



**WEEKLY UPDATE  
NOVEMBER 27 - DECEMBER 3, 2022**

**THIS WEEK**

**NO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
SLO PENSION TRUST BOARD**

**LAST WEEK**

**NO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
NO REGIONAL AGENCY MEETINGS  
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

**EMERGENT ISSUES**

**NINTH CIRCUIT RULES CA ELECTION  
INTEGRITY PROJECT HAS STANDING TO  
CHALLENGE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF  
CALIFORNIA'S ELECTION LAWS**

**SLOW VOTE COUNT CONTINUES  
2<sup>ND</sup> DISTRICT & BOS BALANCE OF POWER RESULTS STALLED**

**GIBSON PROMISES TO GIVE STATE & LARGE  
CORPORATIONS CONTROL OF PASO BASIN WATER**

**COLAB IN DEPTH  
SEE PAGE 9**

**AMERICA'S SOVIET ELECTION SYSTEM**

*America may eschew the cruel details of Soviet elections, but we negate voters' agency just the same as the USSR.*

**BY KATYA SEDGWICK**

**GROWTH IS STILL OUR BEST HOPE**

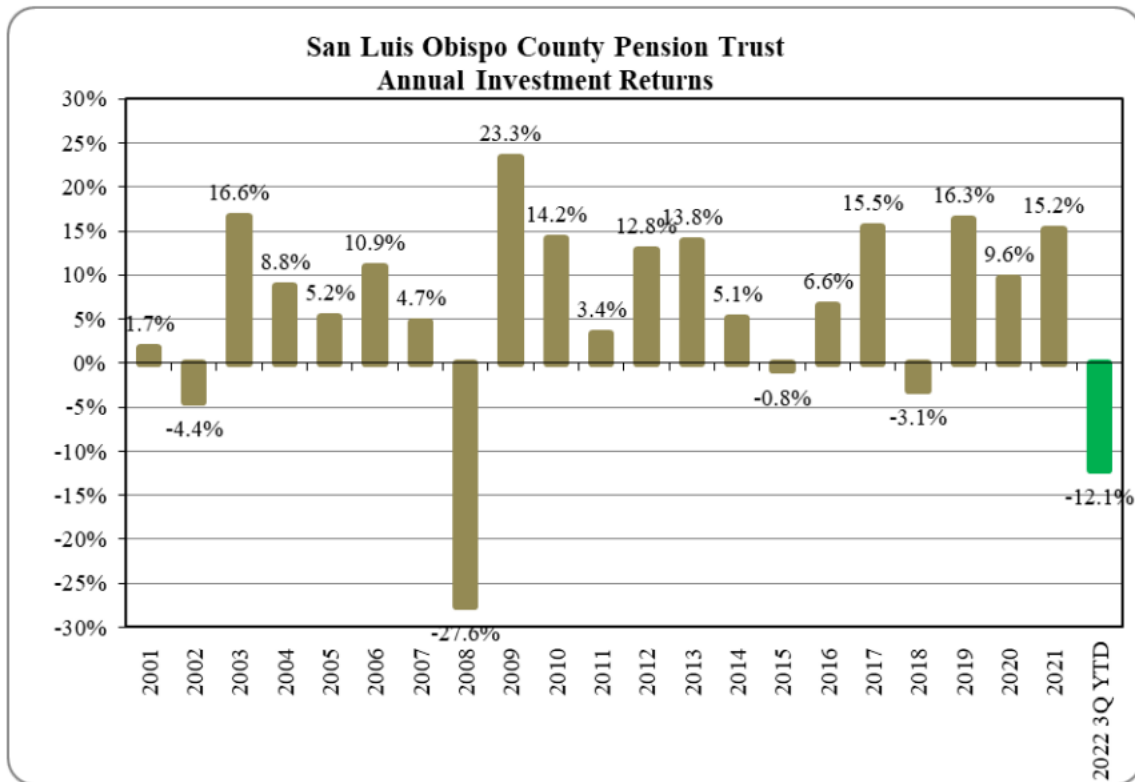
**BY ALLISON SCHRAGER**

**THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS**

**ALL MEETINGS ARE AT 9:00 AM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED**

**SLO County Pension Trust Board Meeting of Monday, November 28, 2022 (Scheduled)  
9:30 AM**

**Item 19 - Quarterly Investment Report for the 3rd Quarter of 2022.** During the first 3 quarters the Trust suffered from declining markets along with investors in general. Actually, October posted some slight increases which prevented the overall picture from being worse.



**Item 20 - Monthly Investment Report for October 2022.** The fund has lost \$173 million so far this year. Hopefully, November and December will continue the more positive trend that began in October. The Trust will begin focusing on rate recommendations this spring. The County administration is expecting some type of rate increase, which will negatively impact future budgets.

	October	Year to Date 2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Total Trust Investments (\$ millions)	\$1,602		\$1,775	\$1,552 year end	\$1,446 year end	\$1,285 year end	\$1,351 year end
<b>Total Fund Return</b>	+2.8% Gross	<b>-9.7%</b> Gross	15.2% Gross	8.9 % Gross	16.3 % Gross	-3.2 % Gross	15.5 % Gross
Policy Index Return (r)	+2.3%	-12.7%	12.8%	10.0 %	16.4 %	-3.2 %	13.4 %

*The Economy ♣ Inflation – The October US CPI inflation report came in lower than expected with a 7.7% year-over-year increase. Core inflation with volatile food and energy prices removed also turned the corner compared to September’s result with a 6.3% rise. The Agenda*

*item report provided some optimism that the early evidence on the Fed's campaign to slow rapid inflation may be combining with supply chain improvements to ease price pressures. The Fed has lifted interest rates from near zero to nearly 4% this year as it tries to slow consumer and business demand and give supply a chance to catch up.*



**No Board of Supervisors Meeting on Tuesday, November 29, 2022 (Not Scheduled)**

The next scheduled meeting is set for Tuesday, December 6, 2022. It will contain an item on proposed revisions to the Paso Robles Basin water moratorium.

## LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

**No Board of Supervisors Meeting on Tuesday, November 22, 2022 (Not Scheduled)**

The Board will not be meeting until Tuesday, December 6, 2022.

**Other regional agencies are also off during this week – None Scheduled**

## EMERGENT ISSUES

**Item 1 - The slow vote count continues.** As of Wednesday, November 23, 2022, there were still 9,872 ballots to tabulate countywide. It is not known how many of these are from the 2nd Supervisorial District, where the race closed to a 37-vote difference. The balance of the Board of Supervisors majority hinges on the ultimate outcome.

**NOVEMBER 8, 2022, GENERAL ELECTION**  
 NUMBER OF ESTIMATED REMAINING BALLOTS  
 AS OF 11/23/2022

All election processes are conducted at the San Luis Obispo County Government Building located at 1055 Monterey Street, Suite D-120.

**Election results and estimated number of remaining ballots will be updated after counting has ended on scheduled days.**

**NEXT COUNT - TBD**

CONTEST/DISTRICT	VOTE-BY-MAIL BALLOTS	PROVISIONAL or CVR BALLOTS	ELECTION NIGHT NON-PROCESSED	TOTAL
COUNTYWIDE	8,553	1,259	60	9,872

**County Supervisor, 2nd District (Vote for 1)**

Precincts Reported: 29 of 29 (100.00%)

	Polling	Vote by Mail	Total	
Times Cast	1,795	22,419	24,214 / 36,891	65.64%
Undervotes	87	1,522	1,609	
Overvotes	0	4	4	
Candidate	Polling	Vote by Mail	Total	
<b>BRUCE GIBSON</b>	339	10,980	11,319	50.08%
BRUCE JONES	1,369	9,913	11,282	49.92%
Total Votes	1,708	20,893	22,601	
	Polling	Vote by Mail	Total	
Unresolved Write-In	0	0	0	

**Count as of Wednesday, November 23, 2022 (Below)**

## County Supervisor, 2nd District (Vote for 1)

Precincts Reported: 29 of 29 (100.00%)

	Polling	Vote by Mail	Total	
Times Cast	1,795	18,271	20,066 / 36,891 54.39%	
Undervotes	87	1,218	1,305	
Overvotes	0	4	4	

Candidate	Polling	Vote by Mail	Total	
<b>BRUCE GIBSON</b>	339	9,430	9,769	52.08%
BRUCE JONES	1,369	7,619	8,988	47.92%
Total Votes	1,708	17,049	18,757	

	Polling	Vote by Mail	Total	
Unresolved Write-In	0	0	0	

### Count as of Wednesday, November 16, 2022

Between the November 16 Count and the November 23 count, the numbers for polling place ballots for both candidates remained exactly the same week over week. Bruce Gibson's mail-in ballots increased by 1,550. Bruce Jones' vote by mail total increased by 2,294. The question then becomes, how many 2<sup>nd</sup> district mail-in ballots remain to be counted, and does Jones' momentum continue sufficiently of offset Gibson's?

The Clerk-Recorder did not announce a date for the next count but simply posted **“TO BE DETERMINED”** on the website. This action seems at best rude and more probably sinister, as the count observers have no idea when they will have to show up.

**Item 2 - A Federal Appeals Court has ruled in favor of the Election Integrity Project California (EIPC).** The Court ruled that EIPC has standing to challenge California's elections laws, which are designed to promote manipulation of low knowledge voters through laws such as no voter signature required, same day registration, month long voting season, ballot harvesting, distribution of street money, and registration of non-citizens, including illegal immigrants.

### **Ninth Circuit Rules CA Election Integrity Project has Standing to Challenge Constitutionality of California's Election Laws**

*California's election 'anomalies' are not new, nor have they been fixed*

By [Katy Grimes](#), November 22, 2022 6:35 am

“Over the last decade California has passed laws, orders and regulations that have led to massive irregularities,” the Election Integrity Project California said in a statement Monday announcing a huge legal win.

The Ninth Circuit has ruled that Election Integrity Project®*California* (EIPCa) and recent and future congressional candidates have standing to challenge the Constitutionality of California's election laws, regulations, policies and procedures that have weakened or removed integrity from the election process. Though the Constitution gives authority to state legislators to pass laws to manage elections and process ballots, EIPCa asserts they do not have carte blanche authority to pass laws that diminish the value of the lawfully cast ballots.

These laws, orders and regulations culminated “in the 2020 election, when Governor Newsom authorized mailing a ballot to all ‘active’ registrants on the voter rolls and former Secretary of State Alex Padilla gutted signature verification requirements. EIPCa received over 700 affidavits signed under penalty of perjury from EIPCa-trained observers who consistently reported election workers not adequately verifying signatures and, in some cases, counting ballots without signatures.”

EIPCa [continues](#):

“Because neither the state legislature nor Alex Padilla required uniform and secure vote casting and counting procedures, uneven procedures were applied across counties. EIPCa and its co-plaintiffs filed this lawsuit against Governor Newsom, the Attorney General, the Secretary of State, and thirteen country registrars.”

“This lawsuit is monumental because it is the first to challenge the constitutionality of California's election laws and procedures, and we are the first to get past standing,” says Mariah Gondeiro, the lead attorney who works for Advocates for Faith and Freedom. “If we win, California will be required to enforce secure and uniform vote casting and vote counting procedures.”

“For over a decade, Election Integrity Project®*California* has researched and documented every aspect of California's election process and identified how these laws transformed an Election Day into a 60-day election season fraught with easy to manipulate procedures,” says Linda Paine, President of EIPCa. “We are now seeing California Style laws in states across the country creating the same problems that have been witnessed and documented by EIPCa-trained observers in California for years.”

The Globe has covered election “anomalies” and explained some of California's in 2020:

In 2016 the California Legislature and Gov. Jerry Brown ostensibly “legalized” [ballot harvesting](#), allowing a third party to collect ballots and deliver them to election officials, eliminating the ballot protection law that allowed only a family member to return another voter's ballot.

As I write this, I am receiving many reports from California voters who say their votes have not been counted. Candidates report their districts are only reporting at 59% and worse.

While the Secretary of State says he has until December 11 to announce California's election outcomes, how did we get here?

Voters' party registrations were changed right before the June 2016 Primary election, ensuring a Hillary Clinton win over challenger Bernie Sanders, in what was called electronic vote rigging. California was a crucial state for both Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton, but the election was called for Clinton minutes after the polls closed, before millions of provisional ballot votes were counted.

A 2017 [study by Stanford University](#) proved that [Hillary Clinton](#)'s campaign pre-rigged the system to [steal the nomination from Bernie Sanders](#). And it was never more apparent than in California where Bernie Sanders voters were likely robbed of a legitimate candidate. You can [read the EIPCa press statement here](#).

For more history of California's elections, "anomalies" and issues, read "[California's Election 'Anomalies' Are Not New, Nor Have They Been Fixed](#): How California's elections are manipulated and why a federal investigation is needed here, and in many states" [here](#).

### [Katy Grimes](#)

Katy Grimes, the Editor of the California Globe, is a long-time Investigative Journalist covering the California State Capitol, and the co-author of [California's War Against Donald Trump: Who Wins? Who Loses?](#)

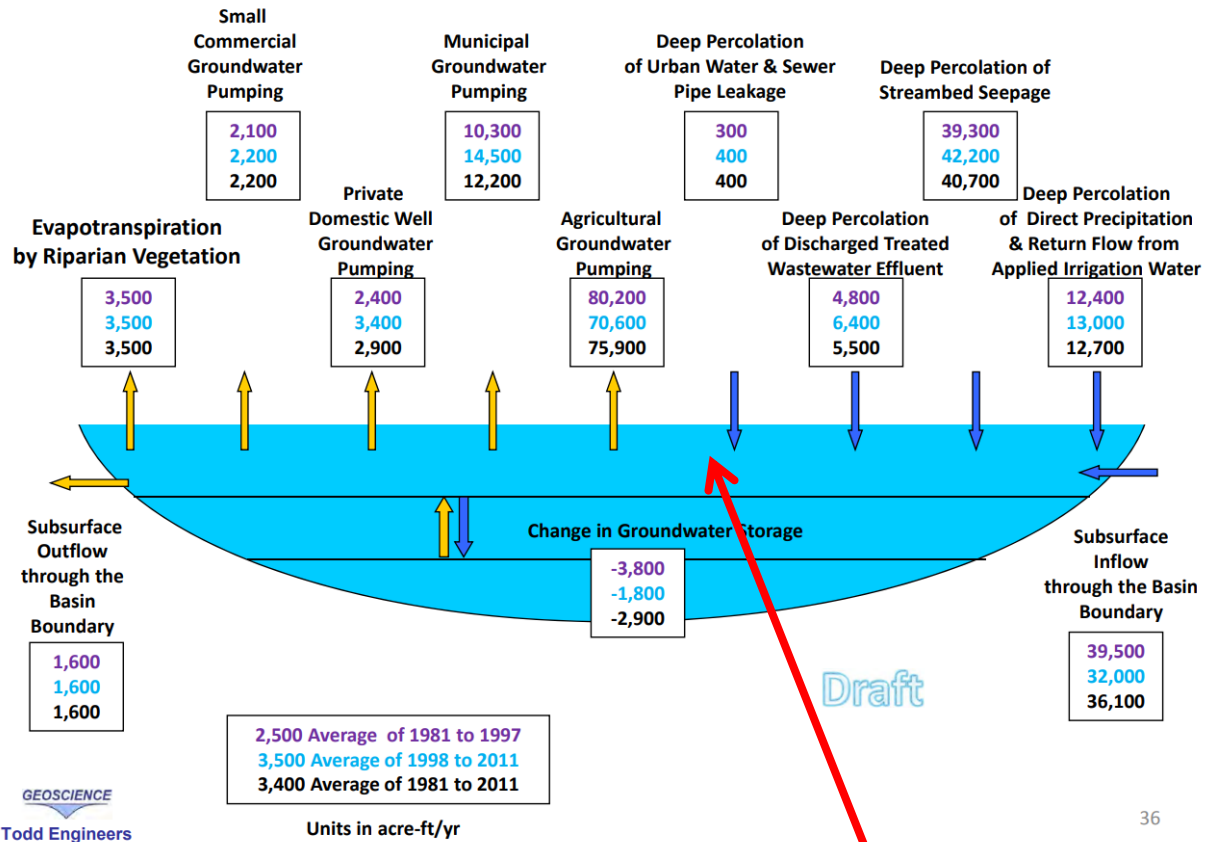
### **Item - 3 Gibson to Give State and large corporations control of the Paso Water Basin.**

Several tipsters have reported that Gibson told people that if the progressive left achieves control of the Board Majority, they will use their power to permit water banking by the large entities in the Paso Basin. The not so surprising revelation was reportedly delivered during a meeting to the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Suburban Caucus during its annual conference at the Disneyland Hotel 2 weeks ago. Remember, water banking is not simple recharge from sources naturally occurring in or over the basin. It can include state water, the injection or percolation of which changes the water rights framework for the overlayers.

The graphic below summarizes behavior of the basin. It was prepared by the County consultant Todd Engineers and was an important part of the information used by the Board of Supervisors to adopt the Paso Basin moratorium in 2013 and thereafter. Note that the study that was used to prepare the Paso Basin SGMA Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) is a more recent study and uses different and generally lower numbers for Ag well pumping. (See the graphic on the page below)



# Average Annual Water Balance – Paso Robles Basin



At issue, if State water is banked in the basin, is the legal status of the space between the current water level and the full capacity of the basin. That space and the water that would be stored within it becomes part of the State public domain and is no longer a priority right of the local overlayers. Physically, the local recharge water and the State [water] banked water would mix. How would anyone know whose water is whose?

During the recent 2<sup>nd</sup> district campaign, Gibson received substantial campaign contributions from some of the larger corporate Paso Basin corporate entities and/or their local agents. Earlier this year, 4<sup>th</sup> District Supervisor Elect, Jimmie Paulding, who defeated Lynn Compton, also received substantial contributions from some of these entities as well.

## COLAB IN DEPTH

**IN FIGHTING THE TROUBLESOME, LOCAL DAY-TO-DAY ASSAULTS ON OUR FREEDOM AND PROPERTY, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE LARGER UNDERLYING IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CAUSES**

# AMERICA'S SOVIET ELECTION SYSTEM

*America may eschew the cruel details of Soviet elections, but we negate voters' agency just the same as the USSR.*

**BY KATYA SEDGWICK**



For years, my husband has been telling me that I need to share this wild family anecdote with my readers. I've put it off for so long, and the United States has changed so much, that the story is no longer interesting for solely anthropological reasons.

The year was 1984, and the hero of the story is my big sister, who was then a college student in her late teens. Like everyone else, one day that March she was expected to report to her local precinct to perform some voting ritual. The USSR made Election Day a holiday, giving the workers a day off to celebrate their Sovietness.

For my sister, however, it was a chance to sleep in until early afternoon and then spend a few hours on the telephone. Maybe doing a little homework and playing "Rondo Alla Turca" on the piano. Then phone her friends again.

When the doorbell rang that evening, my sister opened the door. A short corpulent woman in a dark coat said she was from the polling place and that they knew that she hadn't voted yet. My sister reassured the lady that she was on her way, closed the door on her and asked me to not tell grandma about the visitor. Of course, I was happy to be part of the conspiracy.

That wasn't the end of it. The woman showed again up sometime later, explaining that the day was coming to an end but that her comrades couldn't close the precinct yet because some irresponsible individuals hadn't voted yet. You see, Soviet elections boasted a near 100 percent turnout. My sister, this time on her way to the shower, promised to swing by the polling place shortly. Eleven-year-old me was in awe of her sweet-talking the election official. Certainly, I was on her side, and I wouldn't tell grandma.

But when the lady rang the bell for the third time, my sister was taking her hour-long shower, and it was grandma who came to the door. Hearing about the situation, she turned pale. It was the Soviet generation gap: members of the First Soviet Generation, my grandmother among them, were the survivors of Stalinism. They knew that disobedience can be costly. Members of the Last Soviet Generation, on the other hand, were apolitical and rebellious.

When my mom returned home later that evening, grandma spent the night complaining to her about how my sister would one day get herself in real trouble, and that she had to go to the polling place in the freezing temperatures with her hair still wet. But mostly she was incensed that, although it was not a real election—in the USSR, there was just one Communist candidate for every position on the ballot—the authorities still felt the need to round up everyone to play pretend. She kept bringing up that point for the rest of her life, long after the Soviet Union became extinct.

That family story no longer feels outlandish; in all but minutia, it has ceased to be a warning about socialism.

That Soviet situation is now not so very different from the electoral process in, for example, California, where, two years ago, under the guise of a public health emergency, Governor Gavin Newsom authorized absentee ballots to be sent to every voter. It worked so well for him that he later made the change permanent. Conveniently, ballot harvesting, also called ballot trafficking, which allows the collection of mail-in voting ballots by a third party, had already been legalized in 2016.

Under the ballot trafficking regime, we don't drag teenage girls out of bathtubs and send them in freezing cold temperatures to polling places with still-wet hair. Oh no, that would be rude. Instead, party and union functionaries arrive at their doorsteps to pick up the ballot—this type of coercion is far more gentle on all individuals involved. We may eschew certain cruel details of Soviet life, but the attack on privacy feels very Soviet and, more importantly, the negation of agency, the very essence of disenfranchisement, is the same.

The Soviet system was as heavy-handed as it gets. Although it was obvious that we didn't live in a democracy, the state wanted a show of obedience, so Communist officials either lured their subjects to precincts with patriotic folk music concerts and rare goods—the former was mostly a turn off, but the opportunity to buy some oranges worked like magic—or, in the case of some resisters, dropped by with reminders. In many former Soviet countries, the situation never changed. Free food rations are offered to voters and polling staffers come knocking on apartment doors. That's one of the reasons why voter participation in the post-Soviet world remains high.

In the USSR, “elections” were play-acted to cover up autocracy. Alexei Yurchak explained in *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More* how, in the 1970s and ’80s, the language of Soviet propaganda was designed to give the impression of stability, and the population was enlisted to reproduce slogans written by the Kremlin. Likewise, the results of Soviet “elections” were predetermined, but everyone was mired in the lie of participation, to help create the illusion of an indestructible regime.

America today has a mirror problem. A sense of suspense around the key races is the norm—pundits generate attention-grabbing headlines, polls are interpreted every which way, and bets are placed on PredictIt.org. At the same time, the process itself is becoming increasingly opaque. With voting and balloting taking weeks if not months, many states have retired the idea of Election Day. The ballots can be returned in batches and stored in unsecured boxes. Cameras watching the uncounted ballots go dark in the middle of the night. Citizens are admonished to trust the experts, and reassured computers will not mess with the vote.

This is not the idea of free and fair Western elections that was sold to us, the discontented in the USSR. A real election involves people going to the polls and casting their vote in privacy, but in a way that is observable, so that anyone can see that it is free of coercion. Paper ballots are tallied immediately after the precincts close. And, of course, a valid form of identification is required to vote. One day, one ballot, one voter, one ID.

Multiple intentional deviations from this model raise doubts about whether what we are witnessing qualifies to be called an election at all.

An election process that doesn’t inspire trust is damaging to our democratic institutions even if no shenanigans take place. Skepticism is a part of being human, and watching the arrival of unsolicited ballots addressed to individuals no longer alive naturally invites skepticism about the alleged democratic values of California. Once skepticism sets in, why should any citizen lower himself to casting his vote in an election that seems like a sham? By merely cooperating with the exercise the voter is granting validity to what might be a lie.

Over the last two years, “election denier” has become a favorite slur of leftist pundits. Certainly, for the system to function citizens need to be able to put their trust in the process. But politicians who needlessly and cynically destroy that confidence are both short-sighted and immoral. It is not incumbent on the citizens to put their faith in sketchy voting arrangements. It is incumbent on governing bodies to create transparent, fool-proof procedures to win back the trust of citizens.

Asking Americans to accept an election system that is anything but airtight makes a mockery of their civic duty, as much a mockery as a precinct official demanding my sister vote. It forces people to accept what they worry is a lie and will, sooner rather than later, undermine social trust and confidence in our government.

*Katya Sedgwick is a writer in the San Francisco Bay area. You can follow her on Twitter @KatyaSedgwick. This article first appeared in the November 21, 2022 American Conservative Magazine.*

# GROWTH IS STILL OUR BEST HOPE

## BY ALLISON SCHRAGER



During a meeting several years ago, as I started to explain to my colleagues how different economic policies could boost growth, a young staffer interrupted me. He announced—quickly, so he could get it all out in one breath—that growth should not be a policy objective anymore, because it destroys the environment. I was stunned—but even more so because many of the younger staffers agreed with him.

But I should have known then that this idea of “degrowth,” like many bad ideas that have taken hold lately, was here to stay. In fact, the idea has been around for a long time already. This latest incarnation began with French social philosopher André Gorz in 1972 and gained some popularity among academics and anti-capitalists. Lately, however, interest in the idea has expanded from activists and idealistic journalists to [scientists](#), academics (including Japanese political theorist Kohei Saito), politicians, and even [Steven Chu](#), a Nobel laureate, professor of physics at Stanford University, and Barack Obama’s energy secretary.

Adherents of the degrowth philosophy believe that economic growth harms the planet, and that stopping it is our best hope to avert environmental catastrophe. London School of Economics [anthropologist and degrowth proponent Jason Hickel](#) explained that the philosophy does not aim explicitly to shrink GDP, but it does think that people should consume much less and accepts that GDP will probably fall as a result.

Extreme environmentalists tend to associate themselves with the degrowth movement, but the disposition exists in more mainstream circles for other reasons. Most politicians won’t come out and say that they are against growth. It has been a while since anyone on the left or right (except

maybe Liz Truss) has talked about growth as an explicit objective without qualifiers like equity or reshoring manufacturing, both of which sacrifice growth for other aims.

The rhetoric stems from the same flawed assumption animating all de-growthers: that the global economy is zero-sum, or that if one person or country gets wealthier, someone else, or the planet as a whole, is worse off.

It is an intuitively appealing proposition. Everyone from the early mercantilists to Thomas Malthus made the same mistake. But economic reasoning and agricultural and industrial revolutions proved them wrong. Growth can make everyone better off. The reason economists are so obsessed with growth is not because we *don't* care about the environment or equity but because we *do*. Richer countries have higher life expectancy, more leisure time, more female employment, lower infant mortality, and higher quality of life by pretty much every metric.

Giving up on growth means dooming lower-income countries never to achieve these things. Hickel concedes that if we stop growth, we will leave developing countries poor. He [envisions them growing](#) until they reach an acceptable level, while rich countries shrink a bit until we all converge at a more sustainable level of consumption. But even if we could equalize wealth and stay put, giving up on growth would leave people today and in the future worse off.

Life seemed good enough to people in the nineteenth century, because living standards were better than they were in the eighteenth century. But it would be unimaginable for us today to live without electricity or antibiotics. It is even hard to imagine going back to the 1980s, when we didn't have smartphones, gene therapy, or as much air conditioning as we have now. Giving up on growth deprives future generations of the innovations that tomorrow holds for us.

The effort to stop growth misunderstands human nature, which thrives on the motivation to create and improve. Dooming people to stagnation deprives them of curiosity and purpose. An economy that is not growing is politically unstable and more prone to disruption. Even if you accept the premise that we have only a few decades to achieve zero emissions or that the planet is doomed, growth remains our best hope. De-growthers are correct that endless consumption is not sustainable, but sustainable growth doesn't come from consumption; it comes from innovation—squeezing out more growth from fewer resources. Innovation is why Malthus was proved wrong, and why a growing population did not mean running out of resources.

Growth is our best hope for green technology. It runs against our basic intuition to see that the economy is not zero-sum. The fact that so many people are open to the degrowth mindset shows how the economics profession has failed to educate the public. Sure, growth isn't perfect; it can be uneven and cause disruption or environmental degradation. But the alternative is far worse.

*Allison Schrager is a senior fellow at the [Manhattan Institute](#), a contributing editor of [City Journal](#), and author of [An Economist Walks into a Brothel: And Other Unexpected Places to Understand Risk](#). This article first appeared in the November 21, 2022 edition of [City Journal](#).*



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Sustaining Member: \$5,000 +  \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*(Sustaining Membership includes a table of 10 at the Annual Fundraiser Dinner)*

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