

Review of: "Global Governance and Sustainable Development: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic"

Jennifer Cyr¹

¹ Universidad Torcuato di Tella

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This commentary provides insights on government responses to and the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. It reflects upon the tensions between containing the spread of COVID-19 while also protecting constitutional rights, especially in democratic versus authoritarian regimes. It examines how vitriol toward the “other” increased in both regime types, in an effort to find a scapegoat for the virus' spread. It also examines how social inequalities increased during the pandemic. The author then examines each of these phenomena within the context of modern capitalism.

As evidenced by my brief summary, this is a sweeping and rather ambitious commentary that nevertheless offers insights on some of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and how those reflect some inherent problems with the capitalist model. There is a lot to take in here in a very short space. My primary suggestion, therefore, is that the author scale back some of the claims made--or that he take more time to elaborate on the multiple points that the essay seeks to make.

This commentary could also benefit from a better justification of the evidence used. While there are many authoritarian regimes in the world, here there is a focus on China and North Korea. Why is this the case? Also, at times anecdotal evidence is used--such as when the author refers to his own experience as a citizen during a period of lockdown. It is difficult to extrapolate more general findings from this kind of engagement with evidence.