

UC Davis

UC Davis Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Exploring the “Next System” after Neoliberalism: A Political Social Network Analysis

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1190c9bz>

Author

Volzer, Alyx RVA

Publication Date

2024

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

Exploring the “Next System” after Neoliberalism: A Political Social Network Analysis

By

ALYX RVA VOLZER
THESIS

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Geography

in the

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

of the

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

DAVIS

Approved:

Clare Cannon, Chair

David Kyle

Eric Chu

Committee in Charge

2024

Abstract

World System Theory suggests structural systemic crisis triggers anti-systemic movements as “struggles of imagination” for a different world “not on the basis of some utopian prescription but on the basis of concrete struggles” (Magnusson and Walker 1988, 62). Currently, no government or major organization claims that we are on track to meet the Paris Agreement targets. As such, the hegemonic world system of neoliberal capitalism is failing to meet 21st century challenges of climate change and rising inequalities such as climate justice and the Sustainable Development Goals. In response, a global anti-systemic movement of organizations, businesses, government bodies, and social movements has emerged, prefiguring an alternative regulatory regime and business ecosystem. Using social network analysis (SNA), supplemented by ethnographic research, a portion of the U.S. “Next System” (after neoliberalism) political economy was modeled based on the relationships between “Next System” economic development organizations (EDOs). This research highlights who and what kinds of “Next System” EDOs tend to work together and how their political and socioeconomic positioning within the US political economy influence the economic development strategy they provide to their clients (such as businesses and non-profits supplying products and services, government bodies, or community groups). Results suggest there are three major subgroups within the network with dense interconnected ties, defined as coalitions, with differing political strategies. First, a group of think tanks and national organizations characterized by workers with graduate degrees, focused on policy changes and pilot projects, and with extensive connections to the broader neoliberal political economy. Second, a diverse group of organizations, cooperatives, and public benefit companies seeking to reinvent how economic entities operate and focused on

delivering basic needs and services in a sustainable way. Third, a group of organizations and informal associations who focus on prefigurative economics, solidarity and movement economics, and socially embedded economic practices. A fourth novel community of organizations with loose ties also is emerging with synergistic characteristics of the other three. While tensions and contradictions within the network, and issues of visibility, challenge its ability to keep growing and evolving, network analysis suggests the network is maturing into a self-sustaining paradigm which can guide policy and business practices in sustainable and socially just ways that are neither a continuation of neoliberal theory nor a revolutionary break from it.

Table of Contents

Contents

Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Figures	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
We are in a Structural Systemic Crisis	1
Anti-systemic Movement.....	2
Outline of Thesis and Literature Gap.....	5
Chapter 2: Literature Review	7
Social Network Analysis in Sociocultural Geography	7
Network Analysis of Social Movements	10
Hegemonic World System and the Anti-Systemic Movement	12
Social Network Analysis of the Anti-systemic Movement.....	19
Political Coalitions of the Next System: A Conceptual Framework	24
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	29
Research Question	29
Methods.....	31
Social Network Analysis	31

Critical Ethnography.....	37
Inclusion Criteria	39
Limitations.....	43
Chapter 4: Data	44
Description and Characteristics of the Dataset	44
Community Detection.....	48
Chapter 5: Discussion.....	57
Topographical structural characterization of the Network and Ethnographic Insights	57
Agency Analysis: Key Power Players	63
Imagining Solarpunk Futures, Non-Reformist Reforms, and Real Utopias in the Next System	
Political Economy Structure.....	67
Contradictions and Tensions.....	72
Meritocratic Talentism and Social Stratification	72
Conflicting Naming Conventions.....	76
Chapter 6: Conclusion	78
Appendix A: Next System EDO websites	83
References	85

List of Figures

Figure 1 Doughnut Economics.	15
Figure 2 Social Determinants of Health framework	16
Figure 3 Four Political Strategies of Change framework	25
Figure 4 Solarpunk art. The Fifth Sacred Thing.....	40
Figure 5: SNA graph of potential political capital of the Next System political economy.....	49
Figure 6: "Smashing" Capitalism Community	52
Figure 7: "Taming" Capitalism Community.....	54
Figure 8: "Eroding" Capitalism Community	55
Figure 9: Novel "Synergistic" Community.....	57

One useful approach to solving the puzzle of where the United States, and the rest of the globe, may be heading lies in viewing our political economy as a complex social system involving intricately intertwined networks of organizational and personal relationships. Multilayered webs of diverse ties connect citizens, communities, corporations, and countries into one dynamic, planet-girdling social structure.

—David Knoke, *Changing Organizations: Business Networks in the New Political Economy*

A society that sustains both individuals and social freedom, must be undergirded by institutions that are themselves liberatory. It must provide the structural means by which citizens can collectively manage their own affairs

—Janet Biehl, *The Politics of Social Ecology: Libertarian Municipalism*

Chapter 1: Introduction

We are in a Structural Systemic Crisis

A multiplicity of crisis events emerging from global biophysical and social (political, economic, and sociological) systemic breakdown is currently threatening the future prospects of humanity (Lawrence et al. 2024). In particular, scholars who analyze the synergistic impacts of climate change and how institutions (social, political, and economic) choose to respond to them suggests the risks and solutions proposed by the International Panel on Climate Change might be vastly understating the danger to human societies (Bendell 2023; Cotton-Barratt et al. 2016; Hansen et al. 2023; Kemp et al. 2022; Sepasspour 2023). The majority of global ecological tipping points, such as the melting of the West Antarctic ice sheet and changes in the circulation of the ocean currents, are on the cusp of no return, if not already there (Lenton et al. 2019; Wunderling et al. 2024). This confluence resembles the structural “circumstance in which an historical system has evolved to the point where the cumulative effect of its internal contradictions makes it impossible for the system to ‘resolve’ its dilemmas by ‘adjustments’ in its ongoing institutional patterns” (Wallerstein 1988, 581). In this kind of structural systemic crisis, incremental, rational, and practical reform in itself is no longer viable. An inflexion point of transition emerges, pointing to a need for a radical break or systemic transformation which centers the cause of crisis as its central objective.

Anti-systemic Movement

Because the institutional response to the current period of ecological and social crisis has not yet been timely or sufficient enough — i.e., five-year trend predictions are not yet suggesting we will be seeing improved conditions by the end of the 2020s (Bendell 2023) — non-hegemonic actors within the existing world system are generating a movement, or what Wallerstein terms an anti-systemic movement, for transformation (Wallerstein 1988). In this situation where reform is no longer enough, an anti-systemic movement builds and creates a new system with alternative institutions¹ (P. Taylor 1991; Wallerstein 1988). Anti-systemic movements are transnational movements— globally networked social movements of local actions, which have moved beyond demanding single-issue policy changes, and even building coalitions around larger structural problems, to “struggles of imagination” for a different world “not on the basis of some utopian prescription but on the basis of concrete struggles” (Magnusson and Walker 1988, 62). They imagine new worlds via a kind of “cognitive migration” into possible futures that are composed of specific conditions, actions, and places (Koikkalainen and Kyle 2016). These are new and alternative institutions of emancipatory practice, or “real utopias” which embrace utopian ideals but are grounded in realistic

¹ The previous three successful major anti-systemic movements of the 20th century— the nationalist post-colonial states, social democracies of the developed world, and the USSR’s communist regime— all failed in the late 1980’s and through the 1990s. Forced austerity of the nationalist post-colonial states undermined national sovereignty, the welfare state in the developed world’s social democracies was dismantled, and the USSR’s communist regime broke apart. This left neoliberalism unopposed by a strong anti-systemic movement and increasingly resistant to co-opting the goals of attempted anti-systemic movements (such as feminism and environmentalism) via concessions (P. Taylor 1991).

institutional designs and facilitate processes which can lead to systemic change, like basic income, cooperative economies, and democratic finance (E. Wright 2010).

The path for an anti-system movement, however, is challenging because their access to resources to build these alternative institutions can be limited. For example, obtaining financing can be challenging due to legibility (such as the organizational structure, like limited equity housing cooperatives) (Lewis and Conaty 2012), complexity (such as multistakeholder cooperative's equity return formulas) (Restakis 2010), or goals (such as desiring to rewild and restore an ecosystem rather than generate a return on investment) (Blythe and Jepson 2020). Furthermore, the power of the hegemonic system often remains strong enough to suppress successful organizations or movements, or co-opt the anti-systemic movement's goals (Gramsci 2011; Arrighi, Hopkins, and Wallerstein 2012). When the goals of an anti-systemic movement are co-opted, the hegemonic system offers concessions (P. Taylor 1991), such as when the second wave U.S. feminist movement saw wins in female entrepreneurship and equality in the workforce but in ways that did not fundamentally transform the role of domestic labor as still the domain of women (Rothman 2000).

Whether anti-systemic movements manage to implement a new system or not, they have critical roles in the evolution of world systems due to the challenge they make to the hegemonic system, such as diversifying finance or incorporating more women into the workplace. They have a role in helping to resolve structural crisis by suggesting potential new policies, institutional arrangements, and administrative interpretations of existing legislation in situations where the hegemonic system might not be willing or able to execute reforms. This implies they have a role in shifting the Overton Window, or the spectrum of publicly acceptable

and achievable governmental policies (“The Overton Window,” n.d.), by shifting the values and norms of society so that more options are viable.

This study aims to build a database of ‘Next System’ Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) and illustrate the relationships between them using social network analysis, using their publicized formal partnership and staff biographies. The relationships are characterized as potential political capital, allowing for the ability to model the ‘Next System’ political economy. Economies are intricately entwined with political decisions, from organized voters engaging in collective action (Grossman and Helpman 2001), regulations and incentives used by governments to guide institutions to produce desired outcomes (such as schools, banking systems, or housing) (Stiglitz and Rosengard 2015), the data collected and analyzed to understand economic trends (Mankiw 2021), to the ideological shared norms used to by businesses and other economy actors (North 1990). World Systems analysis in political geography uniquely frames the ideologies guiding political economies as transient, evolving structurally over the *longue durée* (C. F. Taylor Colin Flint, Peter J. Taylor, Peter J. 2018). I use the artpolitik movement of solarpunk as a type of Gramscian ideology, embodying symbolic content which helps to identify which EDOs embody Next System values and distinguish them from neoliberalized ones. Solarpunk envisions an intersectional, sustainable, democratic, post-scarcity world built around local community (Johnson 2020; Solarpunk Surf Club 2024). By illustrating the relationships between ‘Next System’ EDOs using social network analysis, the structural features of this prefigurative political economy and key power players can be detected. Understanding which organizations have formed coalitions, together with exploring

the sub-cultures of each coalition, brings insight into their strategic position within the political economy, as well as potential internal tensions and contradictions of the Next System.

Outline of Thesis and Literature Gap

The outline of this thesis is as follows. First, in the literature review, I explore the applications of sociocultural geography to social network analysis (SNA) and the use of network theory to understand social movements. After interrogating the failures of neoliberalism as the hegemonic world system to adequately address the sustainability and social crises of the 21st century, and introducing the anti-systemic response to it, I discuss how SNA of economic development organizations (defined as institutions with important roles in political economies) can be used to model political economies. However, as anti-systemic prefigurative political economies face significant challenges in rising to hegemonic status, I propose a theory of change to be tested with SNA. This theory of change leads to a conceptual model of five 'Next System' coalitions (namely a reform coalition, a social movement coalition, a business coalition, a collection of isolationists, and a community of organizations embracing a novel approach which synthesizes aspects from the other coalitions), each with a different political strategy.

After detailing my SNA and ethnographic methodology and inclusion criteria, I present data on the endogenous characteristics of each coalition and the network as a whole, with exogenous attributes from ethnographic research and websites of EDOs included in the study used to give a richer profile for each coalition. In my discussion, I briefly discuss each coalition in the context of their sociocultural and geographical position before highlighting several key EDOs serving as key power players. I conclude with an extended discussion on the structural

characteristics of this prefigurative political economy and how they demonstrate solarpunk futures, non-reformist reforms, and “real utopias,” and the impact of neoliberal path dependencies on its structure. A brief discussion on ideological conflict around naming economic development strategies is also included to highlight how socioeconomic influences on political positioning is potentially the network’s largest strength because it allows for a synergistic, multiscalar approach to system change.

This study is the first to describe the structure and characteristics of the next political economy regime after neoliberalism by building a database of key actors and their relationships with each other. A novel selection methodology using symbolic interactionism drawing on the symbolic artpolitik movement of solarpunk, which operates as a Gramscian ideology for the Next System, is used to build the network database. E. O. Wright’s theory of anti-capitalist systems change is tested on the constructed network, leading to the identification of three political coalitions and evidence of his theorized synergistic coalition forming. By conceptualizing the Next System as a structural anti-systemic response within World Systems Theory, the political coalitions of the Next System network serve both complementary multiscalar functional roles with each other and in the transition between political economy regimes. Finally, ethnographic insights into each of the coalitions is used to highlight both the new institutional arrangements of the Next System and interrogate social stratification between the coalitions caused by meritocratic talentism under neoliberalism.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Social Network Analysis in Sociocultural Geography

Social Network Analysis (SNA) is a multidisciplinary methodology which analyzes the relationships, called “ties” or “edges” between organizations and/or people, called “actors” or “nodes.” When graphed using SNA software, actors represent dots and the lines between actors are ties. Network theory has derived mathematical patterns of predictable ties between nodes which are used to understand and predict emergent structures of networks (J. Scott 2017; Wasserman and Faust 1994). The relationships of dyads and triads have strong replicable mathematical explanations which are transferable to all network relationships regardless of academic discipline or choice of network actors/nodes. Network theory therefore assumes that the social structure in which actors are embedded within highly influences the behavior of actors, even while the individual behaviors of actors structure the network itself (Granovetter 1983; J. Scott 2017; Wasserman and Faust 1994). This is much like Giddens’ Structuration Theory which analyzes how the repetitive micro-interactions of individuals result in social norms and institutions, which in turn effect the range of behaviors actors perform (Giddens 1984).

A unique strength of SNA is the ability to model both agency-centric and structure-centric sociological theories in the same graph, relying on endogenous mathematical characteristics to explain these relationships. The relational data used to build SNA graphs expands our understanding of statistical variable relationships beyond correlation to 1) include the nature of relationships, 2) the structural impact of the network on a relationship, and 3)

explain the role of spurious, mediating, and moderating statistical variables. This gives network theory strong explanatory power. However, SNA does have some limitations. For example, exogenous attributes of actors and their relationships cannot be included in SNA mathematical matrices. Only when matrices are graphed can exogenous attributes be included in limited ways, such as changing the color, shape, or size of nodes and edges.

Network theory's ability to model the relationship between structure and agency is in opposition to most social science literature which emphasizes one or the other. Since SNA multi-scalar networks can be analyzed at any of its levels — the structural-functionalist, agency-centric (or ego-centric in SNA terminology), or dyads/triads— I propose any of the three sociological approaches of structural-functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism can be applied depending on the scale of analysis. Topographical descriptions (the overall layout of a network, including the distribution and connectivity of nodes, the density and clustering of relationships, and the presence of central or influential nodes and coalitions) of the whole network model structural-functional characteristics. Power dynamics can be illustrated via analysis of inter- and intra-characteristics of communities (also called sub-units, blocks, or cliques) and be calculated using ego-centric network properties of actors who are in strategic locations within the network. Microanalysis of isolates, dyads, and triads of actors, and the ways they influence each, predicts short-term changes in the network.

Examining the exogenous attributes of nodes and edges in a network as a supplement to endogenous characteristics of networks allows for an even deeper analysis. Structural-functionalism states that society is composed of interrelated parts which function to stabilize the whole. SNA communities of actors can be analyzed to understand their culture for shared

values, beliefs, and expectations about how the world works. If communities are to be understood as the outcome of social stratification (Davis and Moore 1945), then SNA communities have functional roles within the larger network. When linking cultural and social stratification with institutional patterns, we can model Weberian social systems.

Evaluating the symbolic or ideological content of actors, such as what values they embrace, can provide useful qualitative triangulation of SNA's quantitative community detection methods. This demonstrates that the actors within communities detected by endogenous mathematical relationships utilize symbolic meanings to interact with each other in qualitatively different ways than other communities. The interpretation and evaluation of communications and actions between dyads and triads through their symbolic interactions allows for the ability to describe the social construction of reality within each community (P. L. Berger and Luckmann 1967). When actors interact with different sets of symbolic information with other actors in the network (especially if they are in different communities), this can also provide insight into tensions within the network, such as conflicting demands around funding, administration, clientele, or connections with communities or networks beyond the boundaries of the network.

Conflict theory understands social arrangements as an outcome of power dynamics, competition, and inequalities rooted in demographic characteristics such as race, gender, or class (Collins 2022). Since relationships serve specific functions within a network, such as passing along (or blocking) information, strategic positions within a network are indicative of power dynamics. Communities of actors with similar demographics which are different from other communities suggest important power dynamics might be at play, such as class or race

dynamics. Likewise, individual actors can alter topographical features of the network when they shift alliances, such as when an actor serves as the sole “bridge” between two communities.

Beyond relational data analysis, SNA is a powerful tool for sociocultural geographical research because the structural factors of interaction (which network analysis models) reinforce themselves so that the longer a group is together, the less often exogenous factors (of attributes like actor behaviors and demographic characteristics) are statistically significant (Whitbred et al. 2011). Network theory assumes the longer the evolution of the network, the more whole network characteristics have additional downward impacts on actors. Thus, patterns within networks are evidence for ongoing structural (e.g., formation, growth) processes, which can provide clues as to the maturity of a network.

Network Analysis of Social Movements

The role of networks themselves have been identified as important to the development and success of social movements (Della Porta 2020; Diani 2022; Zald and McCarthy 1987). The network of relationships between actors in social movements have been seen as critical to leftist organizing such as coordinating protests and demonstrations, as well as understanding the flows of information and values through the network, especially via the internet and media (Della Porta 2006; Moghadam 2019; D. Taylor 2017). World Systems Theory (WST) analysis, likewise, has recognized the role of these social movements, as transnational networks, as historically situated within the *longue durée* structural crises of capitalism (Smith and Wiest 2012). WST uniquely situates socio-political movements as responses to the economic realm

and not simply social or moral movements (Wallerstein 1988). Centering the economic realm over the social one is essential to a WST understanding of social movements because capitalism strongly shapes society, cultures, and politics (Robbins 2014). The diversity and abundance of different social movements, such as Occupy and Black Lives Matter, critiquing capitalism, capitalist society, and the role of money in politics is said to have risen to the level of anti-systemic movements when their interrelated concerns form not only a larger critique of the hegemonic world system but is also triggering systemic transformation of institutions and states (Smith and Wiest 2012).

SNA as a methodology has been used to understand and test WST at the nation-state level since the 1970s by modeling trade flows, military interventions, diplomatic relationships, and conjoint treaty memberships (Snyder and Kick 1979). Alternative network methodologies have modeled the roles and hierarchies of cities worldwide (Alderson and Beckfield 2004), transnational policy-planning groups composed of corporate directors (Carroll and Sapinski 2010), and the dual structural and relational nature of global commodity chains (Dicken et al. 2001). Certainly, network theory has been extensively applied to understanding counter-hegemonic and social movement networks, including attempts to model the topographical structure and nature of them (Guglielmo and Ward 2024; Nunes 2014). But research on WST has not yet applied network theory to the actors of anti-systemic movements to understand their actions as structural reactions. WST uniquely localizes social movements in the economic sphere (Smith and Wiest 2012; Wallerstein 1988). Therefore, modeling economic anti-systemic movements using network analysis fills a gap in the literature. Network analysis of anti-

systemic networks can give us a more precise understanding of the tensions within political economies, especially as reforms to meet the current crisis continue to fail.

Hegemonic World System and the Anti-Systemic Movement

According to Wallerstein (1998), every world system has a lifespan with a beginning, a development, and end. During transition periods when the centrifugal forces of internal contradictions reach crisis, structural changes in the form of reforms must occur. However, when the crisis is too great for reform, “suppressed strata” have the potential to organize rebellion and/or anti-systemic movements to resolve the crisis (Wallerstein 1988). These movements are a natural outgrowth of the core-periphery model and the inherent crisis of internal contradictions within any historical system (like the political economy).

Our current world system is neoliberal capitalism, and the current crisis is both ecological (e.g., climate change, biodiversity loss, eutrophication, and significant accumulations of pollution) and social (e.g., poverty and access to basic needs like shelter and food and electricity, social equity, political participation, literacy, health and mental health) (Hickel 2020; Raworth 2017; Steffen et al. 2015). Neoliberal capitalism’s ecomodernist strategy of technological solutions and policy reformism provides “fixes” for environmental issues like climate change (Shellenberger et al. 2015). With a focus on future solutions being more effective and affordable, and maintaining the “business-as-usual” paradigm of our economic system, ecomodernism relies on accounting manipulations such as the “carbon discount rate” and “sustainable intensification,” and technological solutions which are either not scalable to sufficient volumes or do not yet exist. The carbon discount rate is part of the long term cost-

benefit analysis of carbon emitting activities where low rates force the cost of carbon emissions up in the short term and push costs further into the future, making it more affordable to pollute carbon emissions in the short term (Asdourian and Wessel 2023; Backman 2021). Sustainable intensification improves per unit energy efficiency while still increasing overall production (Cooper 2017), resulting in the Jevons Paradox, where increased efficiency promotes higher rates of energy use (Alcott 2005).

The use of technologies under neoliberal ecomodernism depends on two precarious strategies- the overextraction of nonrenewable resources and the development of future technologies to address current externalities. For example, renewable energy and battery storage rely on precious minerals of which there are currently not enough of on the planet (Bendell 2023). And rather than cutting carbon emissions and preventing a buildup of greenhouse gasses (GHGs), emphasis is placed on the development of future technologies like carbon capture to reduce GHGs in the future. Paradoxically, many 4th Industrial Revolution technologies like battery production factories, electric vehicles, and large data processing centers for artificial intelligence (AI) are these hoped for future ecomodernist solutions; however these have or will dramatically accelerate ecological destruction and have intensified social disruption (Jones 2018; Mahnkopf 2019). More fantastical “fixes” such as the new space race to the moon and Mars (in the event Earth is no longer habitable, or to mine precious minerals) and globe spanning infrastructure projects to stabilize and reinforce supply chains are enormous sources of ecological and social unsustainability. This has resulted in an intensification of precarious environmental and social conditions as we wait for ecomodernist solutions to mitigate harms.

As environmental and socio-political conditions reach tipping points, a large global anti-systemic movement is pushing back against ecomodernism, attempting to implement already existing solutions (technological and non-technological) which do not rely on limited supplies of nonrenewable resources, and specifically focus on solutions which localize the roots of ecological and social dysfunction in the logics of capitalism itself (Guglielmo and Ward 2024; Nunes 2014). This anti-systemic movement is a diverse and multi-scalar coalition of social and political activists, artists, nonprofit organizations, businesses, intellectuals, and local/regional government bodies (Beckett 2019; Bregman 2020; Manski, Lazar, and Moodliar 2020). The actors in this network seek to ensure basic needs are met for all people in a sustainable way, using solutions which already exist rather than relying on unscalable and unrealized future technologies or efficiency measures which do not address the intensity of natural resource depletion and destruction (Axelrod et al. 2023). Some ecomodernist approaches are heartily embraced, like renewable energy, as providing potentially valuable supplementary solutions in the future, but importantly, they should not be relied on to meet ecological and social goals (Alperovitz, Speth, and Guinan 2015). From this stance, the actors of this anti-systemic movement seek to establish a new kind of political economy which is based on the creation of new forms of social, political, and economic institutions that are measurably sustainable and socially just (Alperovitz, Speth, and Guinan 2015; Guinan and O'Neill 2019; Manski, Lazar, and Moodliar 2020; Nunes 2014).

This anti-systemic movement has identified four realms of crisis which cannot be met with reform — unequal voice in the governance of economies, legacies of historical injustice and crimes against humanity which continue to be reproduced, undermining of the biophysical systems of the earth, and widespread poverty amidst great national wealth (Kelly 2023). As solutions, they have embraced respectively a set of core values around participatory democracy, equity and equality, sustainability, and economic justice (Alperovitz, Speth, and Guinan 2015; Kelly 2023; Hanna and Kelly 2021). Sustainability refers to two components, both modeled by the Next System framework Doughnut Economics (see figure 1) which illustrates the “safe and just space for

humanity” where environments are utilized sustainably and human communities can persist sustainably (Raworth 2017). The first component of sustainability is preventing ecological overshoot by bringing the use of natural resources down to within one earth’s worth. Doughnut

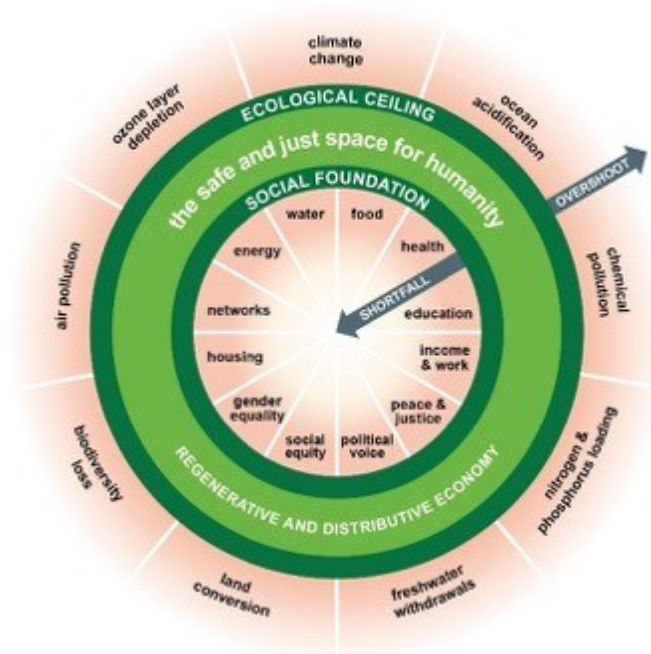


Figure 1 Doughnut Economics. Image from Wikipedia.

Economics identifies nine global ecological thresholds which are at risk or have surpassed the sustainable threshold. The second component of sustainability is establishing a floor of basic needs and services, called the “social foundation,” which is often measured by the Doughnut Economics City Lab using the Social

Determinants of Health (SDoH) framework (see figure 2) (California Doughnut Economics Coalition, private conversation, March 8, 2024). The SDoH is a well-researched framework already institutionalized within a diverse set of actors in the US, including the Affordable Care Act’s evaluation framework for Medicare receiving healthcare providers (“State Innovation Models (SIM) Round 2: Model Test Annual Report One” 2017). The SDoH has six large topic areas around health care systems, education, neighborhood and physical environment, social and community issues, economic stability, and food.

Figure 1

Social Determinants of Health

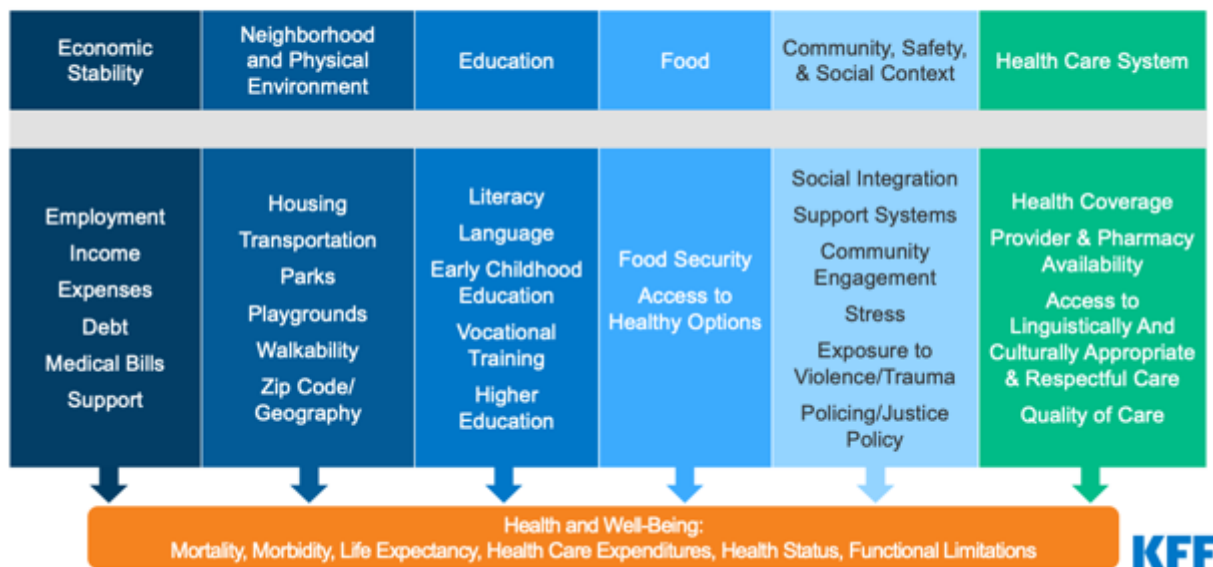


Figure 2 Social Determinants of Health framework. Kaiser Family Foundation. <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/issue-brief/beyond-health-care-the-role-of-social-determinants-in-promoting-health-and-health-equity/>

Meeting the social foundation especially requires addressing environmental racism and climate injustices which could result in mortality rates of 10-25% of the global population (the majority of which are marginalized populations) as the climate crises reaches its peak (Bendell 2023; Cotton-Barratt et al. 2016; Hansen et al. 2023; Kemp et al. 2022; Sepasspour 2023). By increasing democracy in all levels of governance, it will improve equity and equality outcomes

on both basic needs and ecological issues because democratic institutions are simply more effective at representing the general populace's values and are more equitable (Fung and Wright 2001).

To operationalize the four core values of participatory democracy, equity and equality, sustainability, and economic justice, actors in the Next System network draw on seven core ideas. These are composed of 1) cooperative organizations and self-management at work, 2) public ownership of basic needs, 3) localism and bioregionalism as the most important unit of social organization, 4) reinvigorated regulatory role of and social safety net provision by the federal government, 5) citizen science and citizen governance (and ownership) in all economic sectors, 6) reduction of inequalities with special emphasis on historical crimes against humanity (like race based slavery, indigenous genocide, and eugenics), and 7) a respect for ecological conditions of the planet (Alperovitz, Speth, and Guinan 2015; Kelly 2023).

Over the last 25 years, this anti-systemic movement has grown large enough to prefigure an alternative regulatory regime and business ecosystem to our current neoliberal capitalist economy. Prefiguration is the building of microscale versions of the bigger economy, society, and political structure embodying a set of values different from the dominant system with the intention of scaling to society at large (Schiller-Merkens 2022); it is a political project both of “negation but also the creation of an alternative” (ibid, 6). It can recreate society using the “political imagination,” pushing the sociological imagination which helps us understand our personal experiences as part of larger sociological trends, into the political sphere where we imagine our personal positionality as public issues addressed by alternative governance (Burawoy 2008). What sets prefigurative movements from countercultural or simply

alternative ones is their intentional diffusion through networks beyond themselves and into the public (Yates 2015).

The emerging prefigurative political economy, named the “Next System” (after neoliberalism), was proposed as a placeholder term² by the Democracy Collaborative as a proposal for a “bottom-up approach to community economic development” (Alperovitz, Speth, and Guinan 2015; Hanna and Kelly 2021). By 2015, it already encompassed “thousands of cooperatives, worker-owned companies, neighborhood corporations, and many little-known municipal, state, and regional efforts” (Alperovitz, Speth, and Guinan 2015), with network characteristics similar to the one that successfully produced neoliberalism as an economic regime change (Beckett 2019). Three major successes of the network are the spread of the “Cleveland Model” of using anchor institutions to stabilize local economies across the United States Rust Belt (Coppola 2014), more than 3,000 certified B-corporations (“Find a B Corp” 2024), and the launch of 155 municipal and county basic income pilots projects (“Guaranteed Income,” n.d.).

In the past decade, hundreds of Economic Development organizations (EDOs) have emerged modeling local and regional Next System economies, creating policy proposals at all levels of government, providing funding and infrastructure services and leadership

² Consensus on a replacement of the placeholder term has not yet been made, and different terms tend to be favored according to the community coalitions found in this study. More than 26 different terms for the Next System Economy were identified at the 2024 California Just Economies Summit, a recent conference of major Next System players. These terms included “solidarity economy” and “movement economy,” leaving out numerous major business sector terms such as “conscious capitalism” or “triple bottom line.” Textbooks such as “the Handbook of Diverse Economics” (Gibson-Graham and Dombroski 2020), “Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary” (Kothari et al. 2019), The New Systems Reader (Speth and Courier 2020), and Democratic Economic Planning (Hahnel 2021) list dozens more.

development, performing research, building new kinds of institutions, doing business and economic development work (often classifying themselves as “do-tanks”), and establishing federated cooperative villages and ecovillages. LIFT Economy, a Next Economy business education organization, has created the following list of examples of EDO activities which the Next System is working on (Axelrod et al. 2023). These include:

- Research into distributed governance models (citizen assemblies, participatory budgeting, direct democracy models), financial systems for true cost accounting and open book management, land/housing models owned by the commons, and village and community development models.
- Policy supports such as cooperative climate insurance, structures and systems for incentivizing ecosystem restoration and repair, Indigenous landback and Black reparations strategies, re-imagining retirement in communitarian versus individualistic ways, and accessible, free, holistic childcare for everyone.
- New institutions such as consumer owned and member driven media platforms, self-directed savings and investment plans which are community serving, and different ways of transacting (including new and alternative currencies).
- Reworking infrastructures such as supply chain development and shared purchasing (especially for worker owned cooperatives) and data privacy innovations (open, free, and neutral common telecommunications and internet networks).

Social Network Analysis of the Anti-systemic Movement

Tracing the network of relationships between EDOs allows us to model a portion of the political economy relatively easily because most publish their formal relationships and ties publicly on their website or in legally required financial documents. Much like the group of

actors which promote growth at the city level described in Logan and Molotch's Growth Machine Theory (Logan and Molotch 2007), the neoliberal political economy is composed of actors who do not necessarily explicitly coordinate but nonetheless have similar goals and values and therefore reinforce each other's activities. Real estate, newspapers, local politicians, business and economic development organizations, research institutions, foundations and other funding organizations, and nonprofits all seek to understand economic, social, and political trends to position themselves and, if possible, influence those trends. As institutions which collate knowledge and utilize it to guide clients and make decisions which impact tens of thousands of people and other organizations, EDO have an outsized influence on the political economy of a place and this group of actors.

Anti-systemic institutions, by nature of having different values, goals, and organizational processes than the hegemonic system, will experience both internal and external pressures to collaborate with each other. For example, unlike transactional relationships which are mediated by currency or traded favors, durable formal relationships between two actors is most likely to succeed if there is general alignment of values, goals, and organizational processes for which to build a successful relationship (Gereffi, Humphrey, and Sturgeon 2005). In young networks, this kind of alignment is critical for relationships to form, and as networks evolve, the density of ties between actors within the network deepen. External pressures include issues like their business and organizational models might not be legible enough to existing institutions to secure loans and other financial instruments (A. Berger and Udell 2002), or they might have difficulty in finding technical administration and counseling or support services (Chrisman and McMullan 2004), compatible supply chain inputs (Handfield and Nichols

(Jr.) 1999), or sympathetic politicians and executive bureaucrats to bend rules and policies in their favor (Carpenter and Moss 2013). This forces actors to rely more on their networks of likeminded actors.

There are four general pathways towards change— reform, revolution, isolationism, and alternative institution building (E. Wright 2010; 2015; 2019). Working within the system to reform it, tame it, change it, or redefine technical definitions and administrative rules can be a powerful strategy. Compared to launching a revolution, building coalitions, working out compromises, and engaging in pluralist politicking indicates a movement is committed to socio-political stability while obtaining the desired outcomes (Dahl 2005; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). But reform of an existing system from the “inside” requires having access to levers of power, which by definition of being anti-systemic, they do not have such access. In the face of a systemic crisis where reform is no longer sufficient, revolt in the form of a continental congress or a military action can be seen as a way to tear down and start from scratch. However, revolution faces the risk of creating a power vacuum, as seen in the recent Arab Spring. In some cases, removing yourself from the institutions around you as much as possible, such as homesteading and disengaging from voting and other public roles, can be a partial solution for individuals and small groups of people. The building of an alternative system of institutions from the ground up can either displace existing institutions peacefully or fill power vacuums, but rarely is an anti-systemic network of alternative institutions able to grow large enough and be capable of doing either on its own. This makes the building of anti-systemic networks of institutions especially difficult without widespread public support and individuals willing to work against significant odds.

Anti-systemic movements which use a synergistic approach to change, utilizing strategies and tactics from all four approaches of reform, revolution, isolation, and institution building, can tame the hegemonic system, clear away institutions and policies and norms which are no longer useful, provide laboratories of experiments for alternative institutions, and build infrastructures to scale up new institutions to either displace or integrate into the existing system (E. Wright 2010; 2019). The key to breaking through the classic question of “reform or revolution” (Luxemburg 2023) is seeing reform as a strategy to “hospice” the old system and institution building as a way to “midwife” the new one (Axelrod et al. 2023), with the grievances of the revolutionary movement used to guide the direction and nature of hospicing and midwifing. These new institutions are policies, legal entities (like businesses), and infrastructures which aim to address the root causes of social and ecological issues as “non-reformist reforms,” surreptitiously challenging existing structures by instituting organizational design changes which open up opportunities to directly challenge root causes of systemic issues (Gorz 1967). These institutions then grow up in the “cracks” of the old system (often literally streets and squares in cities) where the old system’s dominant institutions have the least power and influence, or simply fail to work (Lefebvre 2003). These new institutions eventually have physical form (as new buildings, spaces, monuments, etc.) on the streets and in the cracks of the existing old system where they are able to flourish and grow relatively undisturbed until “the anti-city would conquer the city, penetrate it, break it apart” (Lefebvre 2003, 13), creating an entirely new kind of urban landscape and landscape of social institutions. A prefigurative alternative economy and political economy forms from the network of actors in the “cracks,” building non-reformist reform institutions. This prefigurative network of alternative institutions

based on non-reformist reforms, like the Next System, when given the space to flourish can build coalitions and coordinate politically strategic actions to both undermine the power of existing institutions and capture key leverage points.

Utilizing network theory helps to explain how New Deal reforms based on Keynesianism, as well as Neoliberalism, followed this same pathway and thus brought about political economy regime changes in the 20th century (Mudge 2018). In both cases, crisis and failure of adequate reform contributed to the conditions ripe for alternative economic ideologies, but while necessary for a regime change, only the networked strategic political actions of building coalitions of alternative institutions were sufficient to trigger a regime change. Then, successful capture of leverage points of power (like the White House, a majority in congress, or the local town planning office) trigger fundamental changes in the political economy of polities. This alters the value systems through which decisions are made and integrates the alternative institutions into the existing system, therefore going beyond simple concessions and towards a new world system order.

The fundamental changes triggered by the anti-systemic prefigurative political economy capturing key points of power can be alternatively understood as a strategic process of “evolving” our current political economy into something new. This is done through developing a networked ecosystem of new institutions (political, social, culture, and economic), which differentiate themselves from the old system and ultimately displace large portions of it over time through competitive “selection” (Alperovitz 2017; Hanna and Kelly 2021). This dialectical Hegelian developmental evolution to the political economy is a kind of transformative change that views the economy as an ecology, which is evolving as a whole. Within the Next System,

terms for this process include “emergent strategy,” described as eschewing planning processes for in-the-moment adaptations (Brown 2017), and “acorn-omics,” which describes the human nurtured growth and development of oak trees as symbolic of human communities (“What We Do,” n.d.; “Institute for Social Ecology,” n.d.)

Political Coalitions of the Next System: A Conceptual Framework

A synergistic structural-functionalist political strategy of the Next System ecosystem seeks to neutralize harm and transcend capitalism’s structures (Ayni Institute 2024; Axelrod et al. 2023; E. Wright 2010; 2019). The strategy is composed of multiple coalitions of actors using four different strategies, each largely operating at different scales (see figure 3 below). A top-down “inside game” of reform (i.e., “taming” capitalism”) and a bottom-up strategy of alternative institution building (i.e., “eroding” capitalism) is complemented by a transnational socio-political movement which demands specific actions and solutions (i.e., “smashing” capitalism), put into practice by the first two coalitions. A fourth strategy is composed of actors seeking to remove themselves from the world system as much as possible and experiment with new counter-hegemonic tactics (i.e., “escaping” capitalism), some of which are scaled up by the institution builders.

According to both Wright³ (2010; 2015; 2019) and the Ayni Institute⁴, bottom-up strategies of “eroding” capitalism builds institutions from the ground up through processes like participatory budgeting, stakeholder governance (especially in the production of inelastic

³ E.O. Wright is a social theorist on social change, developing a framework for the Next System theory of change based in more than a decade of interviews, focus groups, and workshops

⁴ The Ayni Institute is a Next System educational organization seeking to educate leaders and organizations on systemic change

macro-political of "hospicing" the existing system	Federal/National level	Neutralizing Harm	Global-Local level	Transcending Structures
		Taming		Smashing
		Inside Game Guides		Mass Protest
		Structural Organizing Visionaries Builders		Alternatives Experimenters Builders Disrupters
		Regulation & Policy		Revolution
		Technical Fixes		Movements Storytellers
				Solidarity/Mutual Aid & Intentional Communities Frontline Responders Caregivers
				Socially Embedded Economics
micro-political or "midwifing" in the new system	Home/Neighborhood/Local Level	Escaping	Local-Regional Level	Eroding
		Alternatives		Structural Organizing
		Experimenters Builders Disrupters		Visionaries Builders
		Personal Transformation Healers		Alternatives Experimenters Builders Disrupters
		Isolationism		
		Small Scale projects Builders		Scaling up hybrids Builders
		Pilot projects Builders		
		Solidarity/Mutual Aid & Intentional Communities Frontline Responders Caregivers		

Figure 3 Four Political Strategies of Change. Framework By Erik Olin Wright, How to Be an Anticapitalist Today, Jacobin Magazine with examples for each strategy from the Ayni Institute

consumer goods such as “basic needs”), and diversifying legal business structures to increase local ownership. These are “non-reformist reforms” which alter the process by which decision-making is controlled, undermining the power of elites over the long term to shape institutions in their favor. Actors in the “eroding” coalition are the actual builders of the infrastructure of the Next System -- the political, social, and economic institutions.

Wright conceptualizes three types of alternative institutions: ruptural, interstitial, and symbiotic (E. Wright 2010; E. O. Wright 2013; E. Wright 2019). Ruptural institutions are radically emancipatory, primarily used by or in partnership with the “smashing” capitalism coalition to rebuild society from the bottom-up. Interstitial institutions are born in the “cracks”

of capitalism, often reclaiming the streets for alternative uses, like Lefevre suggests. According to Wright, “the central theoretical idea is that building alternatives on the ground in whatever spaces are possible serves a critical ideological function by showing that alternative ways of working and living are possible, and potentially erodes constraints on the spaces themselves” (E. Wright 2013, 20). Symbiotic institutions build upon existing frameworks and institutions but do so in novel ways. Next System “non-reformist reforms” (Gorz 1967) are primarily built around multi-scalar, flexible, project-oriented (or task-specific) participatory stakeholder groups with practical orientations around particular communities and problems like health services, transportation, fire protection, and welfare, relying on deliberative development of solutions (Fung and Wright 2001; Hooghe and Marks 2003; Ostrom and Ostrom 1979). Neoliberalism largely already created an abundance of these “special districts” and subcontracted nonprofit organizations and businesses (inclusive of privatized public entities, like utilities) at the local level (Hooghe and Marks 2003), but they have been captured by local

elites rather than submitted to popular democracy (Immerwahr 2015; Laurent 2015; Marwell 2004). The Next System seeks to democratize these decentralized units, and is thus able to erode away the power of capitalism.

The “inside game” of “taming” capitalism works through regulation, policy, and technical fixes establishing a political economy that is slightly less exploitative and extractive, enough so to allow the other strategies to flourish. Within the decentralized neoliberal state, this means guiding governmental policy to be facilitative of decentralized and subcontracted units and making them more democratic to co-govern with the people whom policy impacts. It is important to emphasize that democratizing the decentralized state is treating these socio-political governance organizations the same way a business incubator nurtures entrepreneurs; not as a vehicle to replace the political/economic ecosystem but rather as generators of innovation to make it stronger and more diverse (Beckett 2019; Guinan and O’Neill 2019). If the 20th century project of the Democratic Party was mass politics (Mudge 2018), diversifying the people involved in governance to create a more authentic government that is “by the people, for the people,” then perhaps democratizing the 21st century polycentric decentralized federal government is just as feasible.

Actors in the “escaping” coalition helps to delegitimize the hegemonic one by their withdrawal, and the “smashing” coalition helps by bringing attention to structural problems in the economy and our political system. “Escaping” from the harms of capitalism results in not just isolationism but also a fertile ground of innovation and pilot projects. The self-reflection and transformation common in this group provides much of the ideological shift the other three categories rely on for visioning a better world. The pilot projects are used by the bottom-up

“eroding” category of actors as the seeds for projects to scale, relying heavily on the models of the “taming” group to scale them in ways that have larger and wider impacts on the economy and political structure of the US as a whole.

By generating cohesive political “asks” that collate novel solutions to them, the “smashing” coalition helps to remove what is no longer working and demonstrate that revolution could be possible through massive and real demonstrations of alternative practices if their demands are not met. Their work is grounded in changing cultural components of our institutions and resorting to socially embedded economic practices whenever necessary. These help to work around the ways hierarchical control or top-down positionality has a tendency to contain, demobilize, and coopt bottom-up agitation (D. Wright and Kulkarni 2024).

An example in operationalizing this framework is the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services’ (DSHS) effort to reframe the poverty line to a “self-sufficiency” standard. The updated methodology and definition came from a co-governance community assembly between DSHS and families in poverty, providing a stronger safety net that considers regional variation (Tracy 2024). Several new institutions were built (such as the community assembly) and more than 60 reforms of existing Washington state governmental agencies and policies were implemented in the first 18 months alone. This success built upon the United Way of Pierce County's basic income pilot project, one of the most theoretically robust pilot designs (of the 151 pilots launched since 2016) to intervene in generational poverty (Rodriguez et al. 2023; “Resilient Pierce County 2020 Culminating Report” 2021). The “innovator-in-chief” leading this project served as one of the key people in the United Way basic income pilot before joining DSHS and then serving on Governor Inslee's economic advisory committee. Not all

elements of this example would show up in the present study. The EDOs which provided the technical assistance and funding in developing the basic income pilot would show up in this study's network, but government agencies would not. Organizations like the United Way of Pierce County, which internally embraces a mix of these four strategies, are more likely to be found as bridging nodes between the four political coalitions.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Question

The present study is a case study of the prefigurative Next System political economy of the United States. It models both the structure of the Next System as an anti-systemic movement and the prefigurative US political economy by tracing the relationships of one particular kind of alternative institution, the Economic Development organization (EDO). These Next System versions of EDOs are valuable because of their explicit operationalization of Next System values into developing *other* alternative institutions. Methodologically, EDOs are easier to study because social norms lead to (and in some cases the law requires) organizations to list their formal relationships with funders and partners publicly. They are also representative of large numbers of people and organizations because businesses, non-profits, political parties, and government agencies and bodies are all *their* clients. This makes it easier to model the nature of the entire political economy in social network analysis with only a few hundred nodes. As representative actors of a larger system, this also avoids the need to construct complex network structures, or a "network-system," composed of layers of different kinds of relationships in different contexts, like the network of the alterglobalization movement

attempted by Nunes (Nunes 2014). Furthermore, EDOs are stable, long-term actors within the broader dynamic anti-systemic network composed of social movements, influential people, significant events, popular trends, and fleeting single-issue pilot projects and businesses and organizations (ibid.). For example, a novel community owned co-op or local currency pilot project may be inspirational examples of what is possible, but EDOs are anchor institutions which steward the economic stability of whole regions or nations.

This study asks whether there are enough Next System EDOs with enough distinction from the neoliberal economy to constitute a prefigurative political economy regime. The primary outcome of interest is a topographical structural-functionalist description of the network's EDOs and any dense community clusters of relationships, including developing a histogram of the most common keywords on the organizational website of actors within each coalition. A secondary goal of this study is to analyze the power of key actors and community clusters in the network with the following research questions:

1. What are the relationships between actors in the network and who are the influential actors (including key power brokers)?
2. Do any clusters of actors share similar strategies, ontologies, and ideologies, and therefore become "coalitions"? What do they have in common and how do they differ?
3. How do the coalitions compare to E. O. Wright's framework of "anti-capitalist strategies"?

The hypothesis is that there will be clusters of actors who have more in common with each other when compared with the other community clusters, thus forming coalitions. These coalitions will reflect Wright's thesis on political strategy. Commonalities between all coalitions

are indicative of the characteristics of the network paradigm, which can inform us about the nature of the Next System. This could include common values, a general agreement on the nature of the problem (aka: the hegemonic system), and the strategies and tactics used to address the problem.

Methods

This is a mixed-methods, exploratory, descriptive study using social network analysis (SNA) and qualitative analysis of exogenous attributes of organizations grounded in critical ethnographic methods (Palmer and Caldas 2015). Novel mixed methods approaches to SNA incorporate exogenous attributes such as qualitative characteristics of actors, which cannot be mathematically modeled for analysis. SNA analysis is especially powerful because it removes exogenous attributes so to identify communities of agents with strong relationships with each other, thus generating density and cohesion with a community of actors (or “nodes”) and resulting in fewer ties to actors in other communities. This can create natural pools of case studies for further analysis. The actors studied together as a group represent sub-paradigms of the whole network due to their unique characteristics. Thus, depending on the scale analyzed in the network, the network as a whole can be treated as a singular case study, each community can be a case study, or individual nodes/actors can be case studies. This study examines the network as a whole and each of the communities as case studies.

Social Network Analysis

Social Network Analysis (SNA) is used to visualize and analyze the relationships between key actors, key concepts, scholars, and publications with the Next System and then identify the

clusters of thought and influential nodes within the subsequently constructed network. Most importantly, it can interrogate the impact of relationships between actors, and how those relationships modify the behavior of actors.

A snowball method was used as a sampling strategy to collect relational data in the Next System network to build a social network database matrix, which was uploaded into the SNA software program Gephi for graphing and quantitative calculations. Snowball sampling was used to build the network because an existing dataset of the anti-systemic Next System actors has not yet been compiled, and it is unknown how large the network is.

Data is derived exclusively from organizational websites' self-reported information. It is assumed organizational websites would only reflect ties with other organizations if there was a formal relationship of some permanence (such as funder relationships or project partners), indicating a meaningful relationship within the network. This type of relationship is considered a form of political capital, "which consists of organization, connections, voice, and power as citizens turn shared norms and values into standards that are codified into rules, regulations, and resource distributions that are enforced" (Flora 2019, 184). While transactional relationships can certainly turn into long term relationships, I draw on the concept of use versus exchange capital (Marx 1873) in conceptualizing political capital. Organizations networked into long-term relationships depend on maintaining the usefulness of potential political favors, whereas utilizing political capital (especially in a weak, transactional context) can potentially draw down the capital stock available and destroy a relational tie. This draws on foundational early social network studies in sociology on "social capital" in networks where differences between strong social capital (in-group relational ties) and weak social capital (between group

relational ties), frequently abbreviated as “weak” vs “strong” ties, produce profound impacts only on the ability of individual agents to obtain different favors such as a job (Granovetter 1995). Weak ties, or “bridging” social capital, vs. strong ties, or “bonding” social capital, also play an important role in the social structure of whole physical communities (Henning and Lieberg 1996; Kavanaugh et al. 2003) and the ability for actors to bring in assets from outside the community for development purposes (Flora 2019). This operationalization of potential political capital provides a meaningful mechanism to measure power coalitions either between or within political economy governance communities.

Focusing explicitly on potential political capital within formal, publicized relationships leaves the possibility of missing important relationships. Only including relationships on websites, however, provides methodological consistency. While additional ties can be identified, such as when multiple organizations collaborate in generating a white paper or policy recommendation, or presenting together at a conference, these ties are not documented because they are not necessarily indicative of meaningful, predictable potential political capital compared to the durable formalized ties advertised on organizational websites. Utilizing media sources, public relations products (such as newsletters, social media, etc.), and social media sources (such as LinkedIn) as sources of information on ties was also rejected due to the large time investment required as well as the complexity, and inconsistency of the materials which would make replicability of this study more challenging.

Unlike in statistical methods, it is impossible to generate a representative sample of a network, and thus whole datasets are required for analysis (Wasserman and Faust 1994). Approximate saturation is reached when the addition of a new node does not significantly alter

the structural characteristics of the network (ibid.). When all members of a network are unknown, snowball sampling can be used, but the final network analysis should be considered potentially incomplete or biased due to missing nodes and relationships (J. Scott 2017). Since networks are composed to cross-sectional snapshots in a single point in time, the reconstruction of the same network over several points in time can build confidence in whether a network has reached saturation (Mejeh 2020). Advanced techniques beyond the scope of this study using mathematically generated random networks as a control can be used to improve confidence in whether a network is complete and whether its actors are behaving in ways beyond chance (Wasserman and Robins 2005).

Five organizations (New Economy Coalition, Democracy Collaborative, Economic Security Project, Cooperation Jackson, and the Sustainable Economies Law Center) were selected to start the snowball method. These were selected based on the authors experience with the network since 2007 as a nonprofit manager, fundraiser, political organizer and campaign manager, and current member of the network as a social entrepreneur. At least one organization was selected as a hypothesis member for each of E.O. Wright's political strategy categories (namely the Democracy Collaborative and Economic Security Project for "taming," Sustainable Economies Law Center for "eroding," and Cooperation Jackson for "smashing"), and an additional organization, the New Economy Coalition, selected as a political membership organization which seeks to bring together as many members of the Next System as possible. The organizations were recorded in Excel in a symmetrical matrix as undirected ties, which is a binary categorization of relationships between two actors which does not document the directionality of a relationship. Two types of ties were recorded- 1) organizational level ties,

such as strategic partnerships and funders, subsidiaries, program or project collaborators, or members, and 2) personnel level ties, such as the concurrent or prior affiliations of staff, board members, and fellows as reported in their biographies on their organization websites. It is assumed these biographies would not list ties to organizations with which the person has a negative relationship, meaning that the majority of listed ties constitute potential “channels” of communication.

Due to the differences between organization-to-organization relational matrixes versus affiliation matrices, which documents the relationships of individuals with organizations, an affiliation matrix was created only for documentation purposes and personnel affiliations were recorded as direct ties between the organizations. This uses the same methodology employed by SNA public wiki *littlesis.org* which tracks elite political economy actors. Methodologically, however, this is unusual. In a typical SNA matrix, people who serve as bridges between organizations are recorded in a separate matrix and a complex network structure, or “network-system,” composed of layers of different kinds of relationships in different contexts, is constructed. In the present study, multiple organizational ties and personnel affiliations between two nodes were summed to create a “weighted” or “valued” tie. Collapsing the layers of relationships into a singular weighted matrix avoids a nested multi-matrix network structure requiring more complex SNA software and procedures. Once uploaded in the SNA software (Gephi), this allows organizations with multiple ties to the same organization to be graphed with thicker edges to demonstrate stronger ties. This methodological choice is not considered to impact the quality of analysis of the present study since the emphasis of the present study is on 1) global characteristics of the network and general subunits/communities to determine the

approximate shape of the network, and 2) it gives more nuance to the strength of ties between two organizations as multiple potential “channels” of communication or potential political capital. This provides a meaningful mechanism to measure power within and between coalitions.

Once the network matrix was constructed and uploaded into Gephi, isolates and organizations with only one tie were eliminated from the network to aid in visualizing network-level relationships. Endogenous quantitative characteristics of the actors and relationships in the network were generated using Gephi’s analytical software. A community detection algorithm based on the “modularity” of the graph was run to create distinct communities (“Gephi Tutorial Quick Start,” n.d.). A force-directed algorithm (“Force Atlas”) was applied until equilibrium was reached to organize nodes to have as few overlapping edges as possible, which also places nodes with high degree (i.e., the nodes of interest in the study) equidistant from each other. This process organized high degree nodes with multiple ties between them in proximity to each other, and highlighted bridging nodes while minimizing the visibility of low degree nodes. Basic descriptive whole network measures, such as density and centrality, were calculated, and endogenous characteristics of each community, such as the distribution of power, were noted.

Manual manipulation of node and edge size were used to improve visual inspection and to highlight node degree or the quantity of ties between organizations. Bridging nodes were then manually arranged to cluster by type (e.g., funders, social movements, university research connections, etc.) to showcase qualitative themes in meaningful communities of organizations. The resulting graph’s quantitative communities were then qualitatively clustered into

communities using the calculated modules, bridging nodes, and exogenous attributes (e.g., organization type and names). The resulting data was then compared to the conceptual model based on E.O. Wright's four basic political strategies of anti-capitalism (see figure 1) to test his thesis.

In order to explore exogenous attributes of the SNA derived community clusters to determine if they form coalitions with common values or demographic features, quantitative thematic analysis was performed by generating word clouds of key words on websites of any organization with three or more ties to other organizations. Quantitative accounting of key words was performed using <https://www.wordclouds.com> to list the number of times words appeared on the website. Material from the homepage, about us, mission/vision, and other relevant descriptive pages was fed through the program and words which appeared more than five times were collected in an Excel spreadsheet. The results of each website were collated together and averaged to generate a histogram for each community cluster, and for the network as a whole.

Critical Ethnography

Since network analysis is largely a narrative science attempting to construct a story of how and why nodes (actors) interact with each other, ethnographic research was performed to gain a deeper understanding of exogenous attributes and coalitional behavior. While I have converted to or experimented with Next System versions of almost all aspects of my life (work, home, transportation, entertainment, consumption patterns, community engagement, political activism, etc.) at some point in the past 17 years, I have not previously interacted directly with Next System EDOs. Therefore, I joined several organizations within the network and attended

conferences and workshops put on by network actors. Additionally, a “Next System” social media presence was established to triangulate the ethnographic research to generate conversation and build a knowledge commons about Next System ideas, and to identify additional possible actors to add to the snowball sample. Ethnography is a complementary tool to SNA because multiple endogenous structural network processes and relationship types between the same set of actors can operate simultaneously. Ethnographic research provides exogenous information about network actors and relationships, assisting in teasing apart how these endogenous processes operate. Network theory assumes endogenous structural network factors of interaction between actors reinforce themselves so that the longer a group is together, the less likely exogenous attributes are statistically significant (Whitbred et al. 2011), and the Next System is still a very young network. Therefore, the exogenous attributes identified at this stage in the network’s development can be considered potentially playing a role in the structural endogenous strength of relationships, with potentially large future path-dependent impacts as the network grows around early relationships.

This particular ethnographic approach follows studies such as (Nichols et al. 2022), which analyzes textual material (such as websites, textual communications like social media and emails, and published organizational material) as the primary “field” to study, rather than the traditional in-person field. Direct interactions with network members are considered supplementary data, primarily used to triangulate data collection in texts. In the present study, qualitative analysis of organizations uses textual analysis of EDO websites and their other published materials.

Since I have been embedded within the Next System network for 17 years, this is *critical* ethnography because of its focus on critical theory praxis as a mechanism of scholar-activism (Palmer and Caldas 2015). Critical ethnography requires a progressive subjectivity due to the challenges of being embedded within the network of study. For example, in interacting with network members, I am careful to delineate which “hat” I am wearing, such as business owner versus scholar.

Inclusion Criteria

To be considered as potential nodes in the Next System network, EDOs must first be development organizations. Development is defined as practices, policies, programs, political actions, or discourse leading to the establishment of new institutions or formal entities such as businesses and non-profits supplying products and services, government bodies or agencies, or community groups. Each EDO must focus on developing an aspect of sustainability, as defined by Doughnut Economics (see figure 1) and they must emphasize participatory democracy, equity and equality, or economic justice. Examples of economic development organizations (EDOs) include but are not limited to think tanks, businesses, nonprofits, funders, foundations, community development financial institutions (CDFIs), and socio-political organizations. Many Next System EDOs do not cleanly fit into neoliberal institutional models; therefore, any organizational structure which facilitates sustainable economic development was tagged for further potential inclusion within the snowball sampling method. Organizations had to be at least 5 years old (with rare exception) and legally organized (such as registered with the IRS) with demonstratable, measurable, and scalable impacts.

When identifying Next System EDOs, utilizing symbolic interactionism is my primary methodology for determining inclusion since networks are composed of individual interactions embedded with symbolic meaning. The symbolic interactionism of visuals, stories, keywords, and the overall narrative of the organization’s website provides context for the organization’s value system, theory of change, and goals. To distinguish Next System EDOs from neoliberalized left-leaning or neoliberalized Democratic Party associated organizations (Bendell 2023; Mudge 2018), which may also embrace democracy, sustainability, equity and equality, and/or economic justice, the symbology of the artistic movement of Solarpunk is used as a heuristic of Next System values (see figure 4). Solarpunk is an aesthetic “artpolitik” movement calling for social and environmental justice, which operates like a Gramscian type of ideology (Gramsci 2021) for the Next System. Artpolitik is the use of art to critique political and economic realities, taking a stance in opposition to hegemonic structures to reclaim art making (and meanings) from capitalist marketing and mass production (Schleuning 2013; Solarpunk Surf Club 2024). As such, solarpunk has much in common with Socialist Realism in imagining



Figure 4 Solarpunk art. *The Fifth Sacred Thing* by Jessica Perlstein, www.jessicaperlstein.com

different arrangements of economic and political power in society and visioning new institutional arrangements for the future (Solarpunk Surf Club 2024). These “solarpunk stories function as counter-hegemonic media by intertwining issues of race, gender, sexuality, class, and colonialism with an ecological ethic” (Johnson 2020, 1).

Solarpunk frequently depicts and invents new examples of “real utopias,” composed of liberatory social institutions and infrastructures based in existing technology and social organizational forms. Themes derived from artistic and literary analysis of solarpunk works, such as radical inclusivity of diverse peoples (rather than merely as token minorities), the building of local power and autonomy (rather than people existing in client relationships with charities or government agencies), post-scarcity visions (rather than simply surviving with basic needs), and the use of infrastructure as a source of freedom, liberating people to focus on whatever is meaningful to them (rather than infrastructure as a consistent toll to be paid to be used) (Solarpunk Surf Club 2024) are used as symbolic indicators of Next System organizations. In the solarpunk image (see figure 4), a “regenerative” city is depicted consisting of urban agriculture in the form of food forests and renewable energy generation. This infrastructure is emancipatory in nature rather than fee-based neoliberal infrastructures, allowing residents to enjoy a greater amount of free time to engage in activities which support good health and mental health.

In contrast to ecomodernism, solarpunk explicitly positions “technology [to be] put in service of humans and the environment” (Woodbury and Flynn 2015) rather than the use of technology for its own sake, or as a mechanism for exploitation and wealth extraction. For example, artificial intelligence and sensor systems used to manage a complex irrigation system

which adjusts micronutrients and water levels for each plant based on real time conditions would be used to improve ecological sustainability of an area to reduce impacts. This contrasts with the way technology is currently used to compensate for the resource needs of crops which do not fit the local bioregion and may have an extraordinary impact on local resources, like planting nut orchards in an area prone to drought. Solarpunk art and stories are full of urban designs mixing high technology with biodiverse, regenerative landscapes.

As an example of the use of solarpunk themes on the organizational website of the EDO Cooperation Jackson, there are pictures of diverse people, symbols of native and Black resistance, and images of nature that highlight growth and abundance (rather than carefully manicured or “tamed” nature). Additionally, the layout of the website emphasizes collective and non-hierarchical organization, balancing text with images which improves legibility for viewers with low levels of literacy. These symbolic features support the *language* of diversity, equity, democracy, and sustainability. In contrast, the Sierra Club website uses much of the same language of diversity, equity, democracy, and sustainability, but its imagery is far more abstract, emphasizes what *they* do *for* people and planet rather than seeing themselves as a part of the ecological community working *with* other people, advocates for ecomodernist solutions, and has a brutalist aesthetic. Furthermore, it is text heavy and organizes the topics by division in a nested design much like a bureaucracy.

A small selection of leftist neoliberal organizations and non-development organizations (e.g., political parties; special interest groups; media such as podcasts, magazines, journals; fellowships; funders; consulting firms; university research centers; lobbyists and law firms; labor unions) were included in the database if they create unique and important bridging ties

between the primary study's organizations. They are, however, not analyzed for additional ties. Progressive departments or unique programs within large organizations that are not inherently leftist or progressive (like universities or large foundations) are recorded as individual nodes since the relationship to the department is the relevant relationship.

Finally, the symbolic interactionism of the cultures of each of E.O. Wright's political strategy coalitions of "taming," "eroding," and "smashing" (see Figure 1) was noted as exogenous attributes. These included, but were not limited to sociocultural and geographic characteristics of "status lifestyles" (Bourdieu 2013; Giddens 2013; Weber 1978) such as education levels, income, types of occupations and at what scale of geography they were located in, and types of communities lived in.

Limitations

Due to the unexpectedly large size of the network, saturation was not reached. This limits the ability to use more advanced SNA analytical tools or construct a randomly generated network with similar characteristics to be used as a control to rule out network relationships as the result of chance (Mejeh 2020; Roller 2020; J. Scott 2017). Additionally, nodes beyond economic development organizations with significant ties to established hegemonic power, such as congressional members or major news organizations, could not be included. The lack of inclusion of non-progressive organizations and ties specifically makes it difficult to calculate role equivalence measures, which is when two nodes have the same or similar types of ties and centrality, even if they do not have ties to the same nodes (Wasserman and Faust 1994). Connections to non-Next System actors can highlight interdependencies with the greater

political economy and is especially important if only one coalition is doing so. Differences in role equivalence can also contribute to defining power relationships with more nuance. The ability to calculate role equivalence measures and integration with existing institutions with power would allow for testing Mudge's historical network thesis on political economy regime changes, where anti-systemic network actors have become powerful enough to be able to influence or capture existing sources of power (Mudge 2018). Integration of this network into the littleisis.org public wiki network could possibly allow for a preliminary analysis of this type.

Chapter 4: Data

Description and Characteristics of the Dataset

Relational data on Next System Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) was collected in April of 2023 by extracting from EDO websites the names of organizations listed as formal partners (such as funders or partners) and organizations named in staff biographies. These relationships are coded as potential political capital. The type of organization was coded in a separate exogenous attribute database. Not all organizations extracted were EDOs but were included because they formed unique and important bridges between Next System EDOs.

The first step in building a network database was selecting an initial set of five organizations, based on the author's experience with the network. At least one organization was selected as a hypothesis member for each of E.O. Wright's political strategy categories⁵

⁵ By definition, the "escaping" coalition are isolates and therefore would not show up in a network built with snowball sampling

(Democracy Collaborative and Economic Security Project for “taming,” Sustainable Economies Law Center for “eroding,” and Cooperation Jackson for “smashing”), and an additional organization, the New Economy Coalition, was selected as a political membership organization which seeks to bring together as many members of the Next System as possible. Through snowball sampling, a database of organizations was developed and seven additional EDOs were selected for the same website extraction procedure. EDOs which are building alternative institutions were prioritized. Given resource limitations, the relational data on only twelve organizations were fully extracted.

These twelve organizations generated a database matrix of 718 other organizations from their official websites. After uploading the SNA matrix into Gephi, isolates and organizations with a degree of 1 (i.e., having only one tie to another organization) were eliminated. Of the original 718, 122 organizations remained with 276 relationship connections (“edges”) generated between them. Within this network, 37 organizations had a degree of three or more (connections with other organizations), indicating they had a meaningful role within the network due to their potential political capital. With each new extracted organizational website, on average of 60 organizations were added to the database in a symmetrical matrix. New relationships were added but existing organizations with connections to organizations already extracted were marked in the matrix as a connection and not added again. Saturation would occur when database additions drop to minimal levels and most ties are to actors already existing in the network. Due to this volume of new relationships for each additional organization of the original twelve, and the relatively low numbers of relationships with organizations already in the database (average degree of 2.4), this could suggest the

network is far from complete and has not reached saturation (the average path length is only 2.815 nodes, indicating the network is small). Alternatively, the network is still too young to study because it does not have significant interconnections (the graph density is 0.037, determined by the ratio of the number of edges divided by the number of possible edges). However, the website of each organization added to the database was reviewed and as the database grew larger, increasing numbers of their connections were organizations already in the database. Therefore, it is likely if additional websites were extracted, the ratio of existing organizations to new ones would increase significantly.

The ethnographic portion of this study also highlighted several key power players which had come up in the initial list of 718 organizations but had a degree of only one or two. This indicates either the selected twelve organizations were not a representative sample or the possibility the network had not yet reached saturation. Due to the low degree, short path lengths, and low graph density, I believe the network has not reached saturation. However, ethnographic research revealed only two new organizations which appear to have significant influence within the network which had not already been discovered through the snowball sampling method. I estimate a complete network at the time of this study would likely be between 100 and 150 meaningful organizations with a degree of three or more. To triangulate the snowball sampling method, I participated in four conferences⁶ and numerous webinars and lecture series hosted by Next System organizations identified in the network. At each, a list of organizations who sponsored, participated as speakers, or attended in the audience was

⁶ COCAP2019 hosted by Common Future/BALLE, Decolonizing Economics Summit 2023 hosted by Cooperation Humboldt, the Solarpunk Conference 2023, and the 2024 California Just Economy Summit hosted by the Institute for Ecological Civilization

collected. Many organizations in my network with only one or two degrees played prominent roles at these events, leading me to believe that they are important to the Next System network and the SNA network has merely not reached saturation. An alternative interpretation of the network characteristics is that the low degree (number of connections) and thus density of the network is in part due to the higher standard for establishing a tie in this study. If all connections observed were documented, instead of just potential political capital, the SNA network would have demonstrated denser ties and higher node degrees.

It should be noted that, the inclusion criteria for each organization in the network required it to be a successful public institution (not simply a private consulting firm), meaning each has dozens or hundreds of businesses, agencies, and civic groups (known as “economic actors”) as clients or consumers. Therefore, this network as a representative sample of the U.S. Next System political economy is estimated to be between 8,616 to 215,400 economic actors if each organization had anywhere between 30 to 300 organizational clients. Calculating the exact number is not possible because this is proprietary internal information for organizations. EDO clients, however, additionally politically “represent” large numbers of their own customers and clients, meaning that the scope of this Next System network potentially encompasses hundreds of thousands of Americans. The EDO B-Corporation which certifies B-corps was not included in this cross-sectional study due to limited resources, but if it had, its approximately 3,000 American B-corp businesses and organizations would dramatically increase these estimations.

Community Detection

After basic network characteristics such as number of nodes and edges, density, nodal degree, and path length were calculated, community detection algorithms for “modularity” were run. This measures the strength of division of a network into distinct modules or groups. A modularity of zero means communities are either random chance or all nodes are in the same community and therefore the network does not have distinct communities. A modularity score of or 0.3 or higher is an indicator of significant community structure in a network (Clauset, Newman, and Moore 2004). The Next System network in this study had a modularity of 0.46, indicating distinct communities exist with dense connections between actors within the communities.

Since an incomplete network (i.e., a network which has not reached saturation) means the addition of an important actor can completely restructure the topographical features of the network and therefore basic network characteristics, identifying the boundaries of and characterizing each of the resulting communities is preliminary at best. However, based on exogenous symbolic characteristics identified on each website which correlate with each of E.O. Wright’s political strategies of “taming” (red line), “eroding” (purple line), and “smashing” (yellow line), the following boundaries were drawn (see figure 5 below). Since “escaping” organizations are by definition isolates, they were removed from the network (if they had shown up in the database at all). Importantly, Wright’s suggestion that ultimately a synergy of the four strategies would represent a significant next step in the evolution of such a

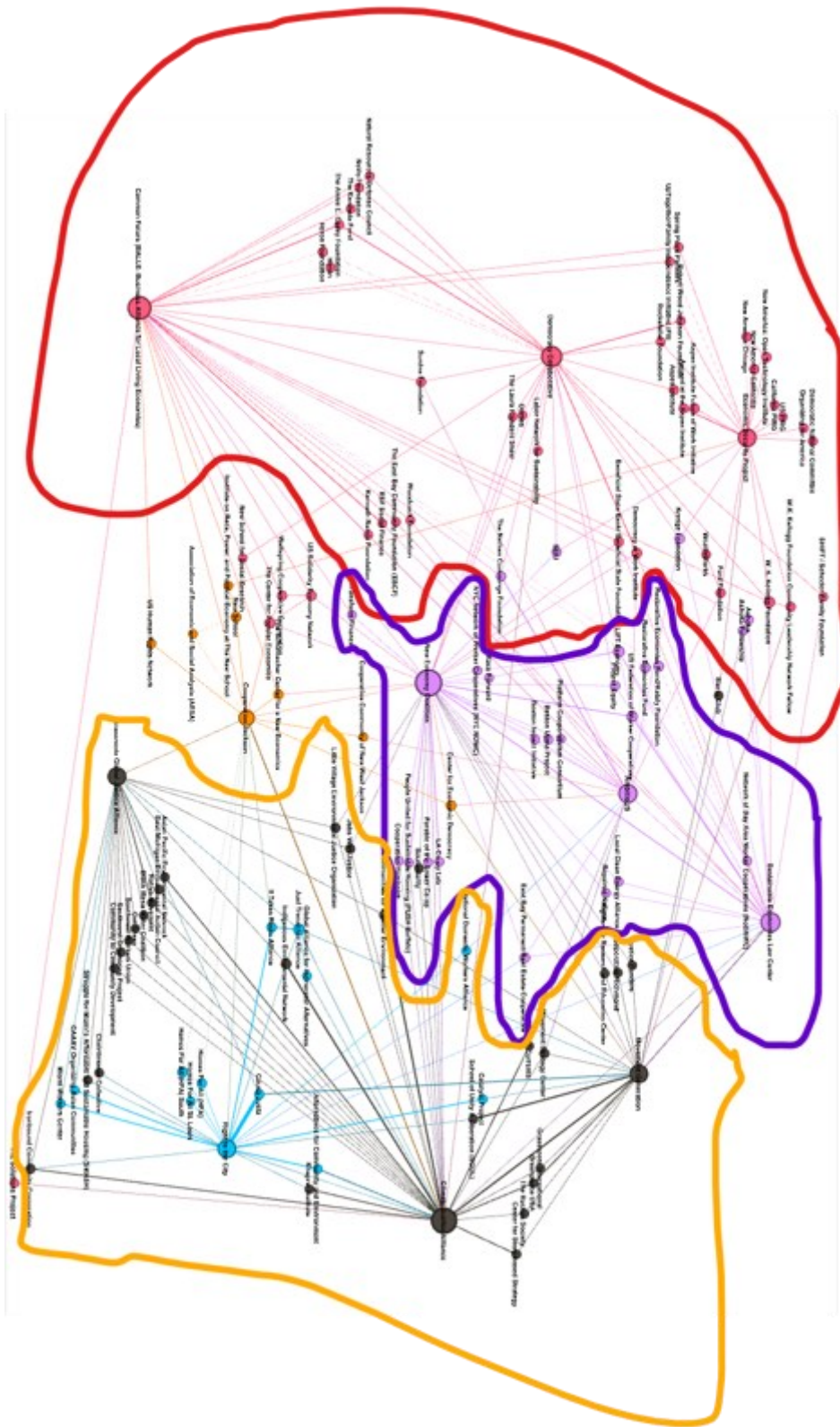


Figure 5: Social Network Analysis graph of potential political capital of the Next System political economy

network of actors, the formation of a loose group of actors with ties across the network represents a fifth potential “synergistic” strategy coalition. It is centered in the middle of the network (these organizations are not enclosed within a boundary since their number and density is still low) and has exogenous characteristics with elements from all three communities. The ethnographic observations in the year since the network was constructed suggest several of the organizations connected to this new cluster, which are located on the border within all three of the other communities, are developing characteristics more in line with the novel cluster.

Once the preliminary boundaries of the four communities were identified using both qualitative criteria and SNA tools such as modularity, force-directed algorithms (to spatially separate nodes visually), and manual manipulation for visual clarity, histograms were constructed of the most frequent words on each of the websites of actors with a degree of three or more. An appendix of these organizations with weblinks has been included.

“Smashing” Capitalism Community

Twelve organizations:

- Right to the City/Homes for All
- Causa Justa
- Just Transition Alliance
- It Takes Roots Alliance
- Indigenous Environmental Network
- Movement Generation
- Communities for a Better Environment
- Jobs with Justice
- Little Village Environmental Justice Organization
- Grassroots Global Justice Alliance
- Ironbound Community Corporation
- Climate Justice Alliance

Endogenous characteristics from the network map: There are a greater number of organizations in this community than the other communities, but they are also fractured into smaller sub-clusters which each appear to be associated with specific issues such as housing, environmental, and intersectional rights. The highest weighted ties were found in this community, demonstrating organizations had multiple channels of communication and collaborations. This was the only community with weighted ties to organizations outside their community (with organizations in the “eroding” and “synergistic” communities).

Exogenous characteristics: Most of these organizations appear to be social and political organizing groups, operating locally but building national and transnational alliances through social movementism. What characterizes them as EDOs is their work goes beyond demonstrations to include institution building. Most appear to advocate for socially embedded economic practices (such as the informal economy, eliminating private ownership or money, ecologically sustainable “ecovillages,” or permaculture-based food networks). The following histogram of website key words (198 words; approx. 18 words per website) shows an emphasis on justice, community, work, organizing, people, climate, power, economic, environment, grassroots, movement[s], alliance, build[ing], campaign[s], transition, local, housing, and rights.

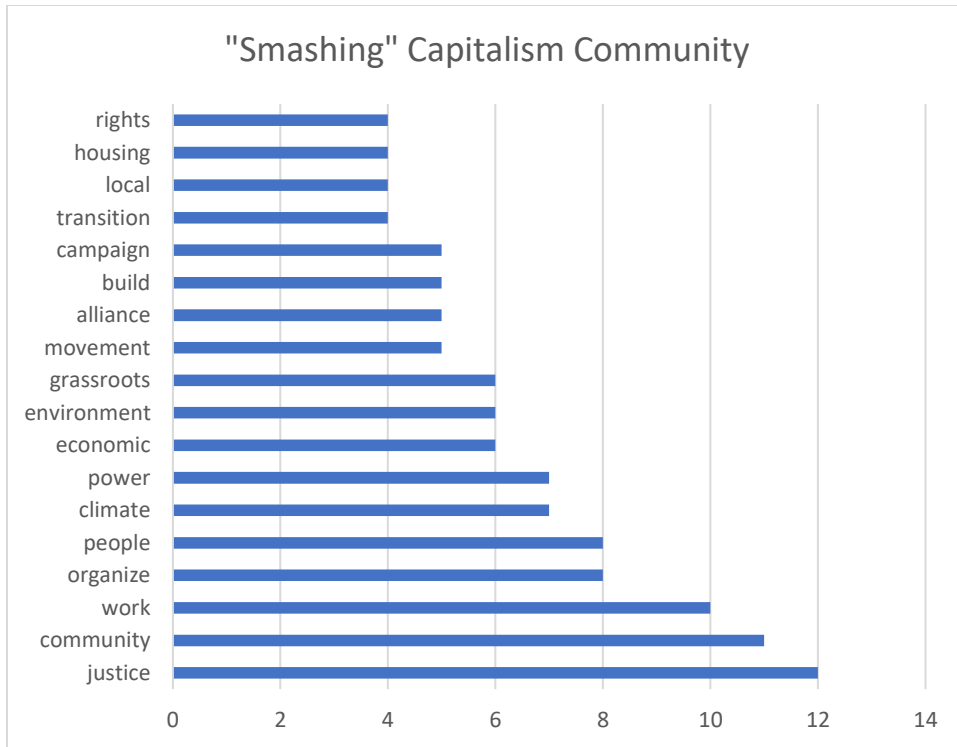


Figure 6: "Smashing" Capitalism Community

"Taming" Capitalism Community

Eleven organizations (only four with significant amount of text to analyze):

- BALLE/Common Future
- SEIU*
- Economic Security Project
- Democracy Collaborative
- Democracy at Work Institute
- Ford Foundation*
- Kellogg Foundation*
- Surdna Foundation**
- The Nathan Cummings Foundation**
- Kresge Foundation**
- Ashoka**

*Neoliberalized bridging organizations

**Older foundations which have adopted Next System values and solarpunk aesthetics

Endogenous characteristics from the network map: Actors form “egocentric” star networks, where single actors have many connections and form islands of power, but the organizations in their orbit do not interact with each other as much. Taming actors are connected to each other and other coalitions primarily via foundations and leadership training programs. Older organizations, such as labor unions or large environmental organizations like the Sierra Club also create bridges to other parts of the network. Numerous weighted ties linked these organizations together.

Exogenous characteristics: Most of these organizations appear to operate at the national level. The types of organizations are think tanks, project driven foundations providing grants, research organizations, and non-profits coordinating multiple programs in different places at the local level. The following histogram of website key words (52 words, 13/website) shows an emphasis on economic, build[ing], community, workers (note, not *work* like in the “smashing” community), democratic, development, and wealth. Other words which came up were impact, influence, institute, invest, lead, model, support, solutions, systemic.

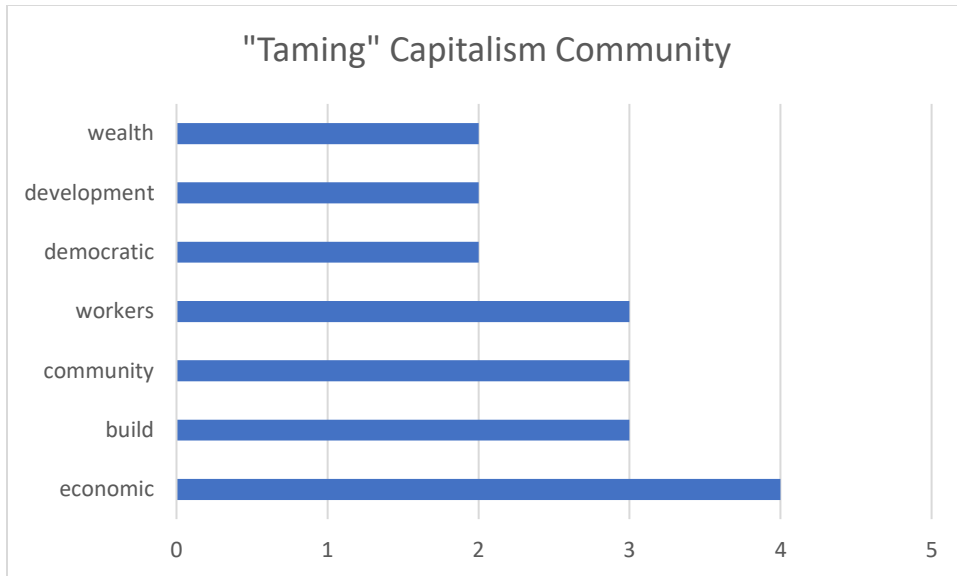


Figure 7: "Taming" Capitalism Community

"Eroding" Capitalism Community

Nine organizations:

- New Economy Coalition
- Ambitious
- US Federation of Worker Cooperatives
- LIFT Economy
- Project Equity
- Restorative Economies Fund/Kataly Foundation
- Sustainable Economies Law Center
- East Bay Permanent Real Estate Cooperative
- Beneficial State Bank/Beneficial State Foundation

Endogenous characteristics from the network map: Actors are highly networked with each other, and as a community they form a bridge between the "taming" and "smashing" communities. There are weighted ties between EDOs and funders, but not between EDOs.

Exogenous characteristics: Most of these organizations appear to be involved in building alternative institutions that fundamentally change the nature of economic, political, and social interactions between people. The types of organizations in this group are law offices, businesses and cooperatives and social enterprises, real estate/land trusts, public banks and credit unions, participatory citizen councils, or offering supply chain certifications (e.g., “fair trade”). The following histogram of website key words (200 words; approx. 22 unique words per webpage) focus on work, community, economic, build, organization, capital, cooperative, culture, finance, justice, learn, members, network, ownership, policy, and project.

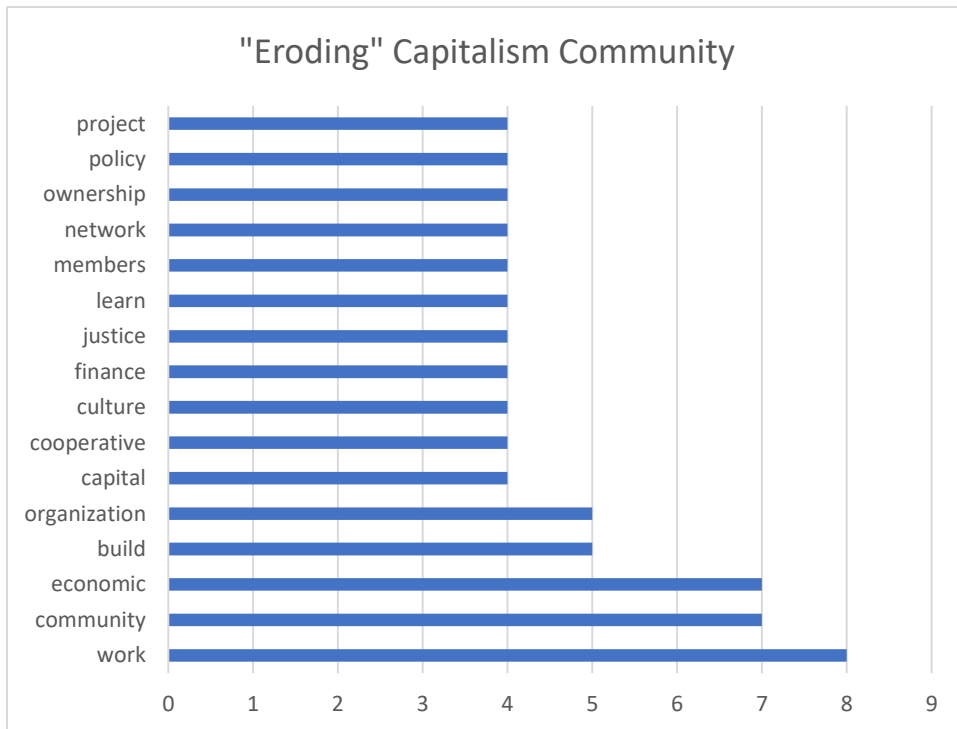


Figure 8: "Eroding" Capitalism Community

Novel "Synergistic" Community

Five organizations (only four analyzable):

- Cooperation Jackson

- Center for Economic Democracy
- Center for Popular Economics
- New School
- Schumacher Center for a New Economics

Endogenous characteristics from the network map: Actors are connected to all three bounded communities and to a diverse set of organizations. There are no weighted ties between these organizations at the time of the study.

Exogenous characteristics: Most of these organizations appear to have organizational models and activities which blend characteristics from the other three communities. They have both an internal and external focus. Internally, they heavily emphasize public education on Next System principles and apply a unique synthesis of those principles in demonstration projects, seeking to teach people how to live within the prefigurative Next System political economy. Their external focus is on public advocacy and generating a socio-political movement to expand the prefigurative political economy. Many are operating seed funds and providing technical infrastructure for copy-cat projects. The following histogram of website key words (84 words; approx. 21 words per website; 4 orgs analyzed) emphasize economy, justice, center, community, organize, systems, and work. Other key words include city, climate, democracy, fund, initiative, land, local, movement, people, plan, political, program, solidarity, and support.

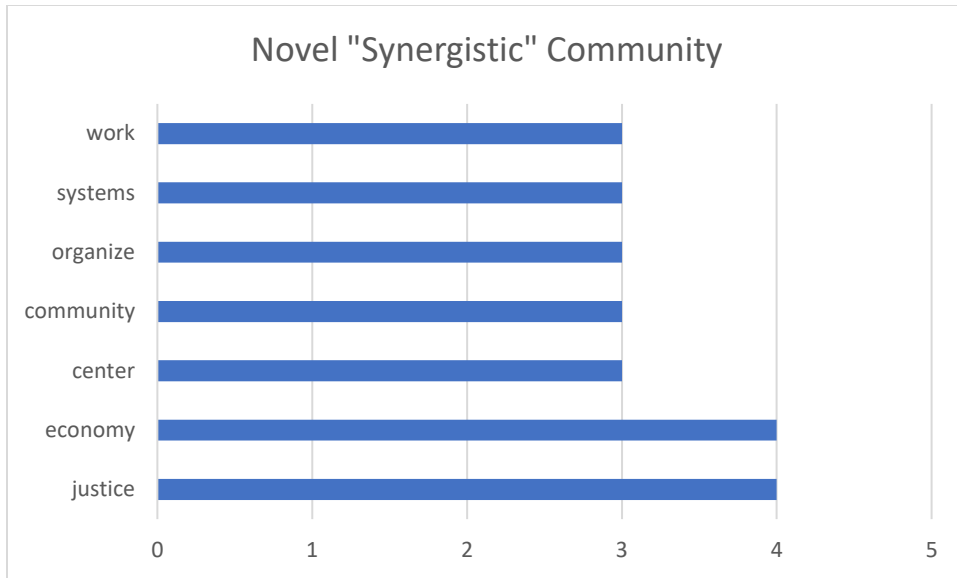


Figure 9: Novel "Synergistic" Community

Chapter 5: Discussion

Topographical structural characterization of the Network and Ethnographic Insights

Network-wide characteristics

After 718 Next System organizations were identified from 12 seed organizations generated from a snowball sample, and the data cleaned to produce a network of 122 organizations with 276 relationships between them, 37 Economic Development organizations (EDOs) were found to have at three or more relationships with other organizations in the network (see figure 5). Based on both endogenous and exogenous characteristics, the Next System network appears to not have reached saturation. Including the full connections of additional EDOs derived from the snowball sampling method is likely to improve the accuracy of the topographical landscape of the network and identify key power players.

In exploring the topographical features of the network, SNA algorithms determined four significant communities and a fifth loose cluster. When evaluated along with exogenous

attributes from the websites of the 37 high degree EDOs and ethnographic research, two communities appear to both align with the “smashing” category of E. O. Wright’s political strategy framework of Next System actors and were qualitatively combined, one community aligns with “taming,” and one with “eroding.” This suggests they operate as quasi-political coalitions, each with unique political goals and strategies. The loose novel group of organizations had relationship connections to all three coalitions and were composed of keyword and symbolic characteristics of all three coalitions. This “synergistic” group suggests a maturation of the network into developing novel institutions of the prefigurative Next System political economy which do not align with institutional locations within the neoliberal political economy structure, but has not developed enough to form its own political goals strategy. The institutional locations of “taming,” “smashing,” and “eroding” within the structure of the neoliberal political economy are examined at the end of this discussion section.

Commonalities among the three coalitions and novel synergistic community include a commitment to local participation in economic and political life. Political capital is channeled towards ecological sustainability and basic needs like housing. All four emphasize on their websites the desire to improve the economic situation of workers and build community. While the “taming” coalition focuses on democracy and development as key values, the others emphasize justice and organizing. The “taming” and “eroding” coalitions share values around ownership, investments, policy, and influence. Meanwhile, only in the “smashing” and “synergistic” communities are ecological issues given equal attention to human needs. As the network and these coalitions evolve, especially if the synergistic community becomes the dominant coalition, then the role of key power players at this stage in the network may have

significant impacts on the value systems, agendas, and types of institutions which develop over the long term.

“Taming” Coalition

The oldest and most powerful coalition is the “taming” capitalism community. It derives its power due to its strong ties with wealthy and politically powerful non-Next System actors (the “inside game”), its workforce consisting mostly of holders of graduate degrees, and the scope of influence of its organizations. These organizations are think tanks, foundations, leadership development organizations, and funders, which are modeling the political economy of the US using metropolitan-centric approaches (such as the “Cleveland Model” and Doughnut Economics), making large investments in research and pilot projects, and guiding economic actors such as policy makers and other government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and businesses. Most of the groundwork in establishing the Next System network was laid by this community through politics, policy analysis, academic scholarship, attempts to model new economic development theories, funding programs to jumpstart organizations and businesses, and the founding of nonprofits to promote the Next System.

Individuals working in this coalition are composed of counter-hegemonic knowledge workers, elites, and professionals. As such, the biographies on organizational websites of staff, board members, and fellows are extensive and prominent, showcasing high-level credentials and educational backgrounds and namedropping connections with other prestigious organizations and people. This group is a progressive faction of the establishment Democratic Party seeking to “to check the malignant political influence of the rich and powerful with countervailing influence by other elements of the rich and powerful” (Lindsey and Teles 2017,

154). Their proximity to the neoliberalized, establishment left makes them distrusted by much of the rest of the network.

“Smashing” Coalition

The largest coalition is the “smashing” capitalism community, which is based in social movementism and has built extensive popular support together with national and transnational network alliances. They have a distributed leadership structure (versus a vanguard), practicing participatory democracy through deliberative processes (such as those seen at the 1999 WTO protests and during Occupy), and their networks experience significant differentiation into smaller sub-coalition clusters which are frequently issue-based (Nunes 2014). Their tactics align with traditional class-based proletarian approaches (Gramsci 2011; Thompson 2016) but are focused more on community building than unionization. They embrace a “Strong Sustainability” approach to ecological issues, characterized by a revolutionary break with the existing system (Neumayer 2003), mostly looking to re-embed economic activity into social relations through commoning, barter/trade networks, and mutual aid groups. This approach draws on the original meaning of the commons, as a place for the common people, the dispossessed, and proletarian to form commons of their own as sites of resistance and selfcare (Bollier and Helfrich 2019; Caffentzis and Federici 2014; Federici 2018). A Gramscian “organic intellectual” approach appears to create a “knowledge commons” for counter-hegemonic and Marxist praxis, and in creating sites of resistance, reclaiming identities, and ensuring basic needs for all. Building off of “alternative” economic theories like Racial Capitalism (Robinson 2000), feminist economics (Waring 1989; 1999), colonial logics (Glenn 2015), and bodymind capitalism (Blayney, Hornsby, and Whaley 2022; Goodley and Lawthom 2019; Pimentel and

Monteleone 2018), this kind of critical economic theory is radically counter-hegemonic and is “concerned with empowering human beings to transcend the constraints placed on them by race, class, and gender” (Creswell and Poth 2016).

Intellectuals like Silvia Federici’s (Federici 2018; 2022) political work on women, commoning, and social reproduction, have deeply influenced members of the “smashing” coalition. The core concept of her work is that there is a close connection between Mother Earth’s reproductive capacity to support living beings and women’s socio-economic role in reproduction of everyday human life in most human cultures (Federici 2004). Commons, which are the “communal properties and relations” of any group of humans (Caffentzis and Federici 2014),

“are the foundation for these broad coalitions, these broad protests, these broad movements of confrontations [which] will never have the power even to survive without a broad, local, day-to-day transformation that takes place in really creating a very different form of reproduction of everyday life. That transformation is what gives them the power and strength for this other struggle to take place” (Federici 2022, loc. 47:46).

It is the kitchen table politics of communal care and human rights, entwined with the health of the earth to provide food, water, medicine, air, and spirituality, where injustices are felt the deepest. The power of social movements come from when systems of exploitation undermine attempts to provision a family home, keep its members healthy and safe, and prepare them to interact with the wider world. Alternatively, homemaking is one of the first places we live our

way into different visions of community, making decisions about how and where we source the material goods we need to sustain ourselves.

“Eroding” Coalition

The “eroding” capitalism coalition serves as a bridge, mediating between these two classic coalitions which have for more than 100 years debated whether reform or revolution is more likely to succeed. This community is composed of mostly technical EDOs building alternative institutions, carving out new spheres of scalable counter-cultural social, economic, and political organizations. Building new institutions requires “place making” (Massey 2013) at the municipal and regional scale, which Brenner and Theodore describe as “actually existing” economies (Brenner and Theodore 2002), where businesses and other economic actors must negotiate the policies, regulations, and social norms of economic practice within cities.

“Eroding” actors’ work consists of leveraging loopholes in policies, codes, norms, accounting practices, and zoning laws to innovate novel solutions to environmental and social crises. Of all the coalitions, this one is the most diverse in its activities, combining social and organizational changes with equalizing technology. From digital platforms, to governance of supply chains, to participatory city planning and budgeting, they are trying to develop novel approaches to land use, finance, cooperatives, supply chain management, new models of ownership, and participatory governance which can ensure all people have access to their basic needs while supporting a regenerative ecological society (Axelrod et al. 2023; Schneider 2018).

“Synergistic” Community

A novel group of “synergistic” organizations seems to be emerging, modeling how Next System institutions reflect a new kind of political economy which builds on cooperativism at the municipal level to deliver equity, sustainability, and a higher quality of life for all. This is a major development in the network, as it indicates the prefigurative nature of the Next System political economy is starting to coalesce into unique institutions which do not conform to the structure of the neoliberal political economy (see following section). However, it is premature to speculate much on this community. Several pioneering international communities, which serve as significant inspiration, have built Next System political economies with characteristics of the synergistic group of this study, such as the Zapatistas (Mayans) in Chiapas, Mexico; the Syrian Kurds in Rojava, Syria; Barcelona’s Sants neighborhood, Spain; the Mondragon federation of worker cooperatives, Basque, Spain; and the Emilia Romagna region of Italy.

Agency Analysis: Key Power Players

Ethnographic study of network actors suggest key power players are not yet accurately identified in the network of 122 organizations. This is a result of the constructed network not yet reaching saturation, as well as the methodology of assigning ties only based on potential political capital from formal relationships between organizations, and the staff members of organizations. Additionally, documented connections with non-Next System actors were limited to funding organizations, which limits understanding the positioning of actors within established institutions of power. Ethnographic research suggests that Next System actors have been involved in the past two presidential elections and the current one in 2024. However,

given the anti-systemic nature of the Next System network, it is expected that relationships with other actors within the network will be more numerous and with greater density, than with actors outside of the network.

One of the five original seed organizations, the New Economy Coalition, has the highest degree and is connected to almost all actors with a degree of three or higher. This is due to its organizational structure as a membership organization of like-minded organizations, formed in the early stages of the network in 2009. Despite the high degree, the New Economy Coalition appears to be serving more as a bridge than a point of power since the number of relationships between its members is also high. In network theory, this is called transitivity, and is common in networks which have had enough time to evolve. This suggests the network is starting to mature, moving out of early phases where relationships are based on exogenous attributes like shared values. Given the evolution of networks tends to rely more on endogenous characteristics than exogenous ones over time, this suggests the locus of power will move to organizations with more strategic positions within the network.

Two organizations with strategic positions are LIFT Economy and Cooperation Jackson. Both are involved in education and development, supporting other organizations and individuals in building new institutions while simultaneously attempting to put into praxis what they teach. LIFT Economy serves as an important bridge between the “taming” coalition and the “eroding” coalition. Their own internal description of their position is one of “hospicing” the business-as-usual economy while “midwifing” the New Economy (Axelrod et al. 2023). Their vision encompasses a robust networked economy of worker-owners within a modern political

economy, which is distinctly different from the “smashing” coalition’s efforts to dismantle capitalist economies, or some of the anarcho-primitivist tendencies in the “escaping” coalition.

Cooperation Jackson does not have a strategic bridging position, and has relatively few relationships compared to other power players, but their relationships are deliberate, connecting with only the other most powerful or strategic members of the network.

Ethnographic observations suggest Cooperation Jackson is seen by other members as a small-scale pilot project of what the Next System political economy could look like. Unlike ecovillages which have an isolationist agenda, Cooperation Jackson’s unincorporated village serves as a kind of knowledge commons of Next System practices which is shared freely with other network members. Meanwhile, Cooperation Jackson’s relationships are with not only the most powerful network members who have resources (like Common Future and the Schumacher Center for a New Economics) and strong bases of popular support (like the Climate Justice Alliance), but also some of the oldest organizations, like the Institute for Social Ecology. They are able to draw on decades of knowledge and the best resources and talent, channeling it not only into their own organization but using it to host regular conferences, workshops, alliance building events, seed new organizations, and mobilize energy and legitimacy to support social movements.

Neither of these organizations, however, has the political power or vision to push the network into a prefigurative political economy on their own. Their efforts are focused mostly on the next economy at the local level where consumers interact with economic actors. They do not integrate “taming” strategies such as building national political power into their work. Powerful individuals of the kind described by Mudge (2018), which can shape and guide a

prefigurative political economy into triggering a regime change (like what occurred with Roosevelt's 1932 election or Reagan's 1980 election) (Mudge 2018), are not explicitly included in this study. But ethnographic research suggests both are connected to such political figures. Conversations with people in Next System EDOs have suggested a rich historical backstory directly linking events like the 1999 WTO demonstrations in Seattle and the Occupy movement with the founding of EDOs and other institutions. Future studies are required to document and verify these connections.

Currently, the largest impacts of the network are being made by organizations in the "taming" coalition. The Economic Security Project has been one of the backbone organizations helping to launch 151 basic income pilot projects in response to the COVID-19 pandemic ("Guaranteed Income," n.d.; Rodriguez et al. 2023). Individuals from these pilots have become strategic players in state government agencies where they can guide reform of welfare policies. On the other hand, the Democracy Collaborative, which now has offices in both the US and in Europe, is the most impactful organization in the network. For nearly two decades, they hosted an online database of Next System practices, serving as a knowledge repository for others to learn about community wealth building practices. In modeling how these practices work, they have developed a post-industrial economic development model for cities which has spread to multiple nations around the world. Their "Cleveland Model" of anchor institutions and method of local supply chain substitution, building local cooperative enterprises to supply anchor institutions, has helped revitalize the U.S. rustbelt.

Imagining Solarpunk Futures, Non-Reformist Reforms, and Real Utopias in the Next System Political Economy Structure

There are three major themes in the Next System political economy structure: a relative invisibility despite its size, a local focus, and a left libertarianism political orientation.

Despite the size of the network and level of impact, the Next System prefigurative anti-systemic political economy is hidden in plain sight. Actors within the Next System are already doing the work to restore nature and keep people out of poverty in ways which mask and compensate for the failures of neoliberalism. First, rather than pursuing individual wealth or political power, which provides visible prestige, Next System actors tend to be channeled into community and infrastructure which serve all. For example, basic income grants, mutual aid communities, and permaculture gardens kept hundreds of thousands of Americans housed and fed during the COVID-19 pandemic. This masks the severity of the neoliberal crisis because people keeping their housing and not going hungry is what neoliberalism claims it is doing. Such activities do not provide headline news stories either. The social stabilization of Next System projects can be profound. It was found that basic income grants to individuals in the Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration (SEED) “spilled into their extended networks in material and immaterial ways that alleviated financial strain across fragile network and generated more time for relationships” (Baker et al. 2021, 12). Likewise, organizations like Project Equity are facilitating the sale of hundreds of Boomer-owned small businesses to their employees and converting them to cooperatives. This masks the severity of wealth inequality and how many small businesses are at risk of being closed because not enough of the younger generations have the capital to buy them.

Another factor in the invisibility of the Next System network is that its structure has emerged from the structure of the Neoliberal political economy. First, the institutional infrastructure undergirding the neoliberal political economy is a tripart structure composed of: 1) a political sphere supported by think tanks, foundations, and career administrators operating at the national level; 2) a business sphere of real estate, law offices, developers, corporations, suppliers and supply chain infrastructure, and finance which are managed by white collar workers, and operating mostly at the regional level; and 3) a nonprofit sector whose clients are the working class doing manual and emotional labor at the local level. The EDOs which have so far been successful have adopted similar roles, using their Next System values as ways to differentiate themselves through strategic market positioning, literally in the cracks of the system. Increasing numbers of federal mandates for diversity, equity, and inclusion have made businesses and organizations embracing Next System values more competitive. Only the novel “synergistic” community of organizations, which depend almost entirely on the Next System network being large enough to support them without relying on the neoliberal political economy, suggests what a Next System political economy would look like. Organizations like Boston Ujima Project and Cooperation Jackson are able to combine elements from across the network into synergistic confederated pilot projects of cooperative workplaces staffed with workers living in alternative housing systems relying on locally sourced food and commodities, all intended to be equitable and sustainable institutions financed by community equity and investment structures, and governed through participatory democracy.

A second element of the Next System political economy network is its local focus. Again, this reflects the neoliberal political economy. Neoliberal governance decentralizes

economic issues down to the lowest level possible whenever possible (“local” is not always the lowest level), privatizes as many government functions as possible, coordinates economic actors of critical basic needs infrastructure (such as water management), and dissolves large bureaucratic firms and corporate conglomerates into a flexible production networks (Block 2023; Knoke 2018; Ostrom and Ostrom 1979; Wagner 2018). The Next System embraces much of this structure, attempting to localize governance to the lowest level possible, democratize the privatized organizations contracted by the federal government (or replace them with democratized versions), implement collective governance of critical basic needs through commoning structures, and desires even more flexible production networks where more people get to be worker-owners (Alperovitz, Speth, and Guinan 2015). Flexible network production systems produced from the devolution of the vertically integrated firm, and extensive federal contracts due to the decentralization of the government under neoliberalism, both make it easier to be self-employed or operate a microbusiness or small business to meet market demands. Where the Next System differs from Neoliberalism is its rejection of the individualism of right libertarianism in favor of leftist versions (“collectivism” or social anarchism) which emphasize that individual freedom does not mean the right to harm others, and therefore, freedom is a product of some limited social responsibility and collectivist participatory democratic practices (Bookchin 1994; Schleuning 2013).

Finally, Next System organizational models are building off libertarian neoliberal ones by utilizing “coordinated decentralization” organizational structures, a method of coordinating a heterogeneous collection of organizations and businesses to come together around a common agenda, as opposed to autonomous decentralization where everyone is free to pursue

whatever they like (Ostrom and Ostrom 1979; Christens and Inzeo 2015). Coordinated decentralization organizational models compensate for the centrifugal forces of autonomous decentralization, network production, governance, and individualism under neoliberalism (Fung and Wright 2001). For example, the dissolution of the corporation and the federal government from its centralized, vertically integrated bureaucratic organizational form into flexible networks blurs the line between what is "inside" and "outside" of the firm (or government) (Heydebrand 1987; Knoke 2018). These neoliberal flexible networks rely on various governance models such as market systems, value chains of interdependent actors, and hierarchical vertical integration (Gereffi, Humphrey, and Sturgeon 2005).

One coordinated decentralization Next System organizational model used to manage flexible production networks is Collective Impact (CI), where member organizations collect and share knowledge (or technology) through citizen science using shared measurement standards via continuous communication and mutually reinforcing activities, supported by a backbone organization (Hanleybrown, Kania, and Kramer 2012). Stakeholders within the CI system draw on this knowledge commons of shared values, information-data, knowledge, conclusions, and big-picture agendas in carrying out their individual goals, creating a method of multiple flexible, localized actionable movements. For example, the California Guaranteed Income Community of Practice brings together administrators, funders, and researchers who are working with basic income pilots to share insights, develop standards of practice, and lobby for supportive legislation. The outcomes of the decentralized network are enfolded back into the core via those same stakeholders who can contextualize the particular case within the other outcomes of the network (Nichols et al. 2022). CI is a critical organizational model within the Next System

prefigurative economy because of the need to coordinate many different actors within a decentralized political economy.

Novel organizational models such as Collective Impact are successful at counteracting the challenges of the neoliberal landscape *because* left anarchism is building upon the architecture right libertarianism (under neoliberalism) has constructed. Leftist anarchist organizational theory and organizational models correct for overemphasis of the individual in right anarchism, as well as the role of malevolent actors weaponizing anarchy (Cohen and March 1992). Since rightwing anarchism or libertarianism presents “a depoliticized approach to community development that assumes that ‘individual gains and interests.... are synonymous with collective, or community, gains and interests’” (Newman and Lake 2006, 53), leftist or social anarchist approaches explicitly institutionalize community gains and interests into the community development process.

Left anarchist and left libertarianism inspired theory and praxis, in fact, is a central feature of the current anti-systemic movements because of its focus on anti-hierarchical domination important to the justice movements, radical participatory democratic institutions, implementation of human-scale communities at the local level, and embrace of diversity (Blumenfeld, Bottici, and Critchley 2013; Cornell 2011; Epstein 2001; Graeber 2002; P. Taylor 1991; Wigger 2016). The political imagination of social anarchist and left libertarian principles have already been critical theoretical components of the Next System due to the Next System explicitly growing out of social movements, such as the “Battle of Seattle” at the 1999 WTO conference and Occupy (Manski, Lazar, and Moodliar 2020). Both of these events were marked by anarchist organizational models such as decentralized networks, horizontal organizing,

inside-outside politics, voluntary association, consensus decision-making, and participatory governance all coordinating activities; internet technologies facilitated novel decentralized communication methods; mutual aid; and anti-hierarchical justice frameworks. The “anarchist turn” has been the formative ground for cooperative economic development practices (Schneider 2018), which have become central to the Next System ecosystem. Murray Bookchin’s hybrid postmarxist-anarchist Social Ecology theory (Chaia Heller, private conversation, March 12, 2024) underpin many leading academics and theorists within the Next System ecosystem. Bookchin is explicitly referenced by Graber and Wengrow in their epic reconstruction of the history of democracy and inequality in *The Dawn of Everything* (Graeber and Wengrow 2021), by E.O. Wright in his model of anti-capitalist political strategy via “eroding” away the power of capitalism (E. Wright 2015), and by Jem Bendel (Bendell 2023), who has deeply informed both Extinction Rebellion and the Deep Adaptation network.

Contradictions and Tensions

Meritocratic Talentism and Social Stratification

Tensions and contradictions within the Next System are being triggered by the high levels of socioeconomic and educational stratification which neoliberalism has produced. Left untheorized by Wright’s four political strategies (see figure 3) is the embeddedness of national economies in local places produced by inherited built infrastructures, social institutions, and regulation and governance regimes (Brenner and Theodore 2002). The Next System economy exhibits path-dependencies from the neoliberal political economy due to the past few decades of urban development, manifested in institutional infrastructures (Cox 2017; Harvey 1978), and

the decentralization of vertically integrated firms and the government (Heydebrand 1987; Gereffi, Humphrey, and Sturgeon 2005; Knoke 2018). When the credential creep of an instrumentalist education is also considered, and the structure of the labor market based on education level, then significant differences emerge for each of the coalitions.

Each of Wright's political strategies functions at a specific neoliberal multi-scalar governance level (national, regional, local) because the people working within the organizations and businesses are doing so as their occupation, and decentralization has encouraged governance (of political or economic organizations) to operate at "appropriate" scales (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Harvey 1978; Jessop 2002; Peck and Tickell 2008). Thus, the positioning of the coalitions is indirectly linked to the level of education their staff obtains because the labor market is highly stratified based on education. In turn, this means that, broadly speaking, different coalitions are located within different socio-economic classes. This deeply influences the political and economic strategies and values of each coalition.

The influence of socioeconomic class on the Next System network cannot be understated. The neoliberal economy embraces a competitive talentist meritocracy, which legitimizes natural cognitive (and broadly speaking biological) inequalities of "talents" as a basis for socioeconomic social stratification (Achilli and Kyle 2023). Importantly, human talents are rarely purely genetic gifts since they require nurturing, as well as material privilege — or at least the social determinants of health — to actualize genetic potential (Adkins and Vaisey 2009). Strong environmental components (such as developmental and social resources) are critical factors in the genetic predisposition of certain talents to emerge and flourish. Under the "privatized Keynesianism" of neoliberalism, which relies on consumer debt rather than public

debt to sustain economic demand (Crouch 2009), only the wealthier strata in the U.S. have the ability to purchase their minimum social determinants of health since the SDoH are no longer provisioned by the government as they were under Keynesianism. But the ideological foundation of meritocratic talentism localizes creativity, genius, and educational achievement as purely the fair result of competitive individualism (Achilli and Kyle 2023).

With such a strong linkage of life expectancy with zip codes (Chetty et al. 2016), neoliberal talentism helps to reinvent racial, sexist, and colonial dynamics which were declining up into the 1970s (D. S. Massey 1990). With low income zip codes experiencing poorer social and environmental conditions, it triggers the conditions for talentist stratification. Since the “untalented” are considered less “competitive” in the labor market, they are more likely to work a low-income job. Linkage between “productivity” and income then leads to explicit regimes of dis/ableism (Goodley and Lawthom 2019), sanism, and neuronormativity. Talentism provides strong explanatory value for the core Next System value of disarticulating the obtainment of basic needs from income.

Talentism shapes all the political coalitions. The “taming” coalition, which functionally operates at the federal and national level of governance and economics, manages organizations and agencies which oversee and coordinate activities across the nation. These require bachelors and graduate-level degrees. By nature of their educational status, higher incomes, and higher socio-economic status, and the resulting “status lifestyles” of consumer goods and world-wide travel (Bourdieu 2013; Giddens 2013; Weber 1978), people working in “taming” organizations are of high meritocratic status. However, since the “taming” coalition has the most linkages with established levers of power outside of the network, embracing anti-talentist

beliefs has very real material and social status consequences when playing the “inside game” to reform the hegemonic system.

Class status and talentism are also prevalent in the “eroding” coalition. Workers in the business community under neoliberalism are characterized by having professional degrees and bachelor’s degrees with a depth of hyperspecialized knowledge such as legal codes, zoning laws, accounting practices, and general business knowledge. Obtaining a professional certification or Bachelor’s degree requires prolonged training and resources, and passing rigorous examinations, all of which are challenging to complete when you do not have your basic needs met. Talentist ideology has had a significant impact on the structure of the American business world (and economy) where creative geniuses invent new technologies, creative destruction invents new paradigms, and “creative classes” demand asset-rich urban playgrounds, resulting in gentrification (Florida 2019; McMahon 2013). The Taylorization of work into intellectual labor for the “talented” and manual and emotional labor for the rest (Braverman 1998; Hochschild 2012; F. W. Taylor 2015) has reified talentism into the very structures of our businesses. Professionals, entrepreneurs, and white-collar workers capable of building new institutions from scratch, thus, are coming from a competitive socio-economic environment which also considers them of high meritocratic status.

On the other hand, those considered not “talented enough” under the American meritocracy have been consigned to precarious working conditions and deteriorating economic conditions (Standing 2011). Low productivity workers, especially those with non-competitive cognitive and physical capabilities, have been consigned to “unskilled” labor pools or pushed out of the workforce altogether. For this reason, those “escaping” capitalism and the

meritocracy seek isolation in their own supportive communities, while the “smashing” coalition builds global networks of solidarity to challenge the premise of the meritocracy and reduced life chances. Both are hyper-local coalitions, composed of mostly high school graduates, manual laborers, service workers, Gramscian organic intellectuals, and those with bachelor’s degrees who have found themselves unable to compete in tight labor markets. Perhaps it is due to the encroaching precarious workforce conditions into previously protected professional and white-collar occupations that solidarity around the right to basic needs and the dismantling of meritocratic standards is emerging as the primary unifying force of the Next System.

Conflicting Naming Conventions

Solidarity around precarious working conditions and shared values like sustainability and equity across the network manifest in contradictory ways. For example, someone who is wrestling with de-growth and is working at the planetary scale or national scale needs a very different conceptual framework compared to someone who is wrestling with degrowth in a community where they are trying to rewild land or apply regenerative permaculture to their home garden. In fact, while actors in the “taming” coalition might use phrases like “de-growth,” actors in the “smashing” coalition are more likely to use phrases like “regeneration.” There is strength in having definitional and terminological diversity because the different terms apply to particular scales. Operating at a synoptic, statistical understanding of a nation’s people and ecology from the top of a modernized bureaucracy is very different than the embedded, emplaced deep experiential “mètis” (e.g. ecological knowledge) of living our lives in community with others and nature (J. C. Scott 2020).

The meso-level approach of the "eroding" coalition in its "actually existing" context at the city level with its globe encircling supply chain infrastructures fueled by the FIRE (finance, insurance, and real estate) economy interlocks with both the consumer household and the nation-state. "Eroding" actors must think about their place within larger systems like land use patterns within their bioregion or national regulations and restrictions to manage their supply chains to deliver goods to households. Households in turn make decisions about material provisioning and whether to purchase their needs in markets or to embrace communal or self-sufficiency, driving consumer demand. A Next System political economy reworks all three levels with different top-down regulations and restrictions on the business community and different sets of consumer demands. Next System businesses producing basic needs must democratize their governance, undoing the legacy of talentism, and incorporate sustainable practices. The different coalitions, operating at different scales, are thus synergistic because the social and ecological crisis we face is also multiscalar.

Even though the political strategy of the Next System is multiscalar, all the coalitions are focused on the city as the site of transition (Kioupkiolis 2022). Top-down approaches provide incentives and regulations to guide local economies in ways that meet global sustainability and social standards. Bottom-up approaches of participatory democracy enact paradigm-shifting pathways towards equity, equality, justice, agency, self-efficacy, and mutual support and care. Institutions mediate between the two, creating the context for participatory processes which meet specific goals. Networks of these institutions in communities, in nations, and transnationally allow the people to co-govern the political economy to maintain the planet and improve social conditions for all.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Ever since the bourgeois revolutions between 1776 and 1848 established democratic republics in the West, social movements keep rising to demand ever increasing rights to participate in the governance of society. Few issues are as relevant as the politics of economics to the everyday lives of citizens. As humanity faces its greatest threat in climate change, the stakes could not be higher in protecting vulnerable human populations and mitigating harms. Neoliberal political economies worldwide, and international partnerships such as the International Panel on Climate Change and Paris Agreement, have embraced technology and financial accounting tricks as a most effective strategy to maintain the global economy while reducing the impact of ecological damage and human vulnerabilities. But the logics of capitalism, in forms such as finance and modern accounting practices, land use rights and patterns, and high technology are the ontological root cause of high greenhouse gas emissions, which is causing climate changes. The benefits of capitalism in increasing national wealth (and the incomes of citizens) comes not only at the expense of natural resource use beyond the sustainability of Earth system processes, but the disproportionate power of a few to pollute the earth and hoard the wealth of nations. The most vulnerable populations to environmental pollution and the neoliberal logics of capitalist political economies are demanding the right to participate in the governance of the economy and shape the choices we are making as a species to address climate change.

The anti-systemic Next System movement believes neoliberal ecomodernism promises to be too little, too late in mitigating massive ecological destruction and social misery. This is a structural response to a structural failure, calling for a reduction of harm using economic development tools already at our disposal rather than relying on the promise of future technologies to save us. Over the last 25 years, worldwide social and political movements have launched a network of alternative political, economic, and social institutions attempting to pilot the implementation of these existing economic development tools. The size of the Next System has already grown large enough to begin effectively pressuring existing institutions to make reforms, which this network study has also suggested with over 718 organizations in a network which has not nearly reached saturation. Three complementary functional political coalitions operate within the same structure as the neoliberal political economy, maneuvering in the “cracks” of the system where neoliberalism is unable to address 21st century crises. However, the emergence of a novel community of organizations puzzling together economic development and political strategies from across the network suggests a prefigurative political economy is forming with a potentially viable alternative regulatory regime and business ecosystem.

New methodologies, such as social network analysis, has opened new insights into how past political economy regime changes have occurred. Network theory helps to explain how both Keynesianism and Neoliberalism successfully met the structural crisis each faced with novel political economic institutions built by networked strategic coalitions of actors. Keynesianism was ushered in by incorporating the anti-systemic movement of socialism, resulting in the construction of social democracies. Neoliberalism was ushered in by

incorporating a parochial anti-systemic movement of privatized local governance, resulting in the construction of multiscale decentralized and networked political economies. In this current crisis, the Next System antisystemic movement has embraced an “anarchist turn,” coordinating a “family” of antisystemic movements (such as racial justice, environmental justice, economic justice, bodymind liberation, etc.) to work together to address the institutionalized hierarchical social structures which have led to ecological damage and human vulnerabilities under capitalism.

The Next System *first is a model of a new kind of political economy which is based on the creation of new forms of social, political, and economic institutions which are measurably sustainable and socially just*, drawing heavily on the participatory democracy, decentralized coordination, and anti-hierarchical values of social anarchism. Put another way, “climate justice and environmental justice IS economic justice” (Tracy 2024). These new institutions are operating in the “cracks” of the neoliberal system where it fails the most such as the provisioning of basic needs and the regenerative care work of restoring the earth and a sense of community.

The Next System *is secondly a strategic process of “evolving” our current political economy into something new* by developing a networked ecosystem of new institutions (across political, social, culture, and economic), which differentiate themselves from the old system and ultimately displace large portions of it over time. As perhaps an indication that the Next System is far more successful than it seems is the reactionary cultural and political backlash to Next System reforms, alternative institutions, and social movements. For example, the embrace of 1) intersectionality (and the reactionary response to critical race theory), 2)

anarchist-inspired decentralized coordination (and the demonization of “antifa”), 3) democracy (and the rise in voting rights abuses), 4) sustainability (and the symbolic material purchases of ever larger houses, trucks, and other luxuries), and 5) the right to basic needs (and the criminalization of homelessness).

Finally, the Next System is a structurally synergistic *movement of coalitions of actors using different political strategies operating at different scales, looking to neutralize harm and transcend capitalism’s structures*. A unique aspect of the Next System is the heterogeneous use of economic critiques of capitalism, meaning the resulting economic ideology is not a cohesive platform. Whether that means it has yet to coalesce, or whether the resulting ideology will remain heterogeneous, is yet to be determined. Donna Haraway’s “objective subjectivity” of situated knowledges (Haraway 1997) provides an appealing opportunity to see what an anarchist anti-systemic movement looks like in form or structure with such heterogeneous practices:

“‘our’ problem, is how to have simultaneously an account of radical historical contingency for all our knowledge claims and knowing subjects, a critical practice for our own ‘semiotic technologies’ for making meanings, and a no-nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a ‘real’ world, one that can be partially shared and that is friendly to earthwide projects of finite freedom, adequate material abundance, modest meaning in suffering, and limited happiness” (ibid., 579).

Each subjectivity in solidarity with other partial ontologies builds together a more comprehensive understanding of the object in question, the Next System. Putting together into

a larger picture each of the lifeways of diverse peoples and identities, supported by infrastructures and norms which foster diversity of being, allows one to see clearly just what an social anarchist-inspired political economy looks like. Critically, it is the democratic process of putting the puzzle together, not the final image itself, which matters to social or leftist anarchists. The multiscalar, relational methodology of social network analysis is one such way of visualizing the puzzle of a different economic paradigm in process/in progress. The challenge is now assembling the components of the Next System's practices into a synergistic development plan, scaling it up to constitute a political economy.

Appendix A: Next System EDO websites

Ambitious	https://ambitio-us.org
Ashoka	https://www.ashoka.org/en-us
BALLE/Common Future	https://www.commonfuture.co/
Beneficial State Bank	https://www.beneficialstatebank.com/
Causa Justa	https://cjc.org/
Center for Economic Democracy	https://economicdemocracy.us/
Climate Justice Alliance	https://climatejusticealliance.org/
Communities for a Better Environment	https://www.cbecal.org/
Cooperation Jackson	https://cooperationjackson.org/
Democracy at Work Institute	https://institute.coop/
Democracy Collaborative	https://democracycollaborative.org/
East Bay Permanent Real Estate Cooperative	https://ebprec.org/
Economic Security Project	https://economicsecurityproject.org/
Grassroots Global Justice Alliance	https://ggjalliance.org/
Indigenous Environmental Network	https://www.ienearth.org/
Ironbound Community Corporation	https://ironboundcc.org/
It Takes Roots Alliance	https://ittakesroots.org/
Jobs with Justice	https://www.jwj.org/about-us
Just Transition Alliance	https://jtalliance.org/
Kresge Foundation	https://kresge.org/
LIFT Economy	https://www.lifteconomy.com/

Little Village Environmental Justice Organization	http://www.lvejo.org/
Movement Generation	https://movementgeneration.org/
New Economy Coalition	https://neweconomy.net/
New School	https://www.newschool.edu/
Project Equity	https://project-equity.org/
Restorative Economies Fund/Kataly Foundation	https://www.katalyfoundation.org/program/restorative-economies-fund/
Right to the City/Homes for All	https://www.righttothecity.org
Schumacher Center for a New Economics	https://centerforneweconomics.org/
Surdna Foundation	https://surdna.org/
Sustainable Economies Law Center	https://www.theselc.org/
The Nathan Cummings Foundation	https://nathancummings.org/
US Federation of Worker Cooperatives	https://www.usworker.coop/en/

References

- Achilli, Luigi, and David Kyle. 2023. *Global Human Smuggling: Buying Freedom in a Retreating World*. JHU Press.
- Adkins, Daniel E., and Stephen Vaisey. 2009. "Toward a Unified Stratification Theory: Structure, Genome, and Status across Human Societies." *Sociological Theory* 27 (2): 99–121. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2009.01339.x>.
- Alcott, Blake. 2005. "Jevons' Paradox." *Ecological Economics* 54 (1): 9–21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2005.03.020>.
- Alderson, Arthur S., and Jason Beckfield. 2004. "Power and Position in the World City System." *American Journal of Sociology* 109 (4): 811–51. <https://doi.org/10.1086/378930>.
- Alperovitz, Gar. 2017. "How Do Evolutionary Reconstruction and Displacement of Corporate Power Differ from 'Countervailing' Strategies of Containment and Regulation?" *TheNextSystem.Org* (blog). May 15, 2017. <https://thenextsystem.org/evolutionary-reconstruction-displacement>.
- Alperovitz, Gar, James Gustave Speth, and Joe Guinan. 2015. "The Next System Project." Teh Democracy Collaborative: The Next System Project.
- Arrighi, Giovanni, Terence Hopkins, and Immanuel Wallerstein. 2012. *Anti-Systemic Movements*. Verso. <https://www.versobooks.com/products/2228-anti-systemic-movements>.
- Asdourian, Elijah, and David Wessel. 2023. "What Is the Social Cost of Carbon?" Brookings. March 14, 2023. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/what-is-the-social-cost-of-carbon/>.

Axelrod, Erin, Kevin Bayuk, Shawn Berry, Ryan Honeyman, and Phoenix Soleil. 2023. *The Next Economy MBA: Redesigning Business for the Benefit of All Life*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Ayni Institute. 2024. "Movement Ecology Workshop." Zoom, February 20.

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/1a5145c9-1651-4ec9-9359-18e6de1c02f4>.

Backman, Isabella. 2021. "Professors Explain the Social Cost of Carbon." *Stanford News*, June 7, 2021, sec. Science & Technology. <https://news.stanford.edu/2021/06/07/professors-explain-social-cost-carbon/>.

Baker, Dr Amy Castro, Sukhi Samra, Erin Coltrera, Mina Addo, Mae Carlson, Pandora Crowder, Meagan Cusack, et al. 2021. "Preliminary Analysis: SEED's First Year." Stockton Economic Empowerment Demonstration.

Beckett, Andy. 2019. "The New Left Economics: How a Network of Thinkers Is Transforming Capitalism." *The Guardian*, June 25, 2019, sec. News. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2019/jun/25/the-new-left-economics-how-a-network-of-thinkers-is-transforming-capitalism>.

Bendell, Jem. 2023. *Breaking Together: A Freedom-Loving Response to Collapse*. Bristol, UK: Good Works. <https://schumacherinstitute.org.uk/product/jem-bendell-book/>.

Berger, Allen, and Gregory Udell. 2002. "Small Business Credit Availability and Relationship Lending: The Importance of Bank Organisational Structure." *The Economic Journal* 112 (477): F32–53. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0297.00682>.

Berger, Peter L., and Thomas Luckmann. 1967. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.

- Blayney, Steffan, Joey Hornsby, and Savannah Whaley. 2022. *The Body Productive: Rethinking Capitalism, Work and the Body*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Block, Fred. 2023. "The Habitation Economy." *Dissent Magazine*, 2023.
<https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/the-habitation-economy/>.
- Blumenfeld, Jacob, Chiara Bottici, and Simon Critchley. 2013. *The Anarchist Turn*. Pluto Press.
- Blythe, Cain, and Paul Jepson. 2020. *Rewilding: The Radical New Science of Ecological Recovery*. Icon Books.
- Bollier, David, and Silke Helfrich. 2019. *Free, Fair, and Alive: The Insurgent Power of the Commons*. New Society Publishers.
- Bookchin, Murray. 1994. "What Is Communalism?"
https://www.democracynature.org/vol3/bookchin_communalism.htm.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 2013. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Routledge.
- Braverman, Harry. 1998. *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century*. NYU Press.
- Bregman, Rutger. 2020. "The Neoliberal Era Is Ending. What Comes Next?" *The Correspondent*. May 14, 2020. <https://thecorrespondent.com/466/the-neoliberal-era-is-ending-what-comes-next>.
- Brenner, Neil, and Nik Theodore. 2002. "Cities and the Geographies of 'Actually Existing Neoliberalism.'" *Antipode* 34 (3): 349–79. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8330.00246>.
- Brown, Adrienne Maree. 2017. *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds*. AK Press.
- Burawoy, Michael. 2008. "Open Letter to C. Wright Mills." *Antipode* 40 (3): 365–75.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8330.2008.00602.x>.

- Caffentzis, George, and Silvia Federici. 2014. "Commons against and beyond Capitalism." *Community Development Journal* 49 (suppl_1): i92–105.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsu006>.
- Carpenter, Daniel, and David A. Moss. 2013. *Preventing Regulatory Capture: Special Interest Influence and How to Limit It*. Cambridge University Press.
- Carroll, William K., and Jean Philippe Sapinski. 2010. "The Global Corporate Elite and the Transnational Policy-Planning Network, 1996-2006: A Structural Analysis." *International Sociology* 25 (4): 501–38. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580909351326>.
- Chetty, Raj, Michael Stepner, Sarah Abraham, Shelby Lin, Benjamin Scuderi, Nicholas Turner, Augustin Bergeron, and David Cutler. 2016. "The Association Between Income and Life Expectancy in the United States, 2001-2014." *JAMA* 315 (16): 1750–66.
<https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2016.4226>.
- Chrisman, James J., and W. Ed McMullan. 2004. "Outsider Assistance as a Knowledge Resource for New Venture Survival." *Journal of Small Business Management* 42 (3): 229–44.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-627X.2004.00109.x>.
- Christens, Brian D., and Paula Tran Inzeo. 2015. "Widening the View: Situating Collective Impact among Frameworks for Community-Led Change." *Community Development* 46 (4): 420–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2015.1061680>.
- Clauset, Aaron, M. E. J. Newman, and Cristopher Moore. 2004. "Finding Community Structure in Very Large Networks." *Physical Review E* 70 (6): 066111.
<https://doi.org/10.1103/PhysRevE.70.066111>.

- Cohen, Michael D., and James G. March. 1992. "Leadership in an Organized Anarchy." In *Classics of Organizational Theory*, 3rd ed., 432–48. Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 2022. *Black Feminist Thought, 30th Anniversary Edition: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003245650>.
- Cooper, Mark H. 2017. "Open Up and Say 'Baa': Examining the Stomachs of Ruminant Livestock and the Real Subsumption of Nature." *Society & Natural Resources* 30 (7): 812–28.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2017.1295494>.
- Coppola, Alessandro. 2014. "A Cleveland Model?" *Métropoles*, no. 15 (December).
<https://doi.org/10.4000/metropoles.4950>.
- Cornell, Andrew. 2011. "A New Anarchism Emerges, 1940-1954." *Journal for the Study of Radicalism* 5 (1): 105–31.
- Cotton-Barratt, Owen, Sebastian Farquhar, John Halstead, Stefan Schubert, and Andrew Snyder-Beattie. 2016. "Global Catastrophic Risks." Oxford, United Kingdom: Global Challenges Foundation: Global Priorities Project.
<https://globalchallenges.org/app/uploads/2023/06/Global-Catastrophic-Risks-2016.pdf>.
- Cox, Kevin R. 2017. "Revisiting 'the City as a Growth Machine.'" *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society* 10 (3): 391–405. <https://doi.org/10/ggb38s>.
- Creswell, John W., and Cheryl N. Poth. 2016. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. SAGE Publications.

- Crouch, Colin. 2009. "Privatised Keynesianism: An Unacknowledged Policy Regime." *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 11 (3): 382–99.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-856X.2009.00377.x>.
- Dahl, Robert A. 2005. *Who Governs?: Democracy and Power in an American City*. Yale University Press.
- Davis, Kingsley, and Wilbert E. Moore. 1945. "Some Principles of Stratification." *American Sociological Review* 10 (2): 242–49. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2085643>.
- Della Porta, Donatella. 2006. *Globalization from Below: Transnational Activists And Protest Networks*. Vol. 26. Social Movements, Protest, and Contention. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press.
- . 2020. "Building Bridges: Social Movements and Civil Society in Times of Crisis." *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 31 (5): 938–48. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11266-020-00199-5>.
- Diani, Mario. 2022. "Networks and Social Movements." In *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*, 1–6. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470674871.wbespm438.pub2>.
- Dicken, Peter, Philip F. Kelly, Kris Olds, and Henry Wai-Chung Yeung. 2001. "Chains and Networks, Territories and Scales: Towards a Relational Framework for Analysing the Global Economy." *Global Networks* 1 (2): 89–112. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1471-0374.00007>.
- Epstein, Barbara. 2001. "Monthly Review | Anarchism and the Anti-Globalization Movement." *Monthly Review*, September 1, 2001.

<https://monthlyreview.org/2001/09/01/anarchism-and-the-anti-globalization-movement/>.

Federici, Silvia. 2004. *Caliban and the Witch*. Autonomedia.

———. 2018. *Re-Enchanting the World: Feminism and the Politics of the Commons*. PM Press.

———, dir. 2022. *The Politics of Care*. Spitzer School of Architecture: Youtube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vVtUkaFpYE>.

“Find a B Corp.” 2024. B-Corporation. June 18, 2024. <https://www.bcorporation.net/en-us/find-a-b-corp>.

Flora, Cornelia Butler. 2019. *Rural Communities: Legacy + Change*. 5th ed. New York: Routledge.

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429494697>.

Florida, Richard. 2019. *The Rise of the Creative Class*. Basic Books.

Fung, Archon, and Erik Olin Wright. 2001. “Deepening Democracy: Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance.” *Politics & Society* 29 (1): 5–41.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0032329201029001002>.

“Gephi Tutorial Quick Start.” n.d. Gephi. Accessed May 2, 2024.

https://gephi.org/tutorials/gephi-tutorial-quick_start.pdf.

Gereffi, Gary, John Humphrey, and Timothy Sturgeon. 2005. “The Governance of Global Value Chains.” *Review of International Political Economy* 12 (1): 78–104.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09692290500049805>.

Gibson-Graham, J. K., and Kelly Dombroski. 2020. *The Handbook of Diverse Economies*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

- Giddens, Anthony. 1984. *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. University of California Press.
- . 2013. *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. 2015. "Settler Colonialism as Structure: A Framework for Comparative Studies of U.S. Race and Gender Formation." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1 (1): 52–72. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332649214560440>.
- Goodley, Dan, and Rebecca Lawthom. 2019. "Critical Disability Studies, Brexit and Trump: A Time of Neoliberal–Ableism." *Rethinking History* 23 (2): 233–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642529.2019.1607476>.
- Gorz, Andre. 1967. *Strategy for Labor: A Radical Proposal*. Beacon Press.
- Graeber, David. 2002. "The New Anarchists." The Anarchist Library. 2002. <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/david-graeber-the-new-anarchists>.
- Graeber, David, and David Wengrow. 2021. *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Gramsci, Antonio. 2011. *Prison Notebooks*. Columbia University Press.
- . 2021. *The Modern Prince & Other Writings*. Foundations, #14. Paris: Foreign languages press.
- Granovetter, Mark. 1983. "The Strength of Weak Ties: A Network Theory Revisited." *Sociological Theory* 1:201–33. <https://doi.org/10.2307/202051>.
- . 1995. *Getting a Job: A Study of Contacts and Careers*. University of Chicago Press.
- Grossman, Gene M., and Elhanan Helpman. 2001. *Special Interest Politics*. MIT Press.

“Guaranteed Income.” n.d. *Economic Security Project* (blog). Accessed May 1, 2024.

<https://economicsecurityproject.org/work/guaranteed-income/>.

Guglielmo, Marco, and Bradley Ward. 2024. “Towards the Progressive Network-System: A Normative Theory of Organisation to Achieve Disruption in Times of Crisis.” *Global Political Economy* 1 (aop): 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1332/26352257Y2024D000000008>.

Guinan, Joe, and Martin O’Neill. 2019. “From Community Wealth-Building to System Change.” *IPPR Progressive Review* 25 (4): 382–92. <https://doi.org/10.1111/newe.12130>.

Hahnel, Robin. 2021. *Democratic Economic Planning*. Routledge.

Handfield, Robert B., and Ernst L. Nichols (Jr.). 1999. *Introduction to Supply Chain Management*. Prentice Hall.

Hanleybrown, Fay, John Kania, and Mark Kramer. 2012. “Channeling Change: Making Collective Impact Work.” *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 2012.
https://ssir.org/pdf/Embracing_Emergence_PDF.pdf.

Hanna, Thomas M, and Marjorie Kelly. 2021. “Community Wealth Building: The Path towards a Democratic and Reparative Political Economic System.” The Democracy Collaborative.
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/62f41050584b40607baef690/t/62fe8be83408b928b4756591/1660849128501/PUB_Community-Wealth-Building-Hanna-Kelly.pdf.

Hansen, James E, Makiko Sato, Leon Simons, Larissa S Nazarenko, Isabelle Sangha, Pushker Kharecha, James C Zachos, et al. 2023. “Global Warming in the Pipeline.” *Oxford Open Climate Change* 3 (1): kgad008. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfclm/kgad008>.

- Haraway, Donna. 1997. "'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective'." In *Space, Gender, Knowledge: Feminist Readings*. Routledge.
- Harvey, David. 1978. "The Urban Process under Capitalism: A Framework for Analysis." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 2 (1–3): 101–31.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.1978.tb00738.x>.
- Henning, Cecilia, and Mats Lieberg. 1996. "Strong Ties or Weak Ties? Neighbourhood Networks in a New Perspective." *Scandinavian Housing and Planning Research* 13 (1): 3–26.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02815739608730394>.
- Heydebrand, Wolf V. 1987. "New Organizational Forms." *Work and Occupations* 16 (3): 323–57.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888489016003004>.
- Hickel, Jason. 2020. "The Sustainable Development Index: Measuring the Ecological Efficiency of Human Development in the Anthropocene." *Ecological Economics* 167 (January):106331. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2019.05.011>.
- Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 2012. *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. University of California Press.
- Hooghe, Liesbet, and Gary Marks. 2003. "Unraveling the Central State, But How? Types of Multi-Level Governance." *American Political Science Review* 97 (2): 233–43.
- Immerwahr, Daniel. 2015. "Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development." In *Thinking Small*. Harvard University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.4159/harvard.9780674735835>.
- "Institute for Social Ecology." n.d. Accessed May 1, 2024. <https://social-ecology.org/wp/>.

- Jessop, Bob. 2002. "Liberalism, Neoliberalism, and Urban Governance: A State–Theoretical Perspective." *Antipode* 34 (3): 452–72. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8330.00250>.
- Johnson, Isaijah. 2020. "'Solarpunk' & the Pedagogical Value of Utopia « Journal of Sustainability Education." *The Journal of Sustainability Education* 23 (April). https://www.susted.com/wordpress/content/solarpunk-the-pedagogical-value-of-utopia_2020_05/.
- Jones, Nicola. 2018. "How to Stop Data Centres from Gobbling up the World's Electricity." *Nature* 561 (7722): 163–66. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-018-06610-y>.
- Kavanaugh, Andrea, Debbie Denise Reese, John M. Carroll, and Mary Beth Rosson. 2003. "Weak Ties in Networked Communities." In *Communities and Technologies*, edited by Marleen Huysman, Etienne Wenger, and Volker Wulf, 265–86. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-0115-0_14.
- Kelly, Marjorie. 2023. *Wealth Supremacy: How the Extractive Economy and the Biased Rules of Capitalism Drive Today's Crises*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Kemp, Luke, Chi Xu, Joanna Depledge, Kristie L. Ebi, Goodwin Gibbins, Timothy A. Kohler, Johan Rockström, et al. 2022. "Climate Endgame: Exploring Catastrophic Climate Change Scenarios." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 119 (34): e2108146119. <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2108146119>.
- Kioupkiolis, Alexandros. 2022. "Digital Commons, the Political and Social Change: Towards an Integrated Strategy of Counter-Hegemony Furthering the Commons." *Ephemera: Theory & Politics in Organization* 22 (2): 58–82.

Knoke, David. 2018. *Changing Organizations: Business Networks In The New Political Economy*. Routledge.

Koikkalainen, Saara, and David Kyle. 2016. "Imagining Mobility: The Prospective Cognition Question in Migration Research." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 42 (5): 759–76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2015.1111133>.

Kothari, Ashish, Ariel Salleh, Arturo Escobar, Federico Demaria, and Alberto Acosta, eds. 2019. *Pluriverse: A Post-Development Dictionary*. New Delhi, India: Tulika Books.

Laurent, Sylvie. 2015. "The Unknown Story of a Counter War on Poverty: Martin Luther King Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign." Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality. https://inequality.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/media/_media/working_papers/laurent_king-war-on-poverty.pdf.

Lawrence, Michael, Thomas Homer-Dixon, Scott Janzwood, Johan Rockström, Ortwin Renn, and Jonathan F. Donges. 2024. "Global Polycrisis: The Causal Mechanisms of Crisis Entanglement." *Global Sustainability* 7 (January):e6. <https://doi.org/10.1017/sus.2024.1>.

Lefebvre, Henri. 2003. *The Urban Revolution*. U of Minnesota Press.

Lenton, Timothy M., Johan Rockström, Owen Gaffney, Stefan Rahmstorf, Katherine Richardson, Will Steffen, and Hans Joachim Schellnhuber. 2019. "Climate Tipping Points — Too Risky to Bet Against." *Nature* 575 (7784): 592–95. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-019-03595-0>.

Lewis, Michael, and Pat Conaty. 2012. *The Resilience Imperative: Cooperative Transitions to a Steady-State Economy*. New Society Publishers.

- Lindsey, Brink, and Steven M. Teles. 2017. *The Captured Economy: How the Powerful Enrich Themselves, Slow Down Growth, and Increase Inequality*. Oxford University Press.
- Logan, John R., and Harvey Luskin Molotch. 2007. *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. University of California Press.
- Luxemburg, Rosa. 2023. *Reform or Revolution*. Strelbytskyy Multimedia Publishing.
- Magnusson, Warren, and Rob Walker. 1988. "De-Centring the State: Political Theory and Canadian Political Economy." *Studies in Political Economy* 26 (1): 37–71.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/19187033.1988.11675541>.
- Mahnkopf, Birgit. 2019. "Discussion Paper No. 01/2019." EuroMemo Group.
- Mankiw, Gregory. 2021. *Principles of Economics*. Cengage Learning.
<https://thuvienso.hoasen.edu.vn/handle/123456789/11032>.
- Manski, Ben, Hillary Lazar, and Suren Moodliar. 2020. "The Millennial Turns and the New Period: An Introduction." *Socialism and Democracy* 34 (1): 1–50.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08854300.2019.1841711>.
- Marwell, Nicole P. 2004. "Privatizing the Welfare State: Nonprofit Community-Based Organizations as Political Actors." *American Sociological Review* 69 (2): 265–91.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240406900206>.
- Marx, Karl. 1873. *Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production*. Humboldt.
- Massey, Doreen. 2013. *Space, Place and Gender*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Massey, Douglas S. 1990. "American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass." *American Journal of Sociology* 96 (2): 329–57. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2781105>.

- McAdam, Doug, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly. 2001. *Dynamics of Contention*. Cambridge University Press.
- McMahon, Darrin. 2013. *Divine Fury: A History of Genius*. Basic Books.
- Mejeh, Mathias. 2020. "Cross-Sectional Social Network Analysis." In *Analyzing Group Interactions: A Guidebook for Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods*, 85–95. New York, NY, US: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367321116-10>.
- Moghadam, Valentine M. 2019. "What Is Revolution in the 21st Century? Towards a Socialist-Feminist World Revolution." *Millennium* 47 (3): 470–82.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0305829819838607>.
- Mudge, Stephanie L. 2018. *Leftism Reinvented*. Harvard University Press.
- Neumayer, Eric. 2003. *Weak Versus Strong Sustainability: Exploring the Limits of Two Opposing Paradigms*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Newman, Kathe, and Robert W. Lake. 2006. "Democracy, Bureaucracy and Difference in US Community Development Politics since 1968." *Progress in Human Geography* 30 (1): 44–61. <https://doi.org/10.1191/0309132506ph590oa>.
- Nichols, Naomi, Kaitlin Schwan, Stephen Gaetz, and Melanie Redman. 2022. "Enabling Evidence-Led Collaborative Systems-Change Efforts: An Adaptation of the Collective Impact Approach." *Community Development Journal* 57 (4): 750–68.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsab011>.
- North, Douglass C. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge University Press.

- Nunes, Rodrigo. 2014. *Organisation of the Organisationless: The Question of Organisation After Networks*. Mute.
- Ostrom, Vincent, and Elinor Ostrom. 1979. "Public Goods and Public Choices." In *Alternatives For Delivering Public Services*. Routledge.
- Palmer, Deborah, and Blanca Caldas. 2015. "Critical Ethnography." In *Research Methods in Language and Education*, edited by Kendall King, Yi-Ju Lai, and Stephen May, 1–12. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-02329-8_28-1.
- Peck, Jamie, and Adam Tickell. 2008. "Neoliberalizing Space." In *Economy*. Routledge.
- Pimentel, Mateo S., and Rebecca Monteleone. 2018. "A Privileged Bodymind: The Entanglement of Ableism and Capitalism | Southern Public Administration Education Foundation." *International Journal of Economic Development* 12 (1): 63–81.
- Raworth, Kate. 2017. *Doughnut Economics: 7 Ways to Think Like a 21st Century Economist*. Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing.
- "Resilient Pierce County 2020 Culminating Report." 2021. United Way of Pierce County.
- Restakis, John. 2010. *Humanizing the Economy: Co-Operatives in the Age of Capital*. New Society Publishers.
- Robbins, Richard H. 2014. *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*. 6th ed. New Jersey: Pearson.
- Robinson, Cedric J. 2000. *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*. Univ of North Carolina Press.

Rodriguez, Sarina, RVA Alyx Volzer, Bapu Vaitla, Vikram Koundinya, Rose Kagawa, Daniel Choe, and Catherine Brinkley. 2023. "Basic Income as Community Economic Development: A Policy Landscape Review of 151 Programs in the United States."

Roller, Margaret R. 2020. "Sample Size in Qualitative Research & the Risk of Relying on Saturation." *Research Design Review* (blog). July 7, 2020.
<https://researchdesignreview.com/2020/07/07/sample-size-qualitative-research-risk-of-relying-saturation/>.

Rothman, Barbara Katz. 2000. *Recreating Motherhood*. Rutgers University Press.

Schiller-Merkens, Simone. 2022. "Prefiguring an Alternative Economy: Understanding Prefigurative Organizing and Its Struggles." *Organization*, September, 13505084221124189. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13505084221124189>.

Schleuning, Neala. 2013. *Artpolitik: Social Anarchist Aesthetics in an Age of Fragmentation*. Minor Compositions.

Schneider, Nathan. 2018. *Everything for Everyone: The Radical Tradition That Is Shaping the Next Economy*. PublicAffairs.

Scott, James C. 2020. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. Yale University Press.

Scott, John. 2017. *Social Network Analysis*. SAGE Publications.

Sepasspour, Rumtin. 2023. "All-Hazards Policy for Global Catastrophic Risk." Technical. Global Catastrophic Risk Institute.

Shellenberger, Michael, Ted Nordhaus, Linus Blomquist, Rachel Pritzker, Peter Teague, John Asafu-Adjaye, Stewart Brand, et al. 2015. "An Ecomodernist Manifesto."

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5515d9f9e4b04d5c3198b7bb/t/552d37bbe4b07a7dd69fcd6bb/1429026747046/An+Ecomodernist+Manifesto.pdf>.

Smith, Jackie, and Dawn Wiest. 2012. *Social Movements in the World-System: The Politics of Crisis and Transformation*. Russell Sage Foundation.

Snyder, David, and Edward L. Kick. 1979. "Structural Position in the World System and Economic Growth, 1955-1970: A Multiple-Network Analysis of Transnational Interactions." *American Journal of Sociology* 84 (5): 1096–1126. <https://doi.org/10.1086/226902>.

Solarpunk Surf Club. 2024. "Solarpunk, Art, & Social Ecological Aesthetics." Zoom, April 9.

Speth, James Gustave, and Kathleen Courrier. 2020. *The New Systems Reader: Alternatives to a Failed Economy*. Routledge.

Standing, Guy. 2011. *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. A&C Black.

"State Innovation Models (SIM) Round 2: Model Test Annual Report One." 2017. RTI International. <https://downloads.cms.gov/files/cmimi/sim-round2test-firstannrpt.pdf>.

Steffen, Will, Katherine Richardson, Johan Rockström, Sarah E. Cornell, Ingo Fetzer, Elena M.

Bennett, Reinette Biggs, et al. 2015. "Planetary Boundaries: Guiding Human Development on a Changing Planet." *Science* 347 (6223): 1259855.

<https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1259855>.

Stiglitz, Joseph, and Jay Rosengard. 2015. *Economics of the Public Sector: Fourth International Student Edition*. W. W. Norton & Company.

Taylor, Colin Flint, Colin Flint, Peter J. Taylor, Peter J. 2018. *Political Geography: World-Economy, Nation-State and Locality*. 7th ed. London: Routledge.

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315164380>.

- Taylor, Dylan. 2017. "Rethinking Social Movements." In *Social Movements and Democracy in the 21st Century*, edited by Dylan Taylor, 51–69. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-39684-2_3.
- Taylor, Frederick Winslow. 2015. "Fundamentals of Scientific Management." In *Working in America*, 4th ed. Routledge.
- Taylor, P. 1991. "The Crisis of the Movements: The Enabling State as Quisling." *Antipode* 23 (2): 214–28. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8330.1991.tb00413.x>.
- "The Overton Window." n.d. Mackinac Center. Accessed May 1, 2024. <https://www.mackinac.org/OvertonWindow>.
- Thompson, E. P. 2016. *The Making of the English Working Class*. Open Road Media.
- Tracy, Lindsay Morgan. 2024. "Building Economic and Environmental Well-Being: Aligning Toward Justice in Washington State." Presented at the California Just Economy Summit, Sacramento, March 9.
- Wagner, Richard E., ed. 2018. *James M. Buchanan: A Theorist of Political Economy and Social Philosophy*. London: Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-03080-3>.
- Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1988. "Typology of Crises in the World-System." *Review* 11 (4): 581–98. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40241112>.
- Waring, Marilyn. 1989. *If Women Counted: A New Feminist Economics*. Macmillan London.
- . 1999. *Counting for Nothing: What Men Value and What Women Are Worth*. University of Toronto Press.

- Wasserman, Stanley, and Katherine Faust. 1994. *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wasserman, Stanley, and Garry Robins. 2005. "An Introduction to Random Graphs, Dependence Graphs, and P*." In *Models and Methods in Social Network Analysis*, 148–61. Cambridge University Press.
- Weber, Max. 1978. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. University of California Press.
- "What We Do." n.d. Native Roots Network. Accessed May 1, 2024.
<https://www.nativerootsnetwork.org/whatwedo>.
- Whitbred, Robert, Fabio Fonti, Christian Steglich, and Noshir Contractor. 2011. "From Microactions to Macrostructure and Back: A Structural Approach to the Evolution of Organizational Networks." *Human Communication Research* 37 (3): 404–33.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2958.2011.01404.x>.
- Wigger, Angela. 2016. "Anarchism as Emancipatory Theory and Praxis: Implications for Critical Marxist Research." *Capital & Class* 40 (1): 129–45.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0309816816628247>.
- Woodbury, Mary, and Adam Flynn. 2015. Interview with Adam Flynn on Solarpunk.
<https://dragonfly.eco/interview-with-adam-flynn-on-the-solarpunk-movement/>.
- Wright, Duane, and Sheila Kulkarni. 2024. "UAW History." Presented at the UAW disOrientation Series, April 10.
- Wright, E. 2010. *Envisioning Real Utopias*. Brooklyn, NY: Verso.

- . 2013. "Transforming Capitalism through Real Utopias." *American Sociological Review* 78 (1): 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122412468882>.
- Wright, E. 2015. "How to Be an Anticapitalist Today." *JAcobin*, December 2, 2015. <https://jacobin.com/2015/12/erik-olin-wright-real-utopias-anticapitalism-democracy/>.
- . 2019. *How to Be an Anticapitalist in the 21st Century*. New York: Verso.
- Wunderling, Nico, Anna S. von der Heydt, Yevgeny Aksenov, Stephen Barker, Robbin Bastiaansen, Victor Brovkin, Maura Brunetti, et al. 2024. "Climate Tipping Point Interactions and Cascades: A Review." *Earth System Dynamics* 15 (1): 41–74. <https://doi.org/10.5194/esd-15-41-2024>.
- Yates, Luke. 2015. "Rethinking Prefiguration: Alternatives, Micropolitics and Goals in Social Movements." *Social Movement Studies* 14 (1): 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2013.870883>.
- Zald, Mayer N., and John David McCarthy. 1987. *Social Movements in an Organizational Society: Collected Essays*. Transaction Publishers.