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Language, Climate Change, and Cities beyond Capitalism

Simon Mair, University of York

simon.mair@york.ac.uk

Abstract

Appeals to the economy are often used to shut down substantive action on climate change. But exactly what is meant by *the economy* is rarely made explicit. In this paper, I draw on previously published research in ecological, feminist, and Marxist economics to argue that appeals to the economy are really appeals to capitalism. It is not an unchangeable set of economic laws that prevents climate action; rather, it is a set of stories and social relationships specific to capitalist ways of organizing economic activity. In theory, we can construct new laws and promote non-capitalist ways of organizing. But in practice, this is difficult because capitalism has enormous cultural power supported by the advertising industry and a lack of cultural depictions of alternatives to capitalism. Cities can undermine this cultural power by rethinking their advertising policy and using it to promote pro-social and pro-ecological ways of living rather than mass consumption. Cities can also produce cultural artefacts that name capitalism and alternatives to capitalism. In this way, cities can take on a radical educational role, helping their citizens to understand how they fit into both capitalist and non-capitalist modes of production, and organize for new economic structures that support substantive climate action.

Summary for Policymakers

- Transformative climate action is often prevented by appeals to economic costs.
- However, what counts as an economic cost is a function of the type of economic system (i.e., the socially constructed systems of production, allocation and consumption of resources). Economic systems can be changed.
- If the dominant economic system is not compatible with serious climate action, we should develop new economic systems.

- Currently, the dominant economic model is capitalism. Capitalism is a way of organizing production and distribution that prioritizes production for profit.
- It is hard to envision an economy beyond capitalism because cultural forces (notably advertising) support and recreate capitalist values.
- Cities can support a cultural shift away from capitalism in three ways.
- First, cities can rethink and repurpose advertising: stopping all advertising that is at odds with climate action (e.g., fossil fuels, mass consumption, SUVs, high-carbon foods and products).
- Second, former advertisement space could be repurposed to promote pro-social and pro-ecological activities.
- Third, cities can identify and name capitalist and non-capitalist forms of production in their policy documents and communication material, helping their citizens to recognize a diversity of economic forms and organize for climate action more effectively.
- Action at the city level can allow cities to contribute to and support global movements against capitalisms tendencies toward over-production and over-consumption that drive the climate crisis.

What Is the Economy?

The language and logic of *the economy* is often used to stop or delay serious climate action. For example, economic arguments feature heavily in the "discourses of climate delay," a typology of arguments used to slow down substantive climate action (Lamb et al., 2020). Attempts to derail climate action by emphasising downsides often do so by appealing to economic costs: "If fossil fuel use were to end tomorrow, the economic consequences would

be catastrophic" (O'Donnell written testimony on Massachusetts bill H3281, as cited in Lamb et al., 2020). Likewise, Donald Trump justified withdrawing from the Paris Climate agreement on the grounds that staying in the accord would cause a "major economic wound" (Trump, 2017, as cited in Lamb et al., 2020). But what is "the economy" here? How does it inflict consequences or become wounded by climate action?

In both popular and academic usage, *the economy* is invoked as an ontological fact (Fisher, 2009; Gibson-Graham, 2006; Mair, 2022). Ontology is the study of being, concerned with the basic categories we use to interpret the world. To treat *the economy* as an ontological fact is to take it for granted. When people refer to *the economy* they talk about it as though it is an object that exists outside of society, with its own immutable laws. Economic wounds happen because when we violate these laws, terrible things happen. Operating from this starting point, mainstream economics is the branch of knowledge that discovers how economic laws work (Martinez-Alier, 1994) and economic policy is the practice of designing policies and institutions that work within these laws. However, the laws of economics are not actually laws. It may be the case that stopping fossil fuel production without changing the economy would cause significant harm. But this is an argument for changing our economic laws, not continuing fossil fuel production. As the chemical engineer and industrial ecologist Roland Clift (2017, paragraph 20) puts it, the laws of thermodynamics may be "hard-wired into the universe" but "the 'laws' of economics are written on paper." So if breaking economic laws by taking climate action leads to undesirable consequences, why don't we write new laws?

This paper draws on an ongoing project to develop an account of what is wrong with current economic laws and think about how we begin to write new ones. Over the last 5 years I have built on work in ecological, feminist, and Marxist economics to develop an account of

the ways that the economic laws of capitalism drive social and ecological crises (Clift et al., 2022; Isham et al., 2021; Mair, 2019, 2020a, 2020b; Mair et al., 2020) and how the cultural power of capitalism limits the scope of what we believe is possible (Mair et al., 2020; Mair, 2022, 2021). In the section "The Economy, Capitalism, and Climate Change," I summarize this research, arguing that what we consider immutable economic laws are actually a particular set of stories that support capitalism (not *the economy*). These stories are failing to meet human needs and are causing climate change. Rewriting these laws is difficult, because capitalism has substantial cultural power that makes it hard to imagine alternatives. In the section "Advertising's Role in Supporting Capitalism" I focus particularly on the role of advertising in recreating capitalism's cultural power. But there are things we can do at the city level to begin to weaken capitalist hegemony and support the development of alternative economic narratives. In the section "Recommendations for a Climate-Compatible Shift away from Capitalism, I argue that cities should rethink how they use advertising space in order to undermine advertising's role in supporting capitalist values. This consists of banning all or some capitalist adverts that promote mass consumption and reusing advertising space to promote activities that create a broader set of social or ecological values. Alongside action on advertising, cities should develop and apply language that helps citizens to see capitalism and imagine something different, sowing the seeds for alternative economic forms to flourish.

The Economy, Capitalism, and Climate Change

In ecological and feminist economics, an economy is any set of activities that uses resources to meet human needs or wants (Mair, 2020a). Ecological economist Joan Martinez-Alier (1994) writes that "economics should not be mistaken for chrematistics, the art of making money"; rather, economics should be "an analysis of the provision of the common

wealth with the means of life which modern science made possible" (p. 132). The same core idea is found in feminist economics, where the economy is conceptualised as the system of social provisioning: "the ways a society organizes itself to produce and reproduce material life" (Power, 2004, p. 7). Within this broad understanding, there are many specific ways that systems of production and distribution can be structured (Gibson-Graham, 2006; Raworth, 2017). There is no one economy: there are many economies.

The Relationship between the Economy and Capitalism

Different forms of economy have different laws. One of the laws of the capitalist economy is that it strives for the accumulation of monetary value over and above all other reasons to produce (Mair, 2020a; Mair et al., 2020). The basic motivating factor underlying capitalist production is, how do we use money to generate more money? In fact the process of using money to generate money was what defined *capital* itself in the classical economics of Smith and Marx (Mair, 2018, 2022). Contrast this with hybrid production, like that in social enterprises, where the motivating factor is, how do we use money to generate the social or environmental values we care about. Or with non-capitalist production processes, such as state or voluntary organisations, where the attempt is to generate social or environmental value, perhaps without making money at all (North, 2016).

The accumulation of monetary value is one aspect of capitalism that makes it very difficult to deliver on serious environmental and social goals (Isham et al., 2021; Mair, 2019; Mair et al., 2020). Under capitalist structures, both workers and capitalists depend on success in the market. This requires them to accumulate money to survive (Gordon & Rosenthal, 2003; Wood, 2002). One strategy for accumulating more money is to sell more goods. In constantly expanding its productive capacity, capitalism creates a systemic tendency to use more energy and more resources and emit more pollutants and more waste (Mair et al.,

2020). At the same time, the need to accumulate monetary value creates systemic pressures to prioritize the production of high-profit goods at the expense of lower-profit goods—even where the lower-profit goods may be of higher environmental or social value (Mair, 2020a). This was noted by Adam Smith (1975), who argued that market-based economies systematically excluded the poor because they had limited purchasing power and so producers seeking a profit would not produce for them. To further secure its accumulation of monetary value, capitalism strives to produce for as low a cost as possible and in doing so pushes workers into unsafe conditions in terms of both their physical and mental health (Isham et al., 2021). But if capitalism is so bad, why don't we change it?

Capitalism is enormously culturally powerful. Our societies struggle to imagine economies and societies that are not dominated by capitalism (Mair, 2022; Mair et al., 2020). Indeed we often do not even recognize capitalism: When opponents of environmental change invoke *the economy*, they are invoking capitalism and implying that there are no alternatives (Fisher, 2009; McKinnon et al., 2018). Consequently, appeals to the economy are demands that all climate action follow capitalist laws. That is, to be implemented at scale, climate action is required to make money. The cultural dominance of capitalist values is maintained partly by the production of cultural artefacts (literature, TV, art) that promote capitalist ways of living. The prime example of this is the advertising industry (Schudson, 1984).

Advertising's Role in Supporting Capitalism

Capitalist advertising promotes the values and practices that reinforce the mass consumption on which capitalism depends. The drive to accumulate monetary value leads capitalists to produce in ever-greater quantities. But because capitalist production is motivated by the prospect of making money, production only really has value for capitalist firms when it is translated into some form of monetary income via consumption. Studies in

consumer research and psychology suggest that exposure to advertising stimulates materialistic values (Richins, 2017; Shrum et al., 2022). Materialism refers to an outlook or value system that prioritizes material possessions and consumption (Dittmar & Isham, 2022). Because of this, materialism is closely connected to a central myth of consumer capitalism perpetuated by advertising: that consumption is the best way to meet our needs (Cushman, 1990; Jackson, 2017).

Such is the power of advertising that some analysts have argued that it takes on an almost religious aspect. The theologian Tricia Sheffield (2006) argues that advertising takes on the role of the "divine mediator"—a theological concept that describes the medium through which people come to know and reconcile themselves with God. Sheffield argues that we can understand advertising in the same way: the culture of capitalism is analogous to God and the language and images of advertising are the medium that communicates the message that capitalism "desires to give to humanity. This act is revelation" (Sheffield, 2006, p. 106).

To create the revelatory effect, and convince us of the consumerist myth, "advertising creates a reality that is not real" (Dittmar, 2007). For this reason, the sociologist Michael Schudson (1984) likens advertising to the Stalinist propaganda tool of *socialist realism*. Socialist realism was a state directive that determined the form and content of art produced under the Soviet Union. The purpose of this was to ensure that art reinforced and re-created the values of communism. Schudson argues that advertising works in the same way but for capitalist values. Like socialist realism, advertising uses a blend of reality and fiction to construct a symbolic language. But where socialist realism used art to reify production and communist values, advertising operates under *capitalist realism*: it is the creation of a kind of art that idealizes the consumer and consumption as the path to happiness (Gibbons, 2005).

Figure 1 is a digital billboard I photographed while on my commute through Salford train station in the United Kingdom in November 2019. Using this as a case study, let us consider how advertising works in cities today. From Schudson's perspective, the advert blends reality and fiction. It depicts a real object (the car) and references real situations (crowded trains), but it caricatures these to produce a fiction. This is not quite a real car—it is not the tangible object you engage with every day. Rather, it is the idea of a car, emphasising an idealized imaginary of what car ownership means. Through this imaginary, we see Sheffield's analogy to God and revelation. The advert communicates to the viewer the ideals of the capitalist culture: keep consuming to improve your life. In this specific case, the answer to overcrowding of commuter trains is buying a car. Through this purchase, you will realise freedom, personal space, and status. Buy the car and become more human. The idea that such qualities should be realised through private consumption (rather than, say, collective action to fund more public transport) is a consumer capitalist fiction.

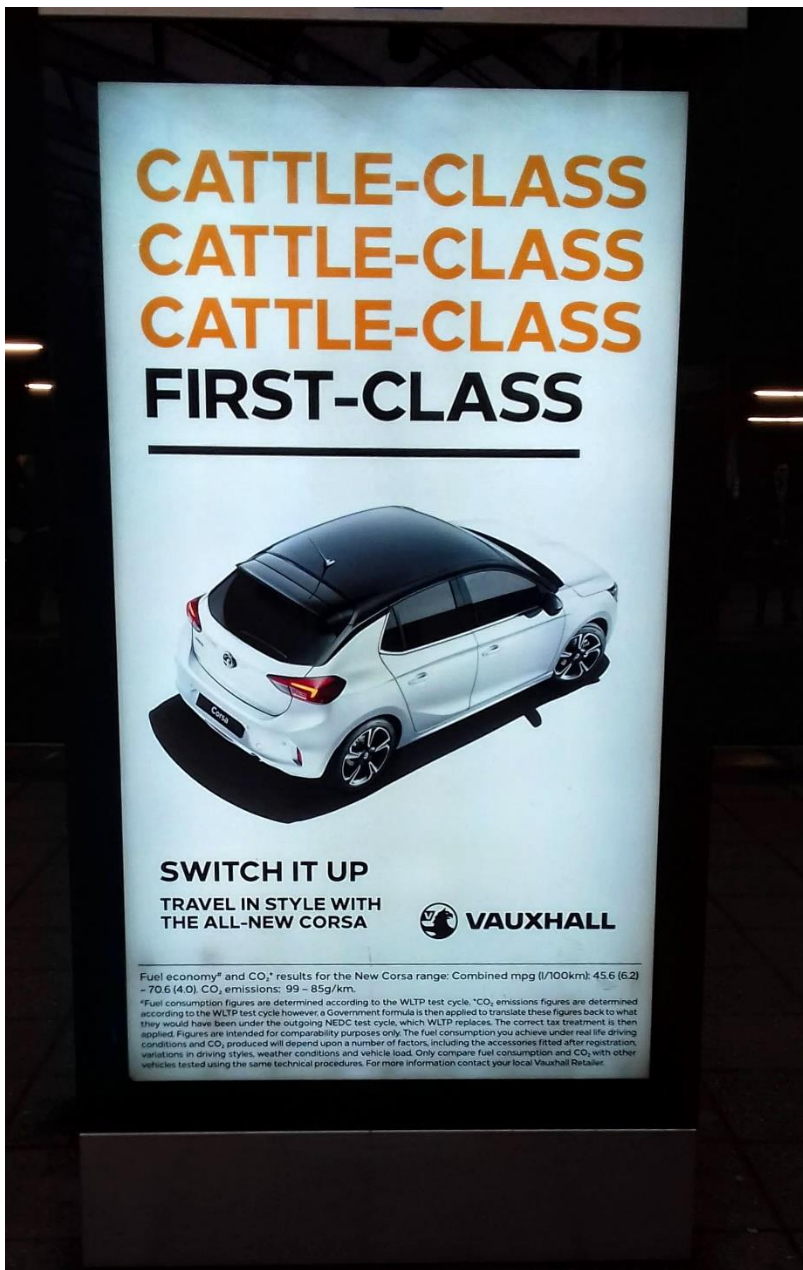

Figure 1: Vauxhall Corsa advert, photographed by the author in Salford Train Station, November 2019

The capitalist goals being communicated by this advert are in direct conflict with the goals of Salford City Council. At the time I photographed the advert, Salford City Council (2019) was revising its local plan after its consultation round (the plan was adopted by the Council in 2023). Salford City Council's (2023) 8 priorities include tackling the climate emergency and promoting public transport. By encouraging consumption and specifically the use of SUVs, the advert directly undermines climate action. By pushing the idea that the answer to overcrowded trains is private transport, rather than greater investment in public

transport, the advert directly undermines the plans stated goal of making "it easy and attractive to walk, cycle and use public transport", stopping motor vehicles from being able to "dominate" (page 33) and taking steps to "reduce car dependence" (page 160). In this way the advert is deeply undemocratic, representing the use of monetary power of capitalist interests to undermine democratically constructed plans to tackle climate change.

Recommendations for a Climate-Compatible Shift away from Capitalism

Recommendation 1: Ban Capitalist Advertising

Cities should take steps to limit capitalist advertising. While it is not possible for cities to end all advertising (e.g., online or broadcast), there is significant scope to reduce or end outdoor advertising. This will require political courage. It is likely to meet resistance. First, and most obviously, resistance may come from advertising agencies and advertisers for whom this is a threat to their business models. But resistance may also come from within city administration. Adverts contribute substantively to the finances of many cities, both directly and through public–private partnerships to fund infrastructure (Iveson, 2012). The loss of these funds is likely to be a challenge for many overstretched and underfunded services. There may also be arguments around freedom of expression and choice—though these rely on a restrictive notion of freedom that requires users to have the money to purchase advertising space, effectively meaning that most citizens and organizations are already unable to take part in advertising.

Local policymakers who do have the political courage to make moves banning advertising may take hope from the fact that they would not be the first to do so. Notably, Sau Paulo implemented a ban on billboards in 2007 with the enactment of *Lei Cidade Limpa*

(*Clean City Law*). Although adverts have since begun to re-establish a presence in the city, this initially saw the removal of some 15,000 billboards (Victor, 2020). Such moves would be a clear way to contribute to national and global struggles against over-production, over-consumption, and climate change (Kaupa, 2023; Schmelzer et al., 2022)

Where it is not politically feasible for city leaders to ban capitalist adverts outright or where non-elected city officials do not feel able to propose such a ban, one option is to move in a piecewise manner. Electorates or city leaders may be more amenable to targeted arguments highlighting how specific adverts are harmful to their political interests. The starting point is to make the case for the banning of the most harmful adverts—such as for fossil fuels, SUVs, and tobacco. There is clear evidence that advertising such products promotes their consumption, directly fostering ecological and social crises (Kasser et al., 2020). Cities around the world are already taking steps in this direction. There is support for this from organizations like Adfree Cities, which set out definitions of and model motions for banning high carbon advertising (Gillet, 2023).

Recommendation 2: Promote Alternative Economy Advertising

Where there is more political ambition or possibility, a move to ban capitalist advertising could usefully be combined with a positive proposal to reimagine advertising spaces and use them promote to pro-social and pro-ecological ways of living. Reading advertising as a form of art that seeks to communicate values and narratives gives us a way to work with advertising beyond banning it. Most adverts today are used by capitalism to promote mass consumption and support mass production. Art was used by the Soviet Union to promote authoritarian communism. But other groups also use art to promote their

practices. Could art and advertising be used to promote alternative, sustainable ways of living? There are examples of this in practice.

Adblock Bristol (https://adfreecities.org.uk/bristol/) supports the Burg Arts project, a community arts billboard that takes a space typically associated with capitalist advertising (the billboard) and instead uses it to host artistic works celebrating the local community (Figure 2). Likewise, the practice of subvertising uses advertising space to critique capitalist organisations (Dekeyser, 2021). Figure 3 shows a billboard from Brighton where a poster has been put up on a billboard with the explicit intention of critiquing a corporate brand and drawing attention to its ecologically destructive practices. Currently these activities are marginal, carried out by grassroots organizations. Cities should act to systematize and promote such creative uses of advertising space. If city advertising space were given over to the promotion of critical thought and non-capitalist activities, this would at least deprive capitalism of a space it uses to recreate its cultural power and could even lay the groundwork for a cultural shift toward civic and ecological activism.

Figure 2: A repurposed advert celebrating Angela Francis an activist and one of the first female black DJs in Bristol. Location: the Burg Arts Project, Bristol. *Source: Artwork by Grace Kress / photo by Adblock Bristol.*

Figure 3: Ruinair, a subverted billboard in Brighton. *Source: Public Domain.*

The first step in systematically promoting alternatives to capitalist advertising is to identify the specific alternative social and ecological values that the city wants to promote. This is challenging because it would be open to greenwashing. To be effective at challenging capitalist cultural values advertising space should be used to promote activities that do not require participation in for-profit activity (either through consumption or production). Table 1 provides a set of exemplar activities and values. Note that green consumption does not feature here; while electric cars, green hydrogen, and vegan meat alternatives (for example) are less environmentally damaging than petrol cars, fossil gas, and red meat consumption, they are still part of the cultural logic of capitalism, and their adverts foster consumption as the means to achieve happiness (Santa & Drews, 2023).

Table 1: Exemplar values that cities may seek to define and use to guide advertising policy

Value	**Activity to be advertised**
Community cohesion	Free to access community events
Ecological restoration	Tree planting projects
Health	Accessible exercise groups
Access to nature	Local parks
Education	Youth groups operating within the city

The suggestions in Table 1 are not definitive; cities would need to develop their own criteria of what constitutes social and environmental value from their perspective. Value cannot be defined technocratically; value is subjective and should be arrived at democratically. In the simplest case, this may be going through stated goals or priorities of the current administration. A more robust approach may be to conduct citizen assemblies or other participatory exercises to construct understandings of value in a democratic manner. Examples of city-level climate citizen assemblies in the United Kingdom suggest that they can be used to build political mandates for elected representatives (Wells et al., 2021).

Once a set of values has been developed, a number of options open up. Where there is political will, city leaders could ban all adverts that do not promote the value criteria developed. Where this is not possible, one model to follow is green public procurement (Aldenius & Khan, 2017; Liu et al., 2019). When negotiating contracts for companies to manage advertising space, the value criteria could be used to judge adverts in terms of the values they support, and quotas of adverts meeting such criteria could be written into legal agreements with outdoor advertising providers. Such a move could be coupled to commitments to provide free or reduced-cost advertising space to city-based community groups meeting the city definitions of social and ecological value. Such moves would fall short of outright bans of capitalist practice but would constitute positive shifts.

Recommendation 3: Acknowledge and Promote Diverse Economic Systems

One of the central ways that capitalism retains its cultural power is by hiding in plain sight (Mair, 2022). For many of us, capitalism is the system that dominates our lives. We work in capitalist organizations, live in capitalist countries, and are subject to capitalist propaganda. And yet, we rarely hear about capitalism; instead we hear about the economy or the market. This is challenging and often leaves us feeling incapable of picturing a life outside of capitalism. And yet, everyday we also engage with non-capitalist ways of producing.

Adverts have power because they are a kind of cultural artefact that shapes how people view the world. But adverts are not the only such artefact. Utopian fiction acts as a rare space in which we find alternative visions of the economy (Mair et al., 2020). Academic papers are another space where we find economic depictions—though by and large these depictions support capitalism rather than challenge it (Mair, 2022). The documents produced by cities are also cultural artefacts: they contain assumptions and ideas about how the world works and can shape the views of the people that read them.

Cities can challenge the cultural dominance of capitalism by helping their citizens to see capitalism as *one possible* economic system rather than *the only* economic system, and by showcasing alternatives. Doing this can start with using language in city documents that identify organizations, processes, or systems as capitalist or non-capitalist. All documents produced by a city administration are cultural artefacts, and many of them have the potential to help people see beyond capitalism. Whether internal or externally facing, documents are engaged with by the public or by staff members, and they will either help people to see and understand the diversities of economic production or implicitly reinforce the idea that capitalism and the economy are synonymous. Indeed, while public facing documents may

reach a wider audience, unelected city officials may have more power to (subversively) act by incorporating this language into internal documents.

As city leaders and staff, you will have experience with multiple forms of productive systems. In your cities, you will have organizations that are run in different ways. In many ways, the specific activities underlying the production will look very similar. What distinguishes them is the social context that surrounds them: What kind of value is produced? Who produces the value? Who gets to keep the value (Gibson-Graham, 2006)? One way to articulate this is through the questions set out in Table 2.

Table 2: Idealized forms of pure capitalist enterprises, hybrid enterprises, and non-capitalist enterprises

	How do people interact with the organization?	**How are workers engaged?**	**Who controls monetary surplus?**	**What is the principal form of value being produced?**
Traditional capitalist	Buying and selling through a free market (e.g., consumers buying in a shop)	Wage labour	Owners, board of directors	Monetary value, with some social or ecological value as a way to realise monetary value (e.g., green consumption, selling of electric cars, or privatized health care)
Alternative capitalist/hybrid	Buying and selling through regulated (mandatory or voluntary) markets (e.g., fair trade, electricity generation)	Alternative paid (e.g., self-employed; cooperative)	Board of directors	Some social or environmental value coupled with monetary value (e.g., living wages paid to workers in production of consumer goods, sale of goods with a portion of profits reinvested in the community)
Non-capitalist	Free at point of use (e.g., services provided by organizations that request voluntary donations, state-provided services)	Unpaid (e.g., voluntary labour, housework, time cooperative)	No surplus	Social or ecological value, with monetary value only generated as an aside if at all (e.g., public libraries; community organizations)

Table 2 sets out idealized forms of pure capitalist enterprises, hybrid enterprises, and non-capitalist enterprises. Under the heading capitalist we might think of speculative financial firms generating monetary value through speculative activity. A small proportion of this monetary value goes to workers in the form of a wage, while the majority is captured by investors. On the other extreme, we might have pure public organizations run by volunteers and generating a non-monetary value that is freely distributed. Think of youth groups or other community organizations. Such organizations might generate no monetary value at all. In the middle fall *alternative capitalist* or hybrid organizations, such as social enterprises, which use monetary value and markets in the pursuit of other value forms. These examples are instructive, but in reality, things are not always so clear.

Many organizations have combinations of capitalist and non-capitalist characteristics. To give you an example from my own life, I work for a UK university. It has a mission to provide the social value of “an education that empowers” (University of York, 2023). This is the major part of why I want to work in higher education: to empower people to make change. I produce knowledge that critiques capitalism and attempts to support alternatives, and I try to teach in a way that empowers my students. These activities are forms of production that have non-capitalist characteristics. They are not done purely to generate money, and the surplus’s they generate are not directly captured by a capitalist class. But, inevitably, these activities are complicated by the capitalist structures they are embedded within. My production is not only valuable for the knowledge it provides but also as a source of income for my employer and as a supporter of the conditions of broader capitalist production. Critique has developed into its own profitable industry (Bacevic, 2019). My employer hopes that my critiques will eventually be realized as monetary value by attracting students or grant money. Students themselves are sold the promise of a better job at the end of their degree and so come to understand

their learning in terms of how they can support capitalist production rather than transform it (Troiani, 2017). I work for a wage, and my employer seeks to minimize my cost to them. As I write this my union is in an industrial dispute with the employers' association over workload, pay, and pensions (UCU, 2023). I (and my union) would argue that this reflects an unequal distribution of surplus generated by the sector. Universities are social organizations, but their social ends are constantly pressured and subverted to the capitalist goals of accumulation by educating a workforce and providing knowledge that can be marketized and sold (Jessop, 2018; Troiani, 2017).

Being aware of my position in production systems enables me to reflect on my role and push towards more substantive change. This is what is sometimes called *praxis*: action that is informed by reflection (Freire, 1970). Knowing that I have some freedoms (to critique and to help students engage with potentially transformative ideas) I can take steps to promote those aspects of my work. I can create classroom spaces, learning opportunities, and research that attempt to strengthen this ideal (Canaan, 2010). At the same time, I acknowledge that this work is compromised and supports capitalist structures, so I can try to challenge and resist the compromises. I do this within my work (discussing these tensions with students and attempting to shape university strategies) and outside it (through my union). I can also acknowledge the limits of my role and take up voluntary activities that support the broader cultural change I think we need (I help run a youth group affiliated with the International Falcon Movement—Socialist Educational International).

By adopting a language and analytical framework that helps people to better understand and reflect on the nature of the economic systems that dominate their lives, cities can take on a proactive and radical educational role. Climate action has to be material—new ideas alone won't save the planet. But, at the same time, such action must be supported by a

cultural shift. Understanding that we engage with both capitalist and non-capitalist dynamics everyday can help people to understand and articulate their place in production systems. Praxis tells us that the first step in taking action on a problem is to be aware of it, and taking effective action always requires reflection on the action taken (Freire, 1970). I have argued that academic writing has the potential to act as cultural artefacts in which readers can find alternative values and ways of living (Mair, 2022). The documents and other artefacts produced by cities can work in the same way: as educational tools that enable the public to see through the "confusion of … 'common sense'" (Canaan, 2005, page 161) that economic rhetoric attempts to use in discourses of climate delay. By helping their citizens to reflect on their lives and place in capitalist and non-capitalist economic activity, cities can enhance collective capacities to engage in community and political action to promote the material structures that support serious climate action.

Conclusion

Taking serious climate action requires a challenge to the core capitalist dynamic of accumulating monetary value, regardless of social or environmental costs. Such action could have social as well as environmental benefits, but it is hard to do because capitalism has enormous cultural power. Cities can act to challenge the cultural power of capitalism by rethinking their advertising policy. A good first step is regulating and banning particularly harmful adverts (such as those for fossil fuels). A stronger step is to move away from capitalist advertising altogether and use advertising space to promote pro-social and pro-ecological values and activities. Cities can also use their outputs to engage and educate the public. Using a language and analytical framework that identifies capitalist and non-capitalist production processes, city documents and other outputs can help their citizens to understand and reflect

on position in production systems. In this way, cities lay the groundwork for greater participation in community and political action to support serious climate action.

Author Information

Simon Mair is an ecological economist, interested in understanding the capitalist economy in order to build something better. He teaches and researches at the University of York, UK, and is a fellow with the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity.

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