



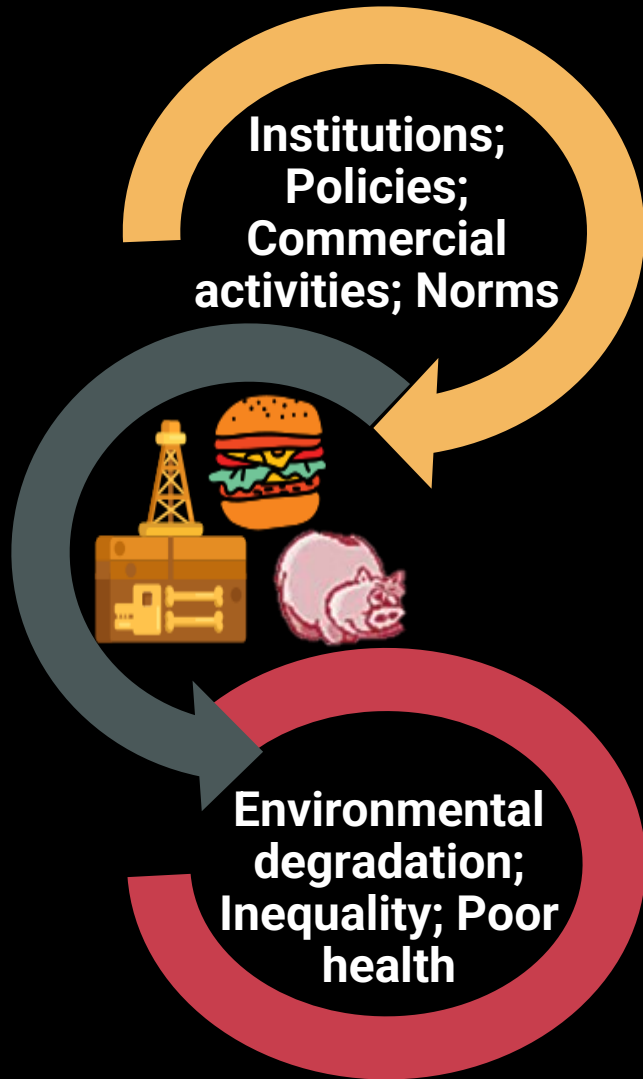
ARC Laureate Fellowship Initiative

Rebalancing Ideas, Interests and Institutions: Addressing the structural drivers of health inequity

Professor Sharon Friel
ARC Laureate Fellow

ANU School of Regulation
and Global Governance

Need to exit the consumptogenic system



- The web of actors, institutions, policies, commercial activities and norms that
- incentivise and reward extraction, production and consumption of natural resources, including fossil fuel-reliant goods and services
 - extract and concentrate wealth

This is a story of power, money and resources



IDEAS

Neoliberalism;
Efficiency;
Individualism.



INTERESTS

Economics;
Shareholders;
Technological;
Biomedical.



INSTITUTIONS

Markets;
Trade;
NPM;
Metrics.

Designing and shaping:

- Public opinion
- Solution trajectories
- Policy and regulation
- Markets

Maintain the status quo



What if...



IDEAS

Equality;
Justice;
Collectivism.

INTERESTS

Health;
Social;
Environment.

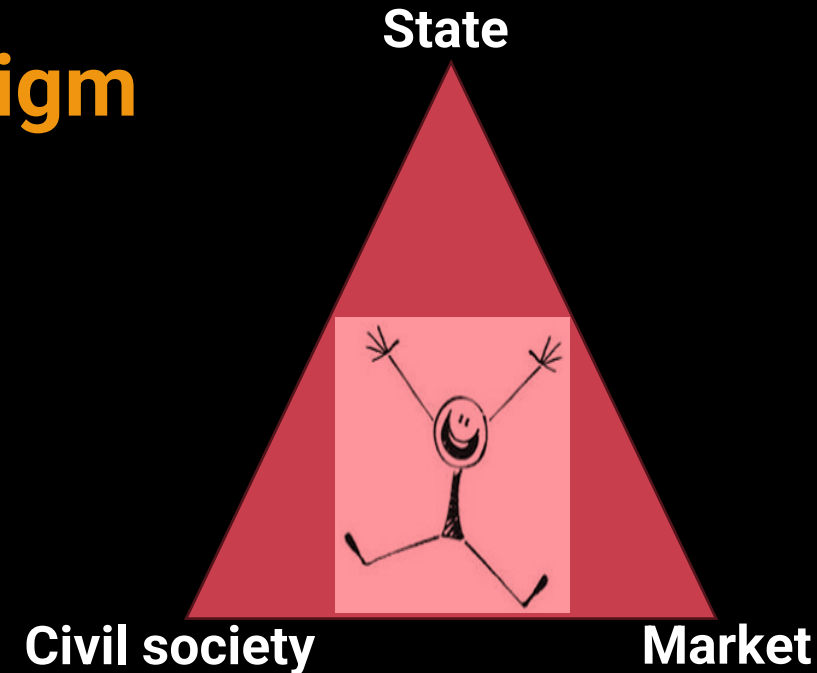
INSTITUTIONS

Democracy;
Controlled markets
Wellbeing
economy.

Creating systems that advance health equity



1. **Imagining and embedding a new paradigm**
2. **Releasing state capacity**
3. **Taming the beast**
4. **Releasing the influencers**

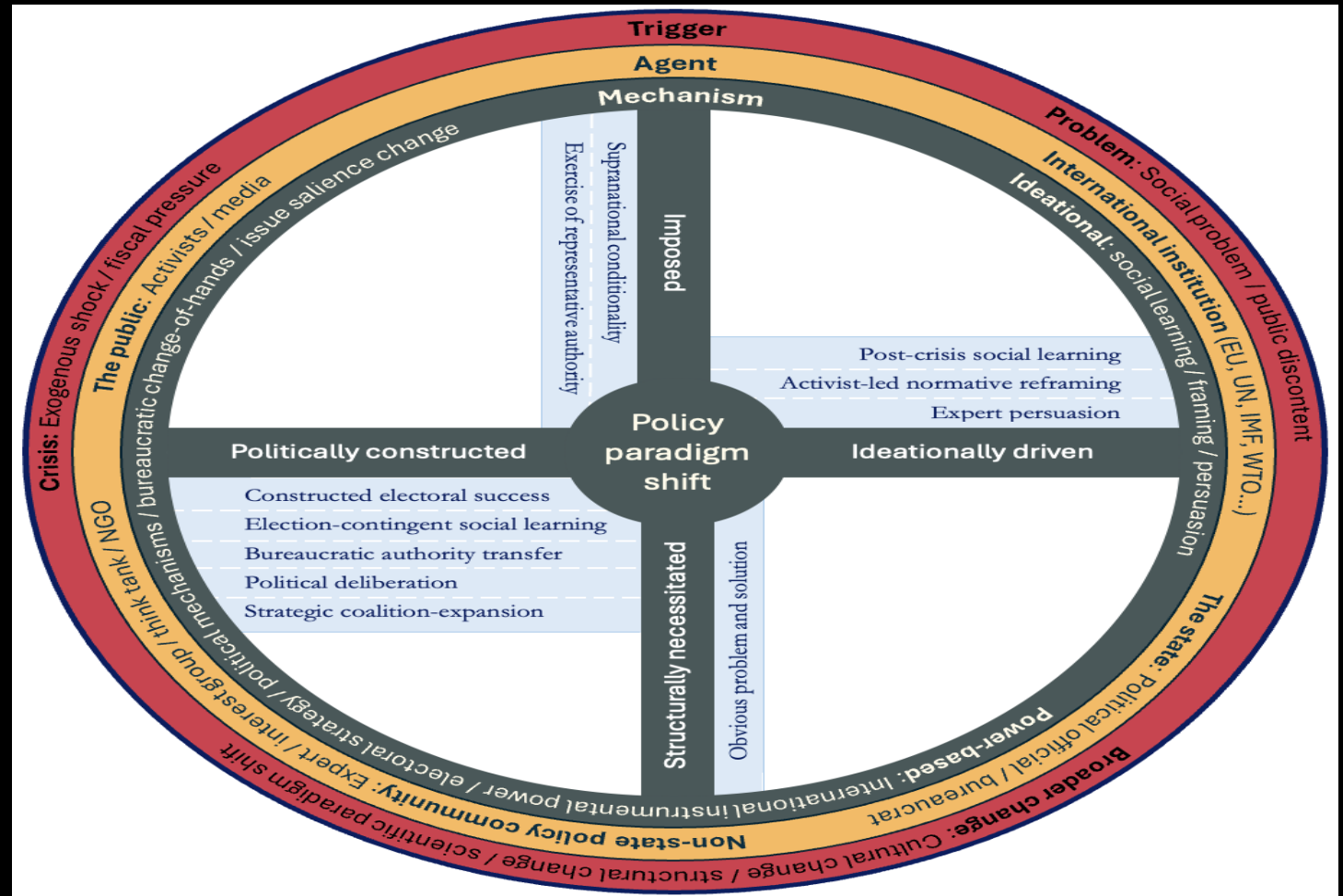


Adapted from Friel et al 2023 Lancet Series on the Commercial Determinants of Health. Paper 3

A new policy paradigm



- Eco-social
- Wellbeing economy
- Justice



Gajurel and Friel 2025. Hothouse Working Paper 3. <https://hothouse.anu.edu.au/research-0#section-7317>

Change the narrative



"There is no magic money tree"

"Fiscal responsibility"

"Growth and productivity deliver better living standards for all"

Creating systems that advance HE



1. Imagining and embedding a new paradigm

2. Releasing state capacity

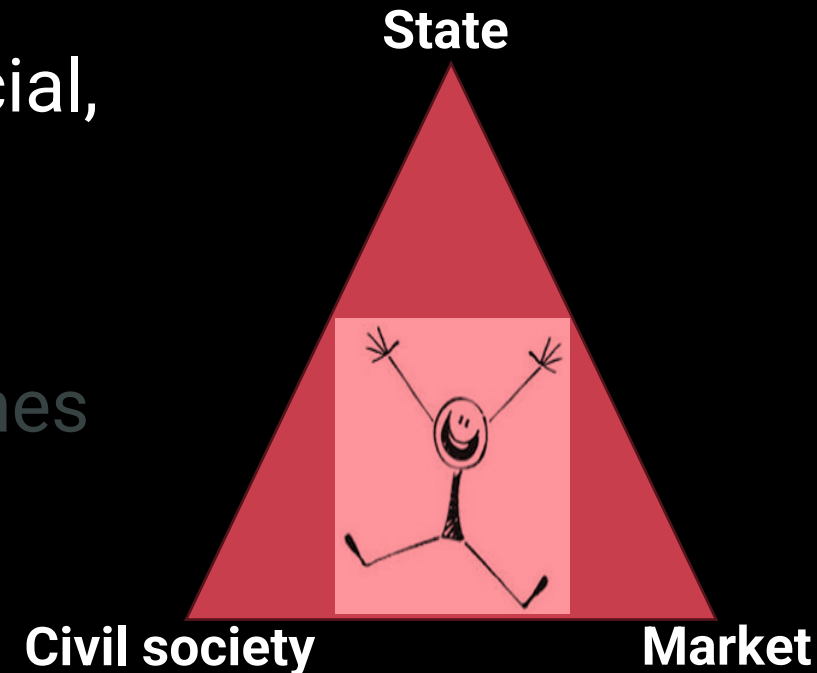
- Public policy and practice that optimises social, environmental and health outcomes

3. Taming the beast

- Regenerative business and finance approaches that serve planetary health equity outcomes

4. Releasing the influencers

- Strategic mobilization



Public policy – stop doing privilege!



‘doing’ privilege – perpetuating existing patterns of advantage and influence

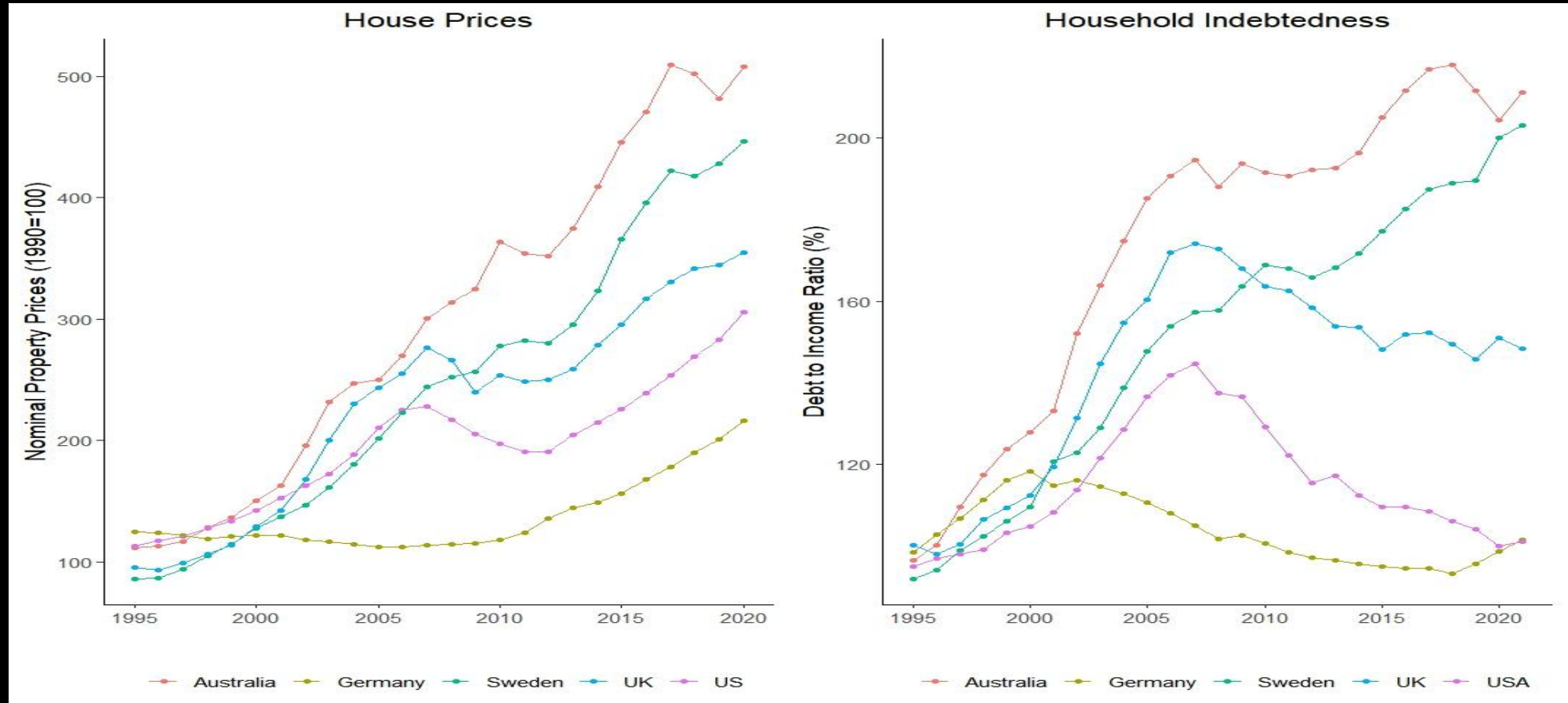
Leading to the inequitable distribution of material and non-material resources

Schram et al 2025. Doing (and undoing) privilege: evaluating how public policy drives health inequities. *Critical Public Health*, 35(1), p.2474078.

Pushing money up: economic growth models



Housing (assets) and credit as a palliative...



Frank et al 2023. New Political Economy, pp.1-15.

Why this matters for health equity



Creating systems that advance PHE



1. Imagining and embedding a new paradigm

2. Releasing state capacity

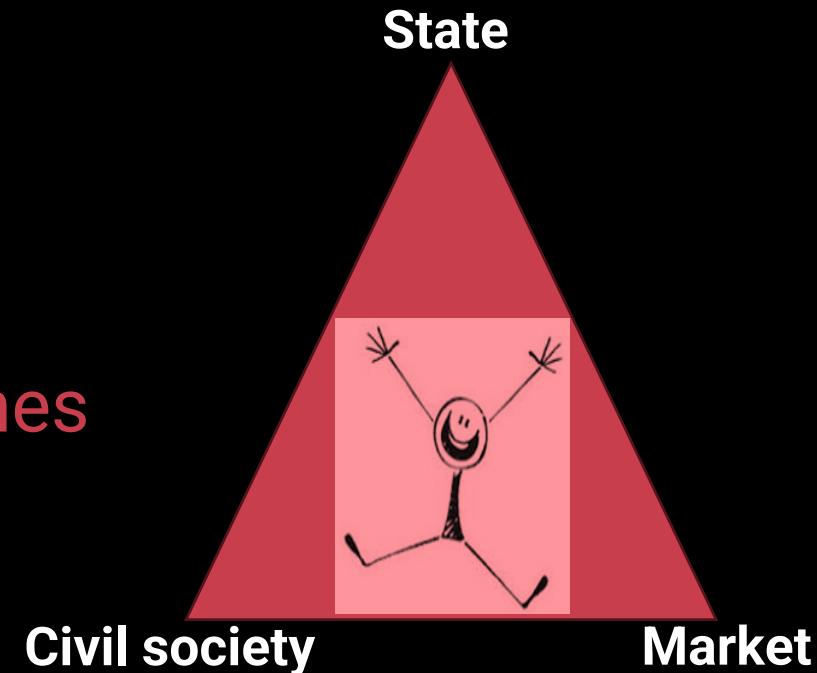
- Public policy and practice that optimises climate, social and health outcomes

3. Taming the beast

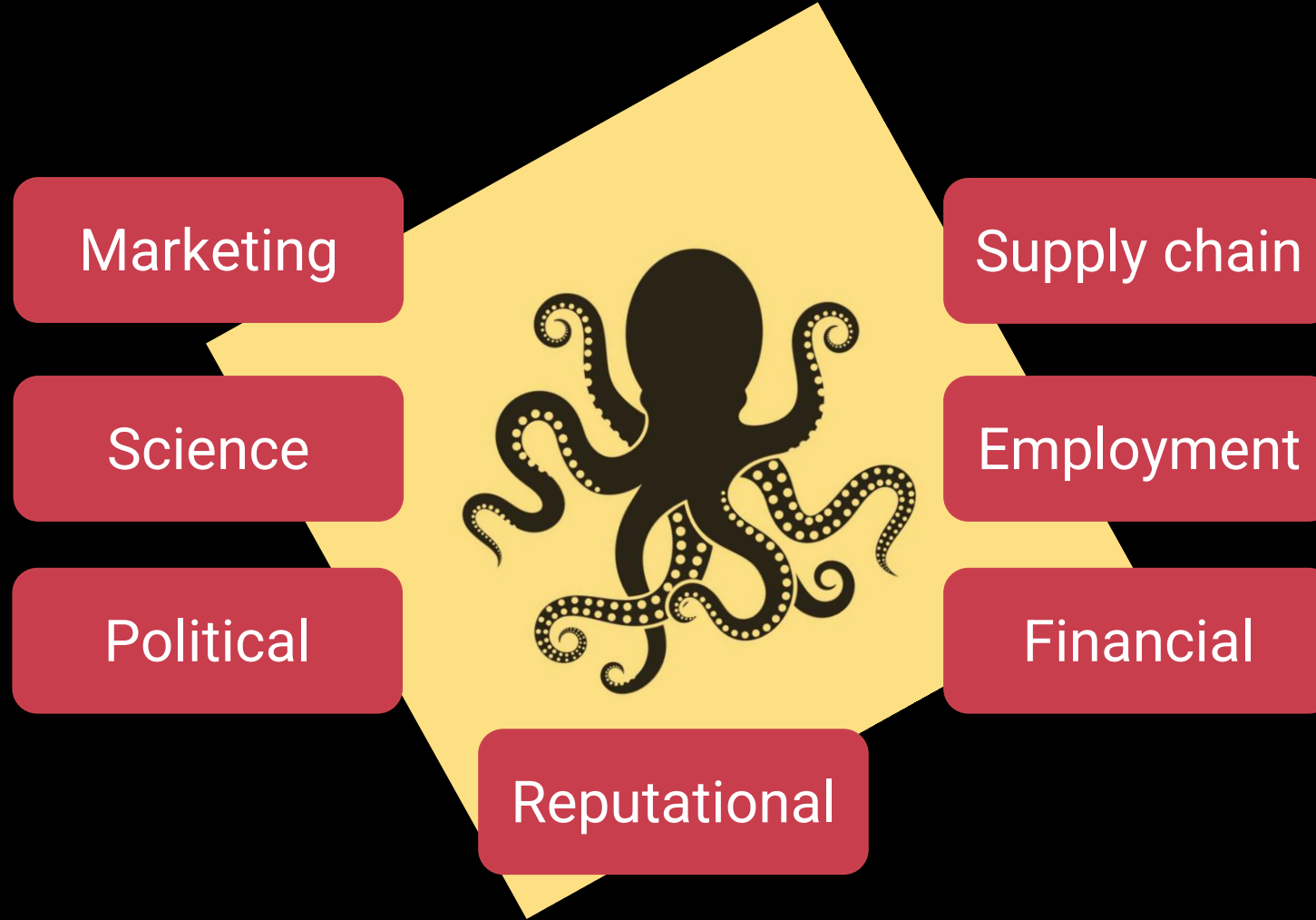
- Regenerative business and finance approaches that serve planetary health equity outcomes

4. Releasing the influencers

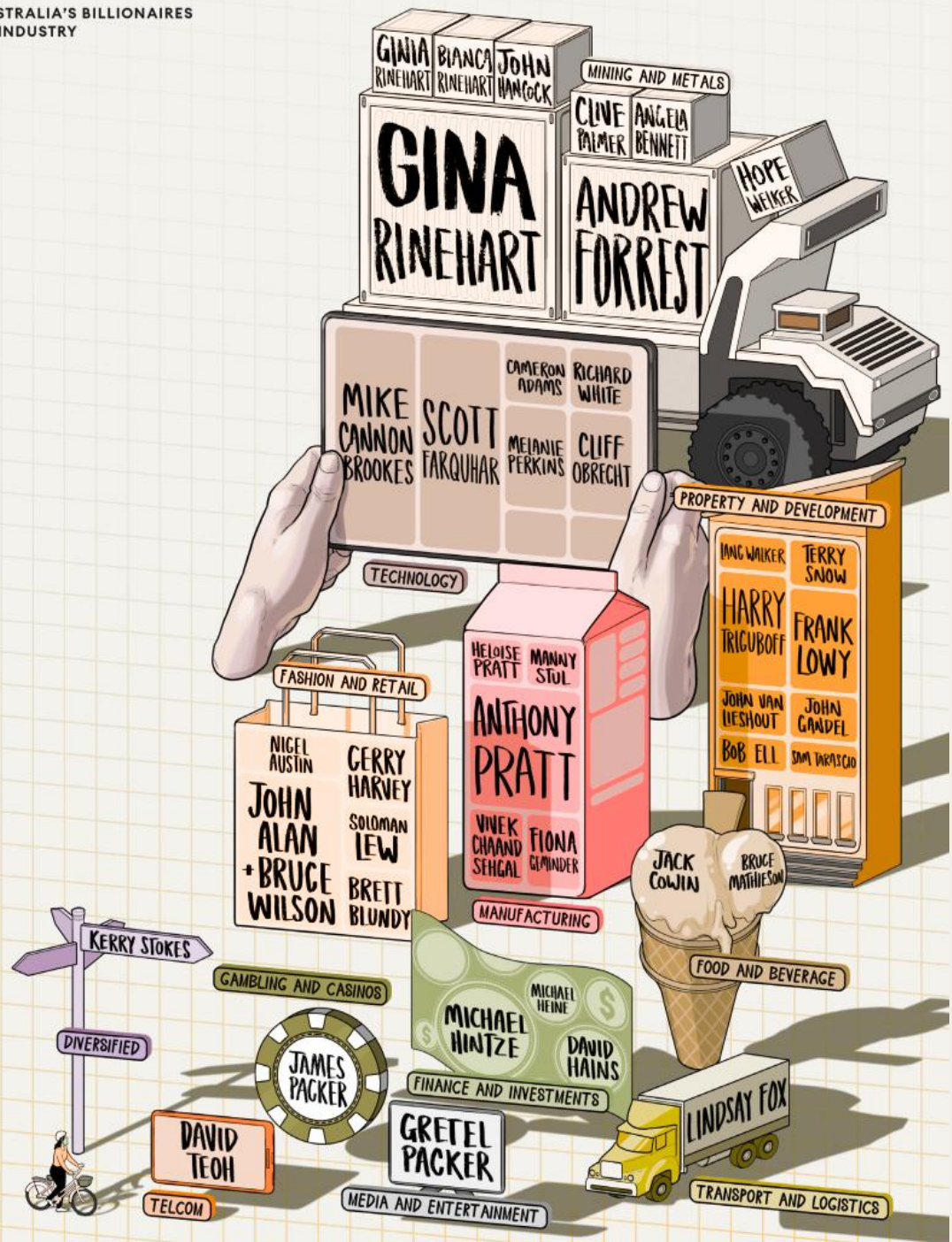
- Strategic mobilization



Market logics and practices



Gilmore et al 2023. The Lancet Series on the Commercial Determinants of Health. Paper 1



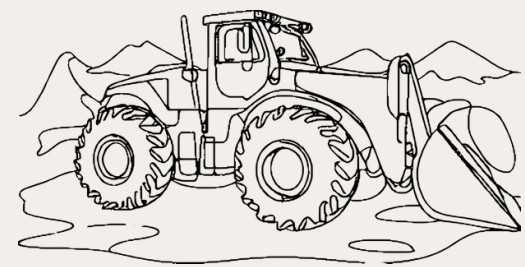
11

the number of industries Australian
billionaires have made their wealth from



71%

the percentage of billionaire wealth from
mining, technology and property



16%

the percentage of billionaire wealth from
manufacturing and retail



Corporate political activity



Figure 6: Top 10 industry contributors to political campaigners

Contributor	Amount
Rio Tinto	\$4,591,423
Glencore	\$4,108,938
BHP	\$3,618,200
Anglo American Metallurgical Coal	\$2,601,543
Mt Thorley Warkworth (owned by Yancoal)	\$2,600,059
BHP Mitsui Coal (80% owned by BHP)	\$2,594,824
Peabody	\$2,330,987
Hunter Valley Energy Coal (owned by BHP)	\$1,974,604
Newmont Australia Holdings Pty Ltd	\$1,368,988
Coal21 Ltd	\$1,159,636



State involvement



- Create an authorising environment:
 - International treaties, policies and reports
- Break corporate control:
 - E.g. Competition policy
- Break wealth concentration:
 - E.g. Taxation – including full cost accounting
- Break political capture:
 - Capping political donations
 - Lobbying register
 - Conflict of Interest guidelines

Creating systems that advance PHE



1. **Imagining and embedding a new paradigm**

2. **Releasing state capacity**

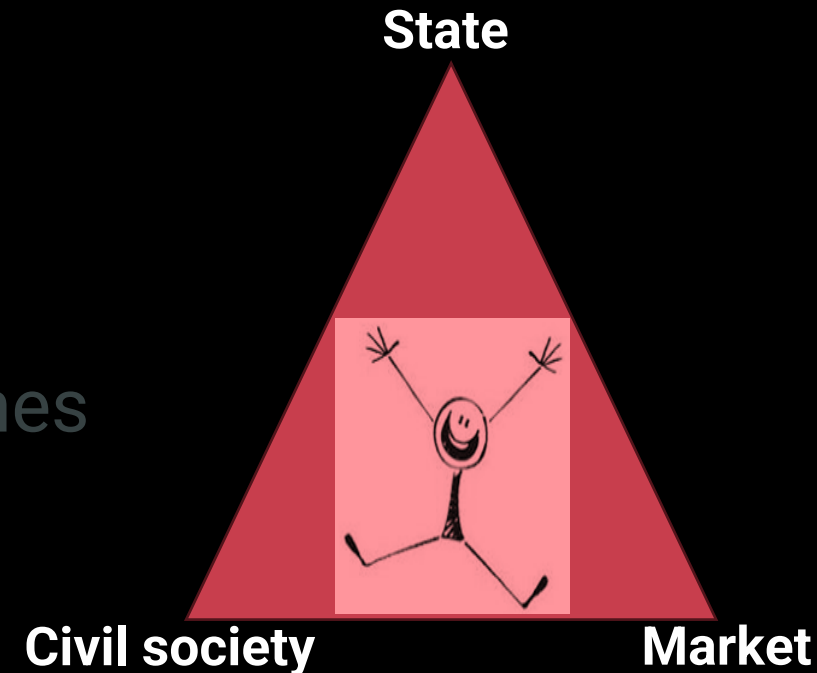
- Public policy and practice that optimises climate, social and health outcomes

3. **Taming the beast**

- Regenerative business and finance approaches that serve planetary health equity outcomes

4. **Releasing the influencers**

- Strategic mobilization



Networks of hope: weapons of the structurally weak



Demanding action for
better health, social and
environmental outcomes



1. Raising collective consciousness
2. Building a power base
3. Fit for purpose evidence
4. Persuasive narratives
5. Pushing for political commitment

Civil society inside-outside strategies



	Target: Commercial actor	Target: Government / Intergovernmental
Inside strategies	→ Forming partnerships and multistakeholder initiatives → Holding private meetings and roundtables → Engaging with company annual general meetings and shareholders → Collaborating other than a partnership; including via the participation in the development of industry standards, reports, CSR initiatives → Pursuing litigation directly against industry	→ Lobbying; including via formal consultation processes (e.g. submissions), serving on committees and in delegations, and informal interactions with policymakers → Drafting legislation, policies and standards; including co-producing reports → Providing technical support and training; including funding government activities and taking on implementation roles → Pursuing litigation against government
Outside strategies	→ Monitoring and reporting on commercial practises; including developing 'counter accounts' to debunk industry claims, calling out industry funded groups, 'naming and shaming' in mainstream media and social media campaigns → Protests at industry sites → Boycotts → Directly engaging with the public in campaigns, including mass letterboxing and coordinating mass petitions → Creative use of alternative spaces; including via public documentaries of corporate activities	→ Protests and public campaigning calling for regulation; including via mainstream media and social media → Monitoring and reporting, including monitoring government compliance with international treaties and generating evidence for monitoring → Forum shifting debate from one policy forum to another – vertically within government and horizontally to the global level → Proposing and initiating alternative sources of economic development

Townsend et al. 2023. Globalisation and Health 19, 74

Advancing health equity



A jigsaw of radicalism: from incremental to transformative actions

- Hold the line
- Ameliorate harms
- Prevent harms

Thank you

Email: Sharon.friel@anu.edu.au

Website: hothouse.anu.edu.au

