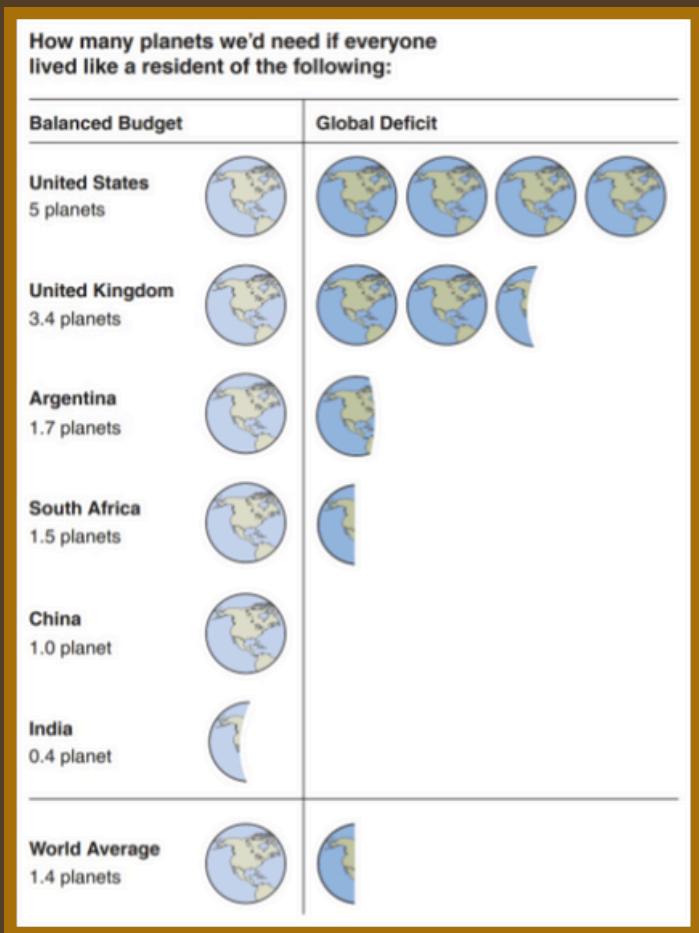


EXAM 4 PART II: CAPITALISM & CLIMATE CHANGE



HOW HAS CAPITALISM CONTRIBUTED TO CLIMATE CHANGE?



Robbins, Paul. 2018. *Environment and Consumption*. United States: Wiley-Blackwell.

Capitalism has contributed to climate change through production and consumerism. The Global North is responsible for both of these factors, which in turn, directly affects the living conditions within the Global South. Within production, Robbins's article explains the commodity, livestock, and how the industry has historically been not only the most wasteful, as well as environmentally damaging (2018:202). This is largely due to the high consumption levels from this industry in America, leading as an example of America's overconsumption problem.

A graph within Robbin's article, *Environment and Consumption* (2018:202), features how many Earths it would take for every person in the world to live like residents from different countries. Based on the United States, it would send the world into global deficit four times over. The next largest global deficit is from the United Kingdom, at two point four times over. This highlights the waste and overconsumption problem in the United States, representing that many consumers take these cheap commodities for granted.

PRODUCTION & CONSUMERISM

As discussed in lecture 1, consumerism is a cultural occurrence in America, as well as the Global North (Week 9, Lecture 1). It has detrimental environmental consequences, as mentioned before, in both the Global North and Global South. This results in climate change. Overconsumption is due to the rise of capitalism, and as long as the Global North is powered by capitalism, attempting to reduce the effects of overconsumption or consuming less by the working class can and will result in economic recession and crisis (Robbins 2018; Week 9, Lecture 1). The reason why overconsumption can happen so easily is due to the outsourcing of labor the capitalist model uses.

Kalinin Ilya. *Plant Factory Industry Building*. Canva.



OUTSOURCING

Outsourcing labor allows companies from the Global North to exploit their workers from the Global South. This labor model also allows for these companies to exploit the cheapest materials or resources (Week 9, Lecture 1). When companies follow this capitalist model, they also need to ensure that they advertise their products as much as possible. This, again, results in overconsumption and the Global South suffers.

FORCED RELOCATION

Upon a closer look, Carteret Islanders of Papua New Guinea have been forced to relocate due to climate change caused by capitalism, documented by the film *Sun Come Up* (Redfearn 2011). The Carteret Islands have been shrinking due to sea levels rising, making them less and less sustainable as they decrease the quality of land they live off. Forced relocation, in some cases, can also result in the resurgence of anti-immigration, as well as homelessness. This is true for one-fifth of Tuvalu's population, who have experienced violent storms that destroyed several communities and homes (Week 9, Lecture 1). Rising sea levels are major contributors and threats to those living on islands, especially in the Pacific Ocean.

EXTRACTION SITES

Another way the Global South suffers due to the consumerism in the Global North is through extraction sites. Extraction sites are powered by capitalist businesses for cheap production that exploit workers from the global peripheral in mines for resources like diamond or silver. These are sacrifice zones where they prioritize gaining resources over the needs of the environment and residents, ultimately contributing carelessly to the effects of climate change (Week 9, Lecture 1).



irasutoya. *Illustration of a Minecart Filled with Coal*. Canva.



Sketchtify. *Hand-Drawn Travel Around the World*. Canva.

EXAM 4 PART II:

CASE STUDY

WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH CLIMATE CHANGE?

THE SAKHA REPUBLIC OF SIBERIA

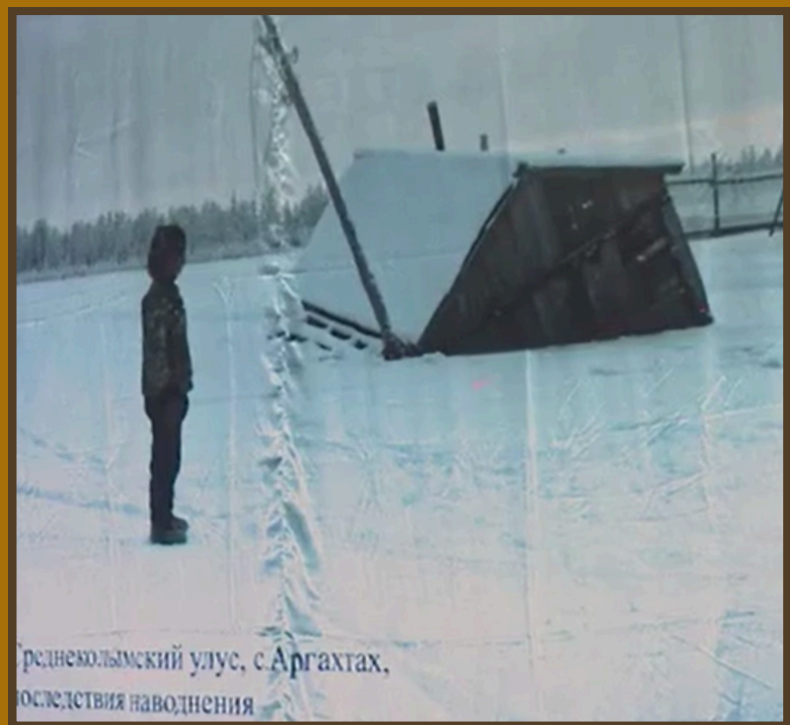
From *The Anthropologist* (Kramer et al. 2015) film, a case study of the Sakha Republic in Siberia illustrates the impacts of social and ecological vulnerabilities as a result of climate change. Due to climate change within the Sakha Republic, permafrost has thawed, leading to massive flooding within farming fields and in housing areas. Floods in farmlands effects the land's capability to grow the hay properly, impacting they quality of life for their livestock. Being that the Sakha Republic's major source of food is their livestock, thawing permafrost due to climate change affects the sustainability of this land. *The Anthropologist* (Kramer et al. 2015) shows Siberia being the most affected by increasing temperature on an international scale graph. With permafrost thawing levels increasing each year, it environmentally degrades the land and its capacity and ability to sustain this community.



Kramer, Seth., Miller, Daniel A., and Newberger, Jeremy. 2015. *The Anthropologist*. Garrison, NY, United States: Ironbound Films.

HEALTH EFFECTS AS A RESULT

In the Ust-Aldan region of the Sakha Republic, an image captured a sunken house due to permafrost thawing, and with the extremity of winter season conditions, it has covered this house in snow. It is explained that this situation happens very often, and it is a crisis that needs to be addressed and aided urgently. During the film, anthropologist Susie Crate interviews people within the Sakha community. Many citizens spoke about permafrost floods causing increased blood pressure due to the inability to cope with this stress and wolves moving closer to their town. It could be possible that wolves are encroaching due to the quality of life for livestock decreasing—making them easier to hunt—or that their habitat is also degrading, as it was previously mentioned in the film that the woods were flooding as well. This case study in the film, *The Anthropologist* (Kramer et al. 2015), illustrates the injustices the Sakha Republic is experiencing due to climate change degrading their lands through permafrost thawing.



Kramer, Seth., Miller, Daniel A., and Newberger, Jeremy. 2015. *The Anthropologist*. Garrison, NY, United States: Ironbound Films.



EXAM 4 PART II: SOLUTIONS

TOWARD MITIGATING THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

STRUCTURAL - GRETA THUNBERG: *THE CASE TO ACT RIGHT NOW*

Two solutions that can be helpful toward mitigating climate change and its injustices are posed by Greta Thunberg's *The Case to Act Right Now*, and Eduardo Garcia's *Things You Can Do* (2018; 2022). This first solution is from Greta Thunberg's Ted Talk because near the end she talks about how hope does not create change, which is a major way people try to encourage the masses to hope the climate will just get better because we just want it to. She further explains how the only way to create change is to act, thus changing the way things are done. She describes her experience of sitting outside the Swedish Parliament in a school strike, saying that she won't go to school to learn how to solve climate change, as she is acting on the solutions instead wasting her time on something that has already been learned. With this, she urges that changes toward helping the climate reduce global emissions--and in turn global temperatures--need to happen now (2018).

Garcia, Eduardo. 2022. *Things You Can Do*.
United States: Ten Speed Press.



Garcia, Eduardo. 2022. *Things You Can Do*.
United States: Ten Speed Press.



INDIVIDUAL - EDUARDO GARCIA: *THINGS YOU CAN DO*

Eduardo Garcia's book offers several things you can change about your life or routines to address climate change be more environmentally conscious (2022). For example, lowering your carbon footprint is a great way to lessen your contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. Ways to do this during the hotter seasons are: only using your air conditioning unit when needed, installing a ceiling fan or using a box fan to cool individual rooms, and using the heat outside to dry clothing. Ways during the colder seasons include: keeping your thermostat temperature at 68 degrees (F) consistently, wearing more layers, using space heaters, and leaving the oven door open after use. Other household appliances can be unplugged when they are not in use to

keep from them drawing more power, as well as aiding in reducing your electricity bill. These are just small and simple solutions to reduce emissions, but larger solutions involve using green energy. Individual homes can use solar panels to reduce their carbon footprint, and thus, greenhouse gas emissions (Garcia, 2022). Though it might not be globally accessible, and it is expensive, they should definitely be considered if proper conditions permit it. These individual actions toward reducing the effects of climate change can lead to structural change. For example, if more communities switch to green energy, more companies could switch to green energy as well. Not only would they be reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but they would also profit and gain investors from it as well. Companies also gain considerable attention when switching to green energy, making more people want to support and buy from their business.

THE OUTCOMES

In bringing attention toward climate change, Greta Thunberg explains how sitting outside the Swedish Parliament forced politicians to acknowledge it, speak on it, and act on it. This solution can facilitate climate justice by recognizing the urgency of reducing fossil fuels and global emissions to reduce global temperature increase. She states how Sweden is small, but just Sweden alone could have an impact of reducing climate temperatures by 1.5 degrees Celsius (2018). These solutions are examples of both individual and structural actions toward halting the global effects of climate change.



Wingzky. Recycle Symbol Ecology Go Green. Canva.

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