical concepts or statements of a theory have a nonexistent or nebulous meaning to the understanding, which allows the realization of arbitrary changes, that is, without plausible justifications for doing so. Obscurantism A lot could be said about the obscurantism problem, its relations with pseudoscience, and its pertinence as a part of a demarcation criteria. However, there is not a claim of being exhaustive in this section, despite being offered the following explanations for the introduction of this new item: Obscurantism is a communication style, commonly adopted by pseudoscientists as a rhetorical strategy, that happens when the presentation of the assertions or concepts in a theory is done in a significantly imprecise way, preventing an adequate comprehension of its proposal. This protects it from objections: Since its definitions are excessively vague, it is always possible to accuse the critic of not comprehending it, as well as alternating the definitions in order to adopt or abandon its numerous meanings, using them respectively in the most opportune moments. An obscurantist text, despite appearing to bring a robust content about a topic, in fact does not [10]. This seems relevant especially when comparing it to the definition of pseudoscience: Similarly, in the obscurantism case, an impression of scientificity is created when in fact there is a considerable distance from science (in the broad sense). For that reason, the introduction of this item seems justified. In some obscurantism cases, a series of claims are made, but in reality, they are proclaimed as phrases that lack truth value, that is, phrases that cannot be true or false. In others, even if some meaning could be salvaged, an unclearness is imposed under their real definition by the own author, preventing readers from tracing precise or consensual interpretations about what they intended to say. This creates more difficulties for placing objections: It is harder to criticize a position that one cannot adequately comprehend compared to another that exposes its arguments explicitly and clearly. Also, it is important to notice that, under many circumstances, concept changes are welcome in science, but in order to do so, reasonable justifications must be presented. This is not taken into account by the obscurantist. In the case of psychoanalysis, some things have changed from Freud's times to the present day, but despite not being many, they also were not adopted based on the emergence of good evidence. The great psychoanalytical theories of the present are still used, adopted and taught without going through empirical testing [14], showing that the changes were arbitrary and probably aimed just to adapt to each age’s cultural climate. An example of this could be the change in the pathological status regarding the sexual orientation of gays and lesbians, as well as penis envy [4]. A theory supposedly evolving and changing its concepts over time only has merits if those changes are made based on good evidence, and not only by cultural influence; after all, even religious movements change their explanations about the world as the centuries go by, and this is no reason to classify them as scientific. Cioffi [4] points out that the etiological role of sexuality suffered with an opportunistic change of meanings. Ideas about sexuality, eroticism, and libido had their definitions chosen arbitrarily by Freud according to the context: When questioned by the skeptic, they became something that would represent fraternal love, affection, or in the case of sexual drives they would be desires that could be satisfied by using a variety of senses, including non-genital ones. Meanwhile, in safer and more receptive environments, those conveniently change back to mean "sexual" in the traditional sense. “As psychoanalytic theory is entirely empty, it is also, at the same time, supremely adaptable. When some concept of the theory shows to be hard to sustain, or even downright embarrassing (…) it is enough to silently abandon it and take a new theoretical rabbit out of the immense top hat of the unconscious. This is what psychoanalysts like to describe as the ‘progress’ of psychoanalysis (…). What is given as progress in psychoanalysis is nothing but the ultimate interpretation, that is, the most acceptable in a specific institutional, historical or cultural context” [40, p. 140-141]. Buekens and Boudry [10] show that Lacanian psychoanalysis is another example of obscurantism. Lacan assumes that the unconscious is structured as a language, and defends that his writings are equivalent to the expression of his own unconscious. The adherence to an obscurantist style is, therefore, justified from his point of view. In this way, any systematic effort to interpret him would be destined to fail, and this immunizes the doctrine against any possible criticism. Even if Lacan gave the impression of being an authority about human psychology that would transmit his ideas through occult means, it would be up to the reader to interpret him (in the countless ways of doing so), while still being susceptible to possible accusations of not really understanding him. Buekens and Boudry [10] argue that since it is not possible to trace definitive conclusions about what Lacan really meant to say, the only thing left for the reader is to subjectively interpret him according to their personal experience, what creates a significant divergence of interpretations by the adepts themselves. The psychoanalyst not only used an obscurantist language in his works, but also assumed and defended its use explicitly: “I would say that it is with a deliberate, if not entirely deliberate, intention that I pursue this discourse in such a way as to offer you the opportunity to not quite understand. This margin enables you yourselves to say that you think you follow me, that is, that you remain in a problematic position, which always leaves the door open to a progressive rectification” [45, p. 164].

Conclusion

This article pointed out that psychoanalysis — not only on its classic, but also with its contemporary version — ends up checking all of the seven items in Hansson’s multicriteria list. It also fits the eighth item that was introduced in this work. So, in this way, psychoanalysis checks eight out of eight demarcation of pseudoscience’s items. The evidence presented in this article suggests that with both Popper and Hansson’s demarcation proposals, and taking into account its traditional and contemporary versions, psychoanalysis is indeed a pseudoscience. Even if the impression that it represents the most reliable human psychological theory is created by its proponents, that is not the case, because it considerably deviates from scientific standards of quality.

## DA

### Inflation DA---2AC

#### Inflation’s high. The Fed declared it.

Derby 1/9 – Specialist Writer at Reuters.

Michael S. Derby, “Fed's Bostic says high inflation still central bank's main challenge -radio interview,” Reuters, 01/09/2026, https://www.reuters.com/business/feds-bostic-says-high-inflation-still-central-banks-main-challenge-radio-2026-01-09/

Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta President Raphael Bostic said on Friday in a radio interview inflation issues are still at the forefront of his economic concerns, in comments that added the job market continues to be in a low-hire, no-fire mode amid broader uncertainties.

“Inflation is still too high” and the Fed’s effort to control price pressures is missing the mark by a greater degree than anything having to do with the central bank’s job mandate, Bostic said in an interview with radio station WLRN in Florida. When it comes to high price pressures, “you've got to get it under control, and we need to be laser-focused on making sure that everything we do is contributing to that,” he said.

Bostic's interview happened after the release earlier in the day of hiring data detailing the performance of the job market in December. That report showed a modest payroll gain of 50,000 and a decline in the unemployment rate to 4.4% from 4.5% the prior month.

Underpinning last year's three quarters of a percentage point's worth of rate cuts from the Fed was a desire by policy makers to try to support the job market while at the same time still providing enough policy restraint to bring inflation back to the 2% target. Bostic, who will retire at the end of February, noted in the interview labor markets have cooled while expressing some doubt they're on a trajectory toward greater weakness.

"This is the time, I think, to make sure that we don't lose sight of the fact that even though labor markets have gotten cooler...we still have this big concern around inflation, and we know that consumers across the spectrum are feeling the pressure of high prices, and that has the potential to become mutually reinforcing and then weaken the economy in ways that will be harder for us to address," Bostic said.

#### No wage-price spiral.

Nolan 22 – Labor reporter for In These Times Magazine and the Guardian, union organizer, author of “The Hammer: Power, Inequality, and the Struggle for the Soul of Labor”

Hamilton Nolan, educated at Flagler College and Howard University, former MacDowell fellow in Literature, “One Simple Trick to Protect Workers from Inflation,” In These Times Magazine, April 26, 2022, https://inthesetimes.com/article/protecting-the-working-class-from-inflation-with-good-union-contracts

Free market zealots like to raise the scary prospect of a ​“wage-price spiral,” in which rising prices and rising wages feed off one another to push inflation ever higher. That sort of Econ 101 thinking is not backed up by reality. Most periods of inflation since WWII did not see such a spiral, even when union density was far higher than today. And one of the side effects of today’s thoroughly globalized economy is that it’s now harder for companies to raise prices, even when their labor costs go up.

#### No short-run wage-push inflation AND productivity growth both turns and solves it.

Rich & Rissmiller 2K – Senior Economist, Federal Reserve Bank of New York; Managing Director, Strategas Research Partners

Robert W. Rich; Donald Rissmiller, “Understanding the Recent Behavior of U.S. Inflation,” Federal Reserve Bank of New York: Current Issues in Economics and Finance, Vol. 6, No. 8, August 2000, https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/research/current\_issues/ci6-8.pdf.

What the Triangle Model Excludes

Absent from the triangle model are two factors commonly viewed as exerting an important influence on inflation—wage changes and exchange rate movements. Wage changes are thought to affect inflation through their impact on production costs. Because wages account for the bulk of production costs, firms that raise employee wages may seek to offset the increase in their expenditures by raising the price of their goods. Exchange rate movements affect inflation through their influence on import prices. For example, those who see exchange rates as a key factor in inflation stress that a depreciation of the dollar may cause U.S. consumers and companies to pay significantly more for foreign goods.

Although these arguments seem persuasive, there is reason to question the importance of both wage changes and exchange rate movements as determinants of inflation in the short run—by which we mean quarterly changes in inflation. In the case of wage changes, we note first that increased worker productivity can offset the inflationary pressures that arise from higher wages. For this reason, studies investigating the link between wages and inflation behavior should use a productivity-adjusted measure of compensation—unit labor costs, or the cost of labor per unit of output.

When we plot the spread between prices and productivity-adjusted wages during the past few decades, it becomes clear that the two variables have not moved in tandem (Chart 4).8 Far from reflecting a constant markup, prices have varied considerably from unit labor costs over time. In the 1990s, the period of immediate interest for our analysis, the spread increased steadily, reaching a historically unprecedented level at the end of the decade. Thus, the evidence does not support the existence of a close link between wage changes and quarter-to-quarter movements in inflation. Indeed, the growing spread between these variables in the 1990s suggests that firms have an alternative to increasing their prices when wages rise. If prices are rising markedly faster than unit labor costs, then firms are realizing higher profit margins. In that case, firms have considerable latitude to absorb increases in wages by reducing profits rather than by charging more for their goods.

#### Loan rates are high.

Flanagan 1/8 – Editor on the Fortune personal finance team covering housing, mortgages, and credit.

Glen Luke Flanagan, “Current mortgage rates report for Jan. 8, 2026: Rates tick slightly up,” Fortune, 01/08/2026, https://fortune.com/article/current-mortgage-rates-01-08-2026/

The average interest rate for a 30-year, fixed-rate conforming mortgage loan in the U.S. is 6.163%, according to data available from mortgage data company Optimal Blue. That’s about 1 basis point from the prior day’s report, and up about 2 basis points from a week ago. Read on to compare average rates for a variety of conventional and government-backed mortgage types and see whether rates have increased or decreased.

#### Rate hikes are structurally unpredictable. BUT, the fact that the Fed can response cushions the impact.

Cunningham-Scharf 17 – Staff Writer at Advisor.ca.

Sarah Cunningham-Scharf, “Don’t try to predict long-term rates,” Advisor.ca, 7/5/17, https://www.advisor.ca/investments/market-insights/dont-try-to-predict-long-term-rates/

It’s important to be aware of potential Federal Reserve interest rate changes. But don’t move based on where you think rates may go.

So says Ignacio Sosa, director of the product solutions group at DoubleLine Capital in Los Angeles. “In our fixed-income strategies, [we] look at interest rates and try to manage our portfolios in accordance with our interest rate view, but we do not target a certain level of interest rates as a driver of excess returns.”

One reason for that is it’s “almost impossible to predict long-term interest rates accurately,” he says. “Secondly, even if you do, targeting a specific level of long-term interest rates will add unnecessary volatility.”

#### Trump cooks the books on inflation.

Arends 25 – MarketWatch Columnist

Brett Arends, “If the inflation data go Trump’s way, will you trust it?” MarketWatch, August 12, 2025, https://www.morningstar.com/news/marketwatch/2025081292/if-the-inflation-data-go-trumps-way-will-you-trust-it.

A cynic is tempted to make much the same response about the latest inflation figures.

Yes, they look better than expected. And they will make President Trump happy.

But it's also true that a mere 10 days after the head of the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics got fired for reporting numbers that the president didn't like, her remaining staff have reported numbers that the president ... er ... seems to like.

His temporary proxy heading to the Federal Reserve's board, Stephen Miran, said the consumer-price index released on Tuesday showed no evidence of inflation.

It's almost like a bunch of middle-class statisticians with mortgages and kids didn't want to lose their jobs, and be personally named and shamed before the MAGA army as an enemy of the American people.

Does this mean the latest monthly inflation data were cooked to fit the president's political agenda? Let's assume for the sake of argument that they haven't been. Let's assume, instead, that the BLS staff just got lucky.

But here's the Dorothy Parker-type question, only serious: How can you be sure?

Proof that the president is determined to assert direct, partisan political control of economic data came Monday night. Hours after he had ensured that the headlines would be dominated by his D.C. takeover, he disclosed his new nominee for commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It was, as they say, a good day to bury bad news.

The nominee, E.J. Antoni, is an economist at the Heritage Foundation, the right-wing think tank that birthed "Project 2025." His appointment is even being derided by the professional economists at conservative-friendly Manhattan and Cato Institutes. On the other hand, Steve Bannon is a big fan.

At least President Trump didn't nominate Laura Loomer or Sean Hannity. Maybe he's waiting to nominate one of them for the Fed.

What does the crisis at the BLS mean?

The thing about statistics is that they are easy to manipulate. It was Benjamin Disraeli who first coined the joke about "lies, damned lies, and statistics," and the situation hasn't gotten much better since.

You don't believe me? Just look at the latest numbers.

What's the latest inflation number? Take your pick. The latest consumer-price index for all consumers is supposedly 2.7% if you take the national average, but 3.2% in the Northeast and 2.3% - nearly a full point lower - in the South. It's 4.0% in and around San Diego, and just 0.9% around Dallas-Fort Worth.

Food prices account for 14% of the official inflation calculations. What happened to your food prices last month? That didn't just depend on what you ate and where you live, but how much you ate out. According to the new BLS, food prices for people who ate at home fell 0.1% from June to July last month, while food prices for people who ate out rose by 0.3%.

Meat prices in the grocery store apparently rose 1% last month, or at an annualized rate of about 13%. But egg prices reportedly fell 3.9% in a month - which works out at an astonishing annualized rate of inflation of minus 38%.

"Give us this day our daily bread," goes the prayer. But what kind? White-bread prices apparently fell last month, by 0.1%. But all other bread rose by 1.2%

You can check out all these numbers here.

So what is inflation for a meat eater? What about a vegetarian who eats lots of eggs? What about a vegan? Who is the "average" consumer and what did they eat? And how do you account for sales and specials?

And that's nothing compared to the biggest problem: The official inflation costs for housing.

This, in total, accounts for as much as 44% of the government's inflation calculations. So any changes to the housing numbers would have a major effect on the overall inflation data. And the housing numbers are astonishingly easy to manipulate.

That's because nobody can really agree on what they are. Do you take new-home prices? New rents? Mortgage rates? And that's before you get into things like taxes, utilities and insurance.

The biggest part of the government's calculations by far - 26% of the total inflation data - comes from something called "owner's equivalent rent." The way they calculate this is that they ask homeowners to estimate - to guess, in other words - how much their home would cost to rent.

But this raises all sorts of issues. For example, who do you ask? How do they reach their estimates? How accurate are their estimates? And, maybe most importantly, how relevant are these estimates anyway?

For example, according to BLS data, "owner's equivalent rent" nationwide rose 6% during the COVID crisis, from February 2020 to February 2022. But during that time many rents collapsed, especially in cities, as landlords struggled to find tenants. And many or most homeowners also saw their homeownership costs plummet, as they refinanced their 30-year mortgages at epically low interest rates. During that period, the rate on long-term mortgages fell as low as 2.6%.

So you could argue the cost of homeownership, at least as it was reflected in the inflation figures, should have gone down, not up.

And, just to show that I like to annoy Democrats as well as Republicans, let me point out that, right now, these numbers may be grossly overestimating actual inflation. (In other words, Trump may well have a point.)

The latest inflation numbers say that average housing costs have risen 3.9% in the last year. And owner's equivalent rent has risen 4.2%.

Yet during the same period, Realtor.com reports that average starting rents fell by 2.5%. (Realtor.com is owned by News Corp, which also owns MarketWatch). Its latest data also show average listings prices have risen just 0.5%. And the Case-Shiller index of national U.S. home prices has risen, but only by 2.2% (through May). The average interest cost of a new 30-year mortgage has risen about 2.5%. (The latest average rate is 6.63%; a year ago, it was 6.47%.)

But the BLS says housing costs are up around 4%. Take your pick.

The main takeaway is that these data are ripe for all the conspiracy theories you want - left or right, democratic socialist or MAGA. The numbers are wide open to manipulation without anyone actually lying. All you'd have to do is change some of your assumptions.

If you wanted, say, to make the inflation numbers miraculously go down, it's easy. If you replaced owner's equivalent rent with, say, data from new rents, the CPI (at the moment) would plunge. Ditto if you assume people ate a little less beef and a little more pork: Beef is apparently up 11% in a year, while pork has risen just 1%.

The bottom line? Inflation data are easy to manipulate. After the shock firing of the commissioner of labor statistics, the new data have gone Trump's way. If they continue to do so, don't be surprised.

#### Economic downturns don’t cause war.

**Walt 20** [Stephen M. Walt is the Robert and Renée Belfer professor of international relations at Harvard University. “Will a Global Depression Trigger Another World War?”, May 13th, https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/13/coronavirus-pandemic-depression-economy-world-war/]

On balance, however, I do not think that even the extraordinary economic conditions we are witnessing today are going to have much impact on the likelihood of war. Why? First of all, if depressions were a powerful cause of war, there would be a lot more of the latter. To take one example, the United States has suffered 40 or more recessions since the country was founded, yet it has fought perhaps 20 interstate wars, most of them unrelated to the state of the economy. To paraphrase the economist Paul Samuelson’s famous quip about the stock market, if recessions were a powerful cause of war, they would have predicted “nine out of the last five (or fewer).”

Second, states do not start wars unless they believe they will win a quick and relatively cheap victory. As John Mearsheimer showed in his classic book Conventional Deterrence, national leaders avoid war when they are convinced it will be long, bloody, costly, and uncertain. To choose war, political leaders have to convince themselves they can either win a quick, cheap, and decisive victory or achieve some limited objective at low cost. Europe went to war in 1914 with each side believing it would win a rapid and easy victory, and Nazi Germany developed the strategy of blitzkrieg in order to subdue its foes as quickly and cheaply as possible. Iraq attacked Iran in 1980 because Saddam believed the Islamic Republic was in disarray and would be easy to defeat, and George W. Bush invaded Iraq in 2003 convinced the war would be short, successful, and pay for itself.

The fact that each of these leaders miscalculated badly does not alter the main point: No matter what a country’s economic condition might be, its leaders will not go to war unless they think they can do so quickly, cheaply, and with a reasonable probability of success.

Third, and most important, the primary motivation for most wars is the desire for security, not economic gain. For this reason, the odds of war increase when states believe the long-term balance of power may be shifting against them, when they are convinced that adversaries are unalterably hostile and cannot be accommodated, and when they are confident they can reverse the unfavorable trends and establish a secure position if they act now. The historian A.J.P. Taylor once observed that “every war between Great Powers [between 1848 and 1918] … started as a preventive war, not as a war of conquest,” and that remains true of most wars fought since then.

The bottom line: Economic conditions (i.e., a depression) may affect the broader political environment in which decisions for war or peace are made, but they are only one factor among many and rarely the most significant. Even if the COVID-19 pandemic has large, lasting, and negative effects on the world economy—as seems quite likely—it is not likely to affect the probability of war very much, especially in the short term.

## DA

### CP---2AC

#### Impeachment backfires. It stokes the MAGA base and guarantees future Trump-style leaders.

Jenkins 21 – Writer at The Guardian

Simon Jenkins, “Why the Democrats should not impeach Donald Trump,” The Guardian, January 11th, 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jan/11/democrats-impeach-donald-trump-exile-base

Beyond that, all reasons for removing Trump are bad ones. They would deflect attention from Joe Biden’s victory and transition into office. And they would run a bigger risk.

The single most significant feature of last November’s election was that Trump won 11 million more popular votes than he did in 2016, a rise from roughly 63 million to 74 million. He might be rich, crude, immoral and incompetent, but he became more popular in office with his base, not less. According to exit polls, support for Trump also increased among black and Latino voters.

Analysts can debate these figures all night, but they are facts. Biden clearly owed his victory to a rise in support from college-educated and wealthier Democrats. Last week, Trump may have tested populism to destruction, but it remains to be seen if he destroyed the bedrock of his support.

Trump’s 2016 desire to “drain the swamp” – of federal power, overseas alliances and political insiders – was undimmed after four years in office. At the end, as at the beginning, he loathed the old guard in Congress and abhorred the normal channels of communication with voters. In last year’s election, Trump portrayed his cause as incomplete and essential, and persuaded almost half of America that its ruling class was still out to balk him. An extra 11 million Americans voted to give him another try.

Trump’s enemies may have hoped that his actions last week killed him politically. In which case, leave him dead. To pursue him now looks like a vendetta; not just against him, but against his cause and supporters. It is one thing to hate Trump but another to hate those who voted for him, and who in their hearts may yet admire Trump’s extremism and eccentricity and see him as their spokesman. Many are non-college-educated Americans who feel failed by those in power.

The outgoing president’s reputation among these people will only grow with each cry of glee from his enemies. Even if he vanishes into exile, his supporters will seek another saviour, another maverick from the rambling confederacy that is modern American democracy. That is why liberals everywhere should be careful how they react to Trump’s going. Losers should know how to lose well, but victors should know how to win wisely. So ignore Trump, and just count the minutes until he goes.

### Midterms DA---2AC

#### Bad maps means dems lose the midterms.

Piper 12/16 – Senior reporter at POLITICO, where she covers politics and elections through the lens of data.

Jessica Piper, Abhinanda Bhattacharyya and Paula Friedrich, December 16 2025, “The underrated factors limiting the power of a blue wave next year,” POLITICO, https://www.politico.com/interactives/2025/democrats-2026-midterm-flips-redistricting-data/

There’s a key factor limiting the power of a potential Democratic surge next year: the number of seats that are realistically competitive.

Even as this year’s election results have left many in the party encouraged they can mount a massive blue wave, next year’s battleground is a far cry from 2018 — with fewer Republican-held seats for Democrats to easily target.

Democrats don’t need to win as many seats this time around, netting just three seats rather than two dozen to claim a majority. But the hill to reach a comfortable majority like the 235 seats they held after the last blue wave has grown much steeper, driven by multiple rounds of gerrymandering — including ongoing redistricting in several states that threatens to erode the battlefield even further.

The result is that Democrats could post a bigger national swing than in 2018 and still end up with a slimmer majority than they had after that year. To flip 40 seats again would require them to win not just the kinds of highly competitive seats that fueled their House takeover last time but every district that Trump won by 12 points or less, a task that would not only defy political gravity but upend it.

Partisan redistricting — even before this year — has allowed both parties to draw mostly safe seats, dropping the number of competitive districts that are likely to flip. And while the battlefield is smaller, Democrats also already own more of it than they did going into 2018. The very reason Democrats hardly need a blue wave to take back the House this time is that their congressional candidates largely outperformed Kamala Harris in last year’s elections.

Heading into the 2018 midterms, there were 31 GOP-held seats that Trump had won by less than 5 points or even lost. Looking ahead to 2026, there are just 14 such GOP-held seats.

“The era of wave elections may be over — which is to the detriment of a system that is responsive to a majority of voters,” said Nick Troiano, executive director of the group Unite America, a political action committee that advocates for electoral reforms.

The battlefield is smaller than ever, Troiano said, thanks to partisan gerrymandering that is further reducing the number of competitive seats: “They were very uncompetitive before this cycle, and thanks to the redistricting, they are going to become even less competitive.”

#### Gerrymandering and Trump cheats.

Riccardi 12/30 – Journalist of the Associated Press.  
Nicholas Riccardi, “After quiet off-year elections, Democrats renew worries about Trump interfering in the midterms”, 12/30/25, Oregon Public Broadcasting, https://www.opb.org/article/2025/12/30/after-quiet-off-year-elections-democrats-renew-worries-about-trump-interfering-in-the-midterms/

President Donald Trump, whose loss of the House halfway through his first term led to two impeachments, is trying to keep history from repeating — and doing so in ways his opponents say are intended to manipulate next year’s election landscape.

He has rallied his party to remake congressional maps across the country to create more conservative-leaning House seats, an effort that could end up backfiring on him. He’s directed his administration to target Democratic politicians, activists and donors. And, Democrats worry, he’s flexing his muscles to intervene in the midterms like no administration ever has.

Democrats and other critics point to how Trump has sent the military into Democratic cities over the objections of Democratic mayors and governors. They note that he’s pushed the Department of Homeland Security to be so aggressive that at one point its agents handcuffed a Democratic U.S. senator. And some warn that a Republican-controlled Congress could fail to seat winning candidates if Democrats reclaim the House majority, recalling Trump’s efforts to stay in power even after voters rejected him in 2020, leading to the violent attack by his supporters on the U.S. Capitol.

Regarding potential military deployments, Ken Martin, chairman of the Democratic National Committee, told The Associated Press: “What he is going to do is send those troops there, and keep them there all the way through the next election, because guess what? If people are afraid of leaving their house, they’re probably not going to leave their house to go vote on Election Day. That’s how he stays in power.”

#### Filibuster solves their impact.

Scher 25 – Politics Editor of the Washington Monthly.

Bill Scher, “The Filibuster is Working. You Just Can’t See It,” Washington Monthly, 3/18/25, https://washingtonmonthly.com/2025/03/18/the-filibuster-is-working-you-just-cant-see-it/

The most significant impact of the filibuster is on the bills that never come up for a vote.

Much of the controversy surrounding the modern application of the filibuster centers on it effectively creating a 60-vote threshold to pass any legislation since 60 is how many votes are needed to end debate with “cloture.” Instead of old-fashioned “talking filibusters” that require great endurance and subject the instigators to public scrutiny—think Mr. Smith Goes to Washington—we get “silent filibusters” that require no effort and prevent bills from reaching the floor.

Today’s GOP legislative agenda is severely constricted despite having a majority in both chambers. Congressional Republicans are mainly focused on what they can stuff into a reconciliation bill, which under Senate rules is filibuster-proof but can only include budget-related provisions. They are angling for radical cuts to Medicaid to finance huge tax cuts for the wealthy and may succeed. But we know from the Build Back Better bust of 2021 and the failed attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act in 2017 that passing party-line reconciliation bills is harder than it looks.

If Democrats had abolished the legislative filibuster (or effectively abolished it by setting a precedent for suspension by simple majority vote), then there would be no stopping a far-right, fascistic legislative freight train. And that would have been a precursor to packing the courts, which, as I argued last month, we should be eternally grateful did not happen. While under increasing strain from Trump, our constitutional system of checks and balances is one of the last guardrails. While the filibuster is not mentioned in the Constitution, it is in line with the spirit of the Constitution, which is designed to prevent tyranny by the majority. Granted, with Trump—who has never won a popular vote and is underwater in polling averages—we have an aspiring minority tyrant. But we still need every check to avoid sliding into authoritarianism.

Filibuster opponents from the left once scoffed at the threat of an unchecked Republican trifecta. The right will be constrained by public opinion, the argument went, or they will pay a price at the next election. Such statements are heard less frequently now, as they have been supplanted by concerns that we will never have a free election again. But the Constitution’s diffusion of powers, abetted by the filibuster, ensures elections will happen on schedule in 2026 and 2028, allowing the public to bury a GOP agenda they never fully understood or supported.

Until then, the filibuster silently works daily to limit the carnage this Republican-controlled Congress can unleash. In 2021, when Democrats took the White House and both chambers of Congress, they almost scuttled the filibuster. The next time Democrats win a trifecta, I suspect their memories of the Trump trifecta will be long enough that they won’t again flirt with such danger.

#### Dem win causes Trump lashout.

Machidori 25 – Professor of Political Science at Kyoto University's Graduate School of Law, specializing in Comparative Political Studies.

Satoshi Machidori, “American democracy will weather the Trumpist storm,” Institute of Geoeconomics, 3/4/25, https://instituteofgeoeconomics.org/en/research/2025030404/

The key is that Trump’s presidency is constitutionally limited to four years. If it enters a lame-duck phase after the midterms, as is likely, the administration might prioritize cementing its legacy by embarking on disruptive international and security-related policies, potentially undermining global trust in U.S. democracy and stability.

#### World War III.

Panetta et al. 25 – former Secretary of Defense, former Director of the CIA, former White House Chief of Staff, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, Co-Founder of the Panetta Institute for Public Policy, J.D. from the Santa Clara University School of Law.

Leon E. Panetta, “It’s Trump’s Messy, Dangerous World Now,” The New York Times, 01-20-2025, https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/20/opinion/trump-foreign-policy-defense.html

The world that awaits Mr. Trump is far different from and more threatening than what he had to confront in his first four years. Autocrats that once operated in their own spheres of influence have now joined together in an axis of mutual support and aggression: Vladimir Putin of Russia is not just a temperamental bully but also a tyrant who invaded the sovereign democracy of Ukraine and continues to threaten democracies in the West; Xi Jinping of China has made clear that he is prepared for a potential Taiwan invasion and wants to compete with the United States as a leading military power; Kim Jong-un of North Korea is not just threatening democracy in South Korea but has also sent drones and thousands of troops to Russia to fight Ukrainians; Iran, weakened by Israel, continues to enrich uranium and is ever closer to developing a nuclear weapon; and ISIS has once again raised its ugly head by inspiring a lone-wolf attack in New Orleans.

Mr. Trump has always prided himself on being a dealmaker, pledging in his campaign that he would resolve such conflicts in the first few days of his presidency. But precisely because it is a more dangerous world, that’s unlikely to happen. And if he tries and fails, the United States will appear weak. There is concern that Mr. Trump may have already started off badly by threatening Greenland, the Panama Canal Zone and Canada. Those are the kind of careless and disruptive comments that only undermine American credibility when it comes to dealing with real-world crises.

This is, however, a time when “peace through strength” could actually work. It will require strong, serious and stable leadership to turn the current multipolar crisis into an opportunity for America. The incoming president can be a dealmaker, but it must be from a position of strength. And strength begins with the United States remaining the strongest military power on the face of the earth.

To ensure that, the new administration must be willing to increase military investments in recruitment, training, readiness, nuclear weapons systems, the U.S. defense industrial base and research and technology. To accomplish all of this, the defense budget cannot rely on the unpredictability of continuing resolutions. There must be a five-year budget that makes clear our defense priorities and achieves savings in duplication, procurement and bureaucracy.

On Ukraine, it is becoming clear that Ukraine and Mr. Putin must find a way to a negotiated settlement to the war. Mr. Trump must make clear that the United States will continue to work with NATO to support Ukraine and that Mr. Putin will not be allowed to succeed. If that message is clear to Mr. Putin and if Ukraine can gain traction against Russia, President Volodymyr Zelensky will have the leverage to negotiate a settlement that provides for Ukraine’s sovereignty and security, allows Russia to remain in Crimea and other limited areas and achieves an end to the war. That would be peace through strength.

Mr. Trump should tell China that it will help Taiwan defend itself, that the South China Sea will remain open pursuant to international law and that the United States will support a strong alliance of Japan, South Korea, Australia, India and other Asian countries to protect the freedom of the seas and commerce in the Pacific. From a position of greater military strength, the United States would have leverage for a more productive dialogue with China on trade, cybersecurity, fentanyl, satellites and other economic issues. To simply expand tariffs on China and start a trade war will result in an economic backlash among unhappy consumers in the United States. Retribution is not dealmaking.

Iran is yet another opportunity. Tehran has been weakened by Israel both militarily and economically; it could very well be open to negotiations on limiting nuclear enrichment and stopping support for proxies in exchange for relief from economic sanctions. Since the previous Trump administration was critical to the establishment of the Abraham Accords, Mr. Trump could work with Israel to bring Saudi Arabia into the deal, along with other moderate Arab nations. Building a Middle East alliance would be important to dealing with Iran and terrorism, and establishing an approach to peace in the Middle East.

The president, as commander in chief, has the power and responsibility to determine America’s future security. If he is careless with that awesome power, the United States could very well find itself in another world war. But if the president understands his power, as Mr. Reagan did, he can provide strong leadership and build alliances that steer the world out of war. The key to peace is strength, and the key to strength is leadership.