

# Economics in film essay

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The movies we've watched and the articles we've read, have given an insight as what may happen, and what is already happening to the world. The movie "Wall-E" has shown the possibilities of world destruction, while the movie "A Civil Action" shows the kind of destruction that is occurring now, and the cost that is associated with both scenarios. To coincide with these two movies, the articles "The Tragedy of the Commons" and "The Problem of Social Cost", also tell us what to expect if the human race does not change its ways. The movies Wall-E paints a picture of the tragedy that will fall upon the Earth, if consumption is not brought under control.

Everything that is produced today is for all intensive purposes, disposable! It is no wonder we are called "the throwaway society".

There is really nothing that is made anymore, that you don't throw away. The movie shows that when you see the collection of items, that people just throw away, in Wall-E's rotating closet. It is also seen when he compacts trash into blocks.

Items that were once valuable are now worthless. In other words everything is replaceable by something better. So, what do we do? Throw the old item away.

In some ways you can say that technology is to blame. Technology has made it very easy to produce new goods as well as easier to purchase. Technology keeps the cost of production lower and so, that makes the items that were too expensive for everyone, accessible to everyone. As long as the costs stay low we will continue the consumption of goods and services at a very high rate. One option to prevent the high rate of consumption is to increase the

price of the goods and services so that people will wait longer before throwing the old item away.

Another way is to charge a refundable tax on certain items, similar to recycling, so that if you trade an item on a new you can either get half your tax amount returned to you or you can write-off double the tax amount on your taxes. Realistically what should be done is what is mentioned in the Article “ The Tragedy of the Commons”. The Commons, being the Earth, is in a fragile state and, things need to be put in place now before the Earth fights back. One of the suggestions is population control.

That would be ok however; at some point people will realize that in the end scheme of t all, you want your family at the top of the food chain because as everybody knows the bigger your family is the power you have. The next thing that needs to be fixed is pollution. There has to be more regulation on pollution. Pollution is affecting all of natural resources and needs to be heavily monitored and heavy penalties for those that violate pollution laws. The regulation of production to prevent the possibility of over-polluting is necessary as well. That will be discussed later in the paper. The movie “ A Civil Action” shows us what was happening in to a small town in New England, in the 1990’s.

After several deaths in a small town, a local Tannery is suspected of somehow poisoning the water supply from illegally dumping out toxic waste. The Tannery and another company were later found guilty of dumping toxic waste and were fined for their actions and forced to clean up the toxic materials and restore the land they destroyed. Unfortunately, the dumping

that occurred there was not the first case of illegally dumping toxic waste and it probably will not be the last. And, who knows how many countless others, that happened many years ago, are yet to be discovered. One of the biggest reasons that companies continue to illegally dump waste is that it is simply too expensive to dispose of it properly. The cost of proper disposing of the material outweigh the benefits of not. So, in other words, it decreases profits. Another thing to point out here is that even if a company gets caught, it is still less expensive to pay a fine or get a settlement agreement, than to dispose of the waste properly.

The article, “ The Problem of Social Cost”, addresses this issue. It says that you can regulate these companies by decreasing the amount they produce. This can be accomplished by increasing the social cost, which will lessen the demand for products that produce pollution. This in turn will assist companies in ensuring that marginal revenue is greater than marginal cost.

Other suggestions that are mentioned are to increase taxation, pass more laws, increase that cost of production, or have a company pay for Environmental Protection Agent on Site, at the company’s expense, to ensure proper handling of toxic waste. The other day I saw a bumper sticker that read “ Environmental Protection: It’s a Family Value. I believe this meant, environmental protection is everyone’s responsibility, not just those that do it for a living.

We have to take care of our “ Common” area or it will be destroyed. The movie “ Wall-E” showed the evacuation of the plant when things got uninhabitable. Which does illicit some hope if that does happen.

However, this is not reality and there will be no escaping our mess.