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Preparing for the End—
Logistical Insights from the Preppers

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Abstract
Since the 1980s, the rise of preppers has revealed a distinctive form of individual mobilization in anticipation of systemic crises—geopolitical, economic, or climatic. Frequently caricatured, preppers construct original and self-reliant supply chains that operate independently of institutional systems. Far from being improvised, their practices are guided by a rigorous logistical rationality: anticipatory stockpiling, discreet sourcing strategies, the pursuit of energy autonomy, and more. This article offers a new interpretation of prepping practices, situating them within a broader genealogy of alternative resistance forms that, while historically recurrent, have been largely overlooked in logistics research. By shifting the analytical lens to the margins, we examine how new relationships to uncertainty are crafted—often in isolation—challenging dominant frameworks. In doing so, we highlight modes of logistics without visible infrastructure, rooted in crisis imaginaries and self-protection strategies. Through the case of preppers, this article invites a reconsideration of the interplay between logistics management, power, and vulnerability, incorporating organizational forms that proactively anticipate collapse rather than merely endure it.
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1. Introduction

The history of resistance to oppression—whether political, colonial, or military—has consistently involved alternative logistics to circumvent dominant structures. A notable example is the organization of French resistance fighters during WW II, where clandestine networks circulated secret information through traditional methods, while also employing ingenious hiding places and concealed supply chains to effectively organize actions against the Nazi occupiers (Paxton, 2015). Research into various forms of resistance, as explored by historians such as Audoin-Rouzeau & Becker (2002), reveals that the logistics of dissent—whether physical or informational—adapted to crises, mobilizing available resources to evade authorities deemed illegitimate. On another scale, colonial resistance, such as that of the Sokoto Caliphate in the face of British expansion at the end of the 19th century, also involved structured logistical strategies. Despite increasing colonial pressure, the organization of local forces enabled sustained opposition, thanks to regional alliances and the strategic exploitation of limited resources (Audu & Osuala, 2015). These historical logics endure today, albeit in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. The principles of clandestinity, self-organization, and collective resilience persist in new forms, driven by fears of collapse and profound distrust of institutions. According to Van Prooijen & Douglas (2017), conspiracy theories now provide alternative explanations for crises, shaping contemporary narratives of active resistance.

Contemporary conspiratorial beliefs, fueled by platforms such as QAnon and influential social media figures like Alex Jones, creator of the *Infowars* TV show, and Ron Watkins, former administrator of *8chan*, have given rise to unique logistical infrastructures that are distinctly separate from conventional institutional models. These beliefs, which assert the existence of secret powers and/or catastrophic apocalyptic events, are discussed by historians such as Sirinelli (2018) and Bourseiller (2022), who have emphasized how certain ideologies, though marginal, consistently find specific channels for dissemination and mobilization across diverse media. Conspiratorial beliefs, for instance, manifest in the establishment of specialized supply chains for storing essential goods, as well as the creation of secretive information networks in which “alternative truths” circulate freely. An analysis of the current dynamics of resistance thus brings to light a timely and significant issue: how are these unique logistics systematically constructed around apocalyptic beliefs? Drawing on Agulhon’s (1979 [1970]) work on historical forms of resistance, we can identify clear parallels between contemporary resistance

movements and those of the past, while also highlighting how the "logistics of fear" are continuously evolving in response to the growing instability and uncertainty of the modern world.

The central question of this article is: why and how do preppers' beliefs, as forms of resistance to the dominant discourse, give rise to specific logistical infrastructures designed to support their approach? By analyzing contemporary forms of resistance, we aim to understand the process through which these beliefs lead to the construction of atypical supply chains—designed not to optimize commercial flows, as is traditionally the case, but to prepare survivor communities for the anticipated collapse of state and scientific institutions. This dynamic aligns with research on revolutions and social transformations, which illustrates how fear, mistrust, and instability can fuel powerful informal networks (Hobsbawm, 1996 [1969]). Far from being entirely new, the logistics of preppers' resistance re-actualize ancient practices of circumventing authority in contexts perceived as hostile. By bridging historical perspectives on underground movements with contemporary conspiracy dissemination mechanisms, the article aims to analyze how alternative infrastructures—digital platforms, supply chains for survivalist products, and cryptocurrencies—reinvent survival strategies. The goal is to shed light on the logistical dimensions of apocalyptic beliefs, particularly at a time when widespread distrust is driving new forms of contestation and resistance.

2. Logistics and Cultures of Survival

The phenomenon of *preppers*—individuals who actively prepare for major political, economic, or social disruptions—has expanded markedly over the past few decades, with estimates exceeding 20 million in the United States by the early 2020s. This movement accelerated in the wake of critical events such as the September 11 attacks, the 2008 financial crisis, and the Covid-19 pandemic. Driven by fears of natural disasters and geopolitical instability, preppers share a core conviction: the established order—and the logistical infrastructures that sustain it—is fundamentally fragile and liable to collapse with little warning. Their worldview often echoes the dystopian imaginaries of films like *Mad Max*, defined by nihilism, social disintegration, and acute resource scarcity (Hassler-Forest, 2017). In response, preppers organize their lives around principles of radical self-sufficiency, anticipating a future in which collective support systems have unraveled (Barker, 2020). They methodically stockpile food, water, and essential supplies, while devising strategies to endure prolonged disruptions in critical supply chains. Although often perceived as extreme, the survivalist ethos is grounded in logistical rationalities borrowed from risk management, business continuity, and military doctrine. Garrett (2021) underscores the structured materiality at the heart of prepping, while Kabel & Chmidling (2014) draw attention to its affective dimension—what they term an "infrastructure of feeling"—that channels emotional anticipation of systemic rupture. The prepper thus emerges as a paradoxical figure: simultaneously a logistician of collapse and an architect of resilience. Crucially, prepping encompasses a wide spectrum of motivations and intensities—from pragmatic actors concerned with disaster readiness to individuals deeply embedded in conspiratorial worldviews. As Johnson (2022) demonstrates, some prepper communities blend empirical risk assessments with elaborate conspiracy narratives, revealing a complex interplay rather than a singular or monolithic orientation.

2.1 Domestic Risk Rationalization

The phenomenon of preppers is grounded in key principles of resilience and risk management, as they adopt an approach like that of organizations facing high risks, but within a domestic context. Sheffi (2007) argues that resilience, whether individual or organizational, is built through proactive management of potential disruptions, a concept that directly aligns with the strategies of preppers. These individuals aim to minimize their vulnerability to various crises, with the most feared being the disruption of supply chains. Preppers organize their daily lives around self-sufficiency, stockpiling essential goods such as food, water, and filtration systems, while also utilizing alternative energy sources. The use of tools like Excel spreadsheets and personal databases to track their stockpiles reflects a logistical management style that might appear rudimentary but demonstrates a genuine commitment to post-collapse planning. This approach mirrors corporate supply chain management, where risks are mitigated through redundancy in storage, information backup, and contingency planning. However, a major distinction lies in the fact that preppers manage their own resilience, without relying on third-party intervention. The proactive nature of this approach is emphasized by Zhou & Hosseini (2023) and Queiroz *et al.* (2024), who highlight the central role of resilience in responding to crises.

The boundary between rational preparedness and conspiratorial anxiety is often fluid and complex. While many preppers base their practices on well-documented risks such as natural disasters, economic volatility, or pandemics, others incorporate more speculative fears—such as government collapse, societal breakdown, or

secret cabals disrupting supply chains. This duality is reflected in the media portrayal of prepping, which oscillates between pragmatic disaster readiness and sensationalist conspiracy coverage, sometimes blurring the lines between reasonable caution and paranoia. The diversity of motivations within prepper communities suggests a layered reality that challenges simplistic categorizations and stereotypes. However, this approach can sometimes verge on excessive precaution, leading to behaviors that appear irrational or disproportionate to actual risks. The use of redundant equipment, the stockpiling of large quantities of perishable and non-perishable goods, and the accumulation of long-term reserves can result in significant logistical overload and inefficiency, disrupting the delicate balance between preparedness and anxiety. The sheer volume of items, such as water filters, weapons, medical supplies, and food, often creates an illusory sense of security that may prove counterproductive during an actual crisis. In such situations, flexibility, adaptability, and the capacity for quick decision-making are far more critical than the mere possession of excessive resources.

Indeed, the prepper must continually manage a vast and complex inventory that frequently exceeds their cognitive capacity, while organizing the flow of goods through often rigid, cumbersome, and time-consuming systems. This complex management task requires constant attention, resources, and mental effort, which can quickly become overwhelming and exhausting. Paton (2019) highlights that, although preparedness is a legitimate and necessary imperative, it can inadvertently generate anxiety, stress, and a sense of helplessness in the face of ongoing uncertainty and threat perception. Fear of social collapse or systemic failure drives some individuals to multiply precautions to the point of saturation, leading to chronic vigilance and emotional fatigue. Paradoxically, the more they attempt to control and anticipate every possible outcome, the more isolated and disconnected they become from broader social support networks, with their ability to respond effectively to unforeseen or novel challenges severely hindered by the excessive rigidity and inflexibility of their preparedness system. The prepper model thus exemplifies what might be called the “logistics of fear,” where inventory and resource management transform into ends in themselves, rather than adaptive, dynamic responses to shifting circumstances, evolving threats, and emergent crises. The fixation on material preparedness paradoxically increases vulnerability by narrowing focus and reducing cognitive flexibility. Cognitive flexibility—the ability to shift perspectives and adapt quickly—is essential in crises where fixed plans fail. Preppers focused solely on material assets ignore critical social, psychological, and logistical factors that require creativity and adaptability. Such “tunnel vision” undermines resilience by discounting the vital roles of social networks, information sharing, and cooperation.

2.2 The Individual as a Logistical Hub

In the prepper ideology, the individual is positioned as a central node, a logistical hub responsible for organizing the flows necessary for survival. This approach draws from theories of socio-technical networks, particularly those developed by Latour (1988), who conceptualizes individuals not as passive actors but as “actor-networks” interacting with objects and technologies to create complex systems. From this perspective, the prepper functions as the manager of both material and immaterial flows within their own universe, integrating resources such as water supplies, emergency equipment, and autonomous energy systems. This idea aligns with Holling’s (1973) theory of resilience, which posits that resource autonomy and diversity enhance a system’s ability to withstand disruption. However, as Simon (2012 [1962]) cautioned, “technical rationality,” which involves excessive and rigid resource management, can limit the adaptability of a system and its associated logistical networks. While the prepper strives to anticipate all potential needs in the event of a crisis, minimizing dependence on external systems, isolation may, paradoxically, be counterproductive. In a real crisis, interdependence and collaboration with other networks are often more effective than total independence. The pursuit of absolute control can therefore undermine the prepper’s resilience in the face of unforeseen events, ultimately compromising their ability to survive.

This vision is inspired by supply chain management models, where the flow of goods is optimized to ensure continuity, even in times of crisis. However, unlike a traditional organization, which can outsource certain functions or rely on collective coping mechanisms, the prepper must manage everything independently: they create a personal logistical network, oversee stocks, secure supplies, and devise a continuity plan for every aspect of their life. The model is, in some ways, akin to the “autonomous network” as conceptualized by Luhmann (1996), in which social systems develop independently while constantly interacting with their environment. However, this approach can lead to organizational overload, as the individual becomes a logistician, responsible not only for managing goods but also for ensuring their quality, safety, and sustainability. In a society deeply marked by uncertainty, while individuals may seek to protect themselves against perceived imminent risks, their over-preparedness can paradoxically heighten their vulnerability (Beck, 1992). Far from being merely an autonomous survivor, the prepper thus becomes a symbol of total control, engaged in a quest for absolute

mastery, yet potentially disconnected from the collective and social dynamics that are essential to their psychological equilibrium.

3. Logistics and Cultures of Resistance

The phenomenon of preppers extends beyond the belief in an imminent collapse; it is rooted in a narrative driven by secrecy and concealment. In this worldview, logistics becomes an invisible tool of control, wielded by an elite or covert group. Conspiracy theories, such as those propagated by QAnon, invoke the existence of clandestine infrastructures: networks of tunnels connecting capitals, human and goods trafficking, and covert transactions masked as legitimate activities. What is typically a methodical, rational domain—logistics—becomes, in this context, reinterpreted by those in power as a collection of ominous signals: every truck, every shipment, every route is seen as evidence of an underground organization intent on destabilization. The story of the Mareko resistance to the Italian invasion (1936–1941), as described by Getachew & Jima (2021), illustrates how communities strategically employed concealed resources to preserve their autonomy in the face of oppression, even to the point of undermining the invader. In this framework, logistics transcends its conventional role as the monitoring of goods flows and becomes a pivotal element of resistance and survival. In essence, analyzing logistics management is no longer about simply understanding the movement of goods but about scrutinizing every clue, every shift, and tracing the remnants of hidden operations, ultimately bearing witness to a silent war.

3.1 Secret Infrastructures

While preppers may initially appear as individuals solely focused on their own autonomous survival, their intense focus on logistical flows often draws them closer to more conspiratorial realms. The meticulous mapping of supply networks, the pursuit of *strategic caches*, and even the anticipation of a deliberately orchestrated collapse can foster a paranoid worldview. Consequently, some survivalist groups begin to suspect the existence of secret infrastructures that operate beyond public scrutiny. Movements like QAnon take this further, imagining hidden tunnels and invisible supply chains that allow a covert elite to move goods and people undetected. In this way, ordinary logistical systems become redefined as instruments of clandestine power. Foucault (2020 [1975]) demonstrated how control is exercised through unseen systems of surveillance. When applied to the realm of conspiracy, logistics management is viewed as a tool of underground domination, controlling flows without institutional awareness. DiMaggio (2022) highlights how QAnon capitalizes on the dynamics of social networks, where the circulation of conspiratorial content intensifies the notion of invisible logistical power. Hannah (2021) examines the role of visualizations within the QAnon narrative: complex diagrams aim to uncover hidden connections, creating a "logistical apophenia" where every route or warehouse is rendered suspect. In this context, the logistical gaze evolves into a form of counter-power, mobilized to expose a parallel world concealed from the public eye.

Given this framework, even the most cautious preppers can transform into amateur cartographers of this invisible geography, utilizing spatial representations to expose what they perceive as hidden structures of domination. Their approach, while initially grounded in a desire for autonomy, occasionally shifts into a more pronounced critique of infrastructures as tools of manipulation. This perspective resonates with Harvey's (1985) work, where logistical networks are part of "spatial power," enabling elites to control both material and symbolic flows. For conspiracists, infrastructures lose their technical neutrality and are redefined as components of an oppressive system to be decoded. The centrality of these "invisible infrastructures" highlights a reimagining of the world in which logistics becomes an esoteric machinery, operating in the shadows. Douglas & Leite (2017) demonstrate how conspiracy theories shape perceptions of organizational structures, transforming supply chains into instruments of power, surveillance, and covert control. In this context, preppers' initial skepticism toward logistical systems becomes radicalized, evolving into a political interpretation of their operations—spanning counter-mapping, revealing, and resisting an order viewed as illegitimate, oppressive, and increasingly covert in its control over both material resources and critical information flows.

3.2 The Rise of Anti-Logistics

In a world where logistical flows are perceived as manipulated by secretive entities, certain individuals are developing counterstrategies to reclaim control over what they view as opaque and adversarial systems. This deep-seated distrust is particularly prevalent among preppers, who, by stockpiling essential goods and establishing their own supply circuits, withdraw from official networks to ensure their autonomy and self-reliance. Simultaneously, online communities are scrutinizing supply chains with growing suspicion, actively searching for evidence of a global conspiracy. Forums and social media platforms become spaces where unverified hypotheses proliferate, suggesting the existence of invisible logistics infrastructures, covert

warehouses, or hidden reserves. This logic aligns with the concept of "networks of counter-power" described by Castells (1997), wherein communication technologies are harnessed to challenge and subvert dominant powers. Within conspiracy contexts, anti-logistics rises as a form of resistance, while simultaneously acting as a source of social fragmentation, nurturing alternative narratives that lack institutional validation. Hockenberry (2022) illustrates how recent logistical disruptions, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, have fueled these imaginaries. The perceived opacity and complexity of supply chains have been reinterpreted, especially by preppers, as markers of a covert conspiracy orchestrated by hidden powers, further deepening societal divides.

The existence of anti-logistics is thus a response to a perception of growing vulnerability in the face of risks deemed unavoidable. It echoes the observations of Scott (2020 [1999]), who shows how marginalized groups, in search of security and self-sufficiency, develop adaptive strategies to bypass centralized systems imposed by dominant political forces. Preppers, for instance, are actively creating their own decentralized supply networks, convinced that the collapse of traditional supply chains is imminent. This behavior is often fueled by a profound sense of empowerment—by the belief that reclaiming control over critical material flows offers protection and sovereignty in an increasingly uncertain world. Establishing independent circuits and bypassing centralized infrastructures can generate a lasting feeling of agency, purpose, and even superiority over those who remain dependent on official systems. As Masco (2014) argues, such practices cultivate an affective regime of preparedness, in which individuals come to see themselves as proactive agents of survival—while, in fact, often reinforcing their own vulnerability through social disconnection. The rise of anti-logistics thus appears as a reaction to structural opacity, but also as a deeply emotional and psychological response to perceived helplessness, which paradoxically leads to greater isolation.

By focusing on parallel supply chains and alternative flows, individuals distance themselves from collective structures, reinforcing their marginality and deepening their sense of precarity. This process transforms preppers into significant players in the anti-logistics movement, but not into effective counter-powers. On the contrary, their retreat into self-sufficient systems generates a break with society, further disempowering them and disconnecting them from socialization networks. Bauman (2000) points out how, in an increasingly "liquid" world, human relationships become unstable and precarious, eroded by a constant sense of uncertainty. The isolation produced by anti-logistics, far from being a solution, can make individuals even more vulnerable to risk, as they lose access to the very networks that might help them navigate such challenges. What emerges, then, is a complex dynamic in which empowerment and disempowerment coexist: while preppers perceive their logistical autonomy as a form of resistance, their disengagement from common infrastructures undermines their resilience. Anti-logistics may thus be read less as an organized alternative than as a symptom of fractured trust—one that reveals both the material fragility of global supply systems and the symbolic power they exert on imaginaries of control and collapse.

4. Logistics and Economy of Fear

In the wake of the material devices of logistical paranoia—bunkers, canisters, air filters—an equally decisive infrastructure is developing: information logistics. For preppers, it is no longer just a matter of accumulating tangible goods, but also of securing data, mapping threats, and sharing digital survival protocols. Platforms like Telegram, Gab, and Rumble function as hubs of a special kind, organizing the circulation of alternative narratives, maps, tutorials, and prophecies of collapse. The aim: to create cognitive spaces disconnected from the dominant discourse. Lyon (2023) points out that these digital environments are becoming veritable ecosystems of distrust, where information circulates according to self-reinforcing logics, escaping institutional regulation. This is the logic of an intangible supply chain, where the management of flows—in this case, cognitive flows—determines the strategic value of content. History is no stranger to such dynamics. From the clandestine networks of the French Resistance to the Soviet *samizdats*, examples abound of underground logistics organized around a shared mistrust, but in the digital age, these parallel logistics have reached an unprecedented scale and porosity, making information as essential a commodity as water, weapons, or stabilized iodine, shaping global narratives and influencing the "distribution of influence."

4.1 Towards the Commodification of Angst?

Building on the figure of the prepper, contemporary survivalist influencers have emerged as the new entrepreneurs of the apocalypse. As Campbell *et al.* (2019) observe, they capitalize on widespread anxieties—ranging from economic collapse and civil unrest to pandemics and climate disasters—by marketing a promise of radical self-reliance. Through platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Truth Social, they propagate an imaginary of imminent chaos, framing individual preparedness as both a moral duty and a quasi-spiritual calling.

Employing alarmist rhetoric and post-apocalyptic aesthetics, they promote a wide array of products—from survival kits and water filters to self-defense manuals and freeze-dried meals—that serve not only practical functions but also symbolize an ideological commitment to autonomy and resilience. These digital successors to the 1980s prepper movement now operate on a global scale, leveraging algorithmic targeting to reach audiences marked by institutional distrust or perceived vulnerability. Within this media ecosystem, fear becomes a powerful vector of persuasion: followers are converted into customers, and content is transformed into monetizable assets. Their discourse cultivates a perpetual sense of urgency, sustained by repetitive apocalyptic scenarios and the theatrical dramatization of systemic collapse. Often, these narratives are interwoven into a broader, internally coherent belief system, in which conspiracy theories reinforce one another, fostering a self-contained and inward-looking worldview (Miani *et al.*, 2022).

The success of the economy of fear increasingly depends on sophisticated forms of emotional engineering. As Bartosiak *et al.* (2025) argue, survivalist influencers strategically exploit the fear of missing out to trigger impulsive purchasing, particularly among young adults seeking stability and meaning. They employ scarcity-driven marketing tactics—such as limited-time offers, orchestrated stock shortages, and dramatized "survivor" testimonials—to cultivate a heightened sense of emotional urgency. Mileros *et al.* (2025) highlight the paradox at the heart of the well-being promised by these conspiratorial figures: under the guise of offering peace of mind, they foster both cognitive and financial dependency among their followers. Survivalist products thus transcend their practical utility, functioning as contemporary talismans that symbolically restore a sense of control over an unpredictable world. Much like Cold War-era fallout shelters during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 (George, 2003), these artifacts materialize the possibility of survival—but now within a domestic, personalized, and almost intimate sphere. The form of resilience promoted by survivalist influencers merges consumerism and paranoia into a potent and troubling alchemy. It sustains an ideology of radical individualism, in which each person is expected to prepare in isolation, distrust others, and accept collapse not merely as inevitable, but as preferable. In this perspective, fear becomes a form of currency, and societal collapse a viable business model.

4.2 Historical Analogies

With the commodification of angst, distrust in traditional institutions emerges as a central driving force behind the formation of parallel networks. These networks primarily develop in decentralized spaces—such as online forums and alternative social media platforms—where information circulates freely, beyond the oversight or regulation of authorities. This configuration evokes historical resistance structures that operate outside institutional frameworks, often following explicitly decentralized models. Notably, similar formations appeared in France during the Second World War, as clandestine groups organized to resist Nazi occupation (Gildea, 2015). Although the motivations of these resistance movements differ from those of contemporary preppers, both are rooted in a fundamental mistrust of centralized authority perceived as coercive or illegitimate. Each seeks to construct spaces of safety, autonomy, and "*alternative truth*," often outside the bounds of mainstream societal norms. In this light, the self-sufficient prepper communities of the 1980s—organized in anticipation of civilizational collapse—can be viewed as modern continuations of historical resistance logics. As Giddens (1991) observes, "systematic distrust" refers to a condition in which individuals increasingly rely on alternative information sources, generating self-reinforcing cycles of skepticism. This dynamic is further intensified by the rise of digital technologies, which facilitate withdrawal from traditional information ecosystems and foster virtual enclaves where reality is reconstructed through the lens of collective distrust.

Parallel networks can be understood as a *supply chain of distrust*, in which information functions as a valuable commodity—something to be consumed, exchanged, and protected. As mistrust in institutions deepens, these parallel flows proliferate and gain strength. Departing from traditional sources, alternative communities construct a "*counter-universe*" where every component of the informational chain—whether documents, testimonies, or data—is validated exclusively within the community itself. This phenomenon, rooted in widespread skepticism, reflects a broader rejection of mainstream media and established authorities. The 1979 Iranian Revolution offers a compelling historical parallel. Informal communication networks—especially those centered around mosques—played a critical role in coordinating resistance against the Shah's regime (Tehranian, 1980; Keddie, 2006). Yet, unlike this form of mobilization, which was oriented toward concrete political transformation, today's conspiracy-driven networks do not necessarily aim to seize power. Rather, they seek to unveil a hidden or suppressed truth. Preppers operate within a similar dynamic, anticipating systemic collapse and developing networks of self-sufficiency and information exchange that function independently of conventional infrastructures. In this regard, one can speak of a historical continuity: individuals, confronting institutions perceived as failing or corrupt, strive to emancipate themselves by constructing credible alternatives.

As Keane (2010) insightfully argues, these responses reflect enduring patterns of civic disengagement and inventive autonomy in the face of crisis.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This article presents an original analysis of the economy of fear, examining how digital networks, conspiracy "influencers," and prepper communities are reshaping logistical practices within a broader climate of pervasive mistrust. A central contribution of this study is the identification of a structural parallel between supply chain management and the informational dynamics of conspiracy-driven communities. Within these enclaves, information functions as a strategic resource—managed, protected, and circulated exclusively among closed networks. Preppers, for example, establish autonomous systems of procurement and storage, often as a direct response to growing distrust in institutions and political authorities. Their orientation is grounded in what Jones & Arnould (2025) describe as "mythologized counter-futures," in which consumption is reimagined as a rehearsal for systemic collapse. This approach echoes the creation of parallel logistical systems during historical crises—such as the Resistance networks in France during WWII—where both information and material flows were governed by the imperative to undermine an oppressive regime. In today's context, fear and suspicion drive the development of alternative supply chains that reject institutional authority and mainstream media, while advancing new forms of self-sufficiency, including informational sovereignty. Drawing on ethnographic data, Kirsch & Ray (2025) show that prepper networks are not merely reactive; they actively construct imagined spaces of autonomy in response to perceived weaknesses in conventional infrastructures. The unprecedented convergence of logistics management and conspiratorial worldviews offers a critical lens for rethinking contemporary mechanisms of control, dissent, and autonomy in an increasingly globalized and digitized society.

5.1 Implications

The analysis of paranoid logistics and the economy of fear aligns with a longstanding tradition of scholarship examining the interplay between information, power, and resistance. While societies have historically grappled with mechanisms of information control, contemporary strategies of perception management—amplified through digital networks—mark a significant evolution in both scale and complexity. As Zuboff (2019) argues in her work on *surveillance capitalism*, information has become a strategically managed and commodified asset, transcending traditional material boundaries. Authoritarian regimes throughout history have weaponized communication infrastructures to consolidate control and maintain the status quo. However, in the digital era, these practices manifest in new, decentralized, and algorithmically driven forms. A historical comparison with periods in which information was central to political struggle—such as the Cold War or the authoritarian regimes in Chile, Brazil, and Argentina—reveals the deep entanglement of information manipulation and institutional power. Viewed from this perspective, the emergence of conspiracy platforms may be interpreted as a form of resistance against dominant narratives that have historically marginalized dissenting voices. This dynamic resonates with Harvey's (1985) concept of counter-infrastructures: alternative networks that arise to challenge and circumvent the authority of centralized political, media, or economic systems.

Logistics management, when linked to the economy of fear, finds parallels in organized resistance during times of crisis or war. During such periods, resistance networks often emerge outside institutional structures, evading oppressive power and control over information flows. For instance, during apartheid in South Africa (1948–1994), the African National Congress (ANC) extensively utilized organized communication and resistance strategies beyond traditional channels, particularly through clandestine networks that coordinated effective actions despite the regime's censorship (Garrett & Edwards, 2007). While these networks arose in a distinct historical context, they share common traits with contemporary conspiracy networks. Both challenge an authority deemed illegitimate and seek to create an alternative society. Similarly, in France, Resistance fighters used clandestine methods—such as leaflets, coded messages, and rumors—to counter Nazi propaganda. Drawing parallels with today's digital platforms, we gain insight into how information continues to be central to power struggles, whether within authoritarian regimes or in the digital realm, where pseudo-truths circulate. As Hofstadter (2008 [1965]) highlighted, resistance networks are ultimately driven by distrust of dominant power structures, forming around alternative narratives that circulate outside institutional channels. Hubble (2025) further illustrates how these patterns have deep historical roots in the American West, where survivalist logics emerged not only from paranoia but from lived experiences of collapse, retreat, and infrastructural abandonment. Analyzing contemporary phenomena within a broader historical framework resonates with Braudel's (2023 [1949]) long-term perspective, contributing to the re-inscription of economic and social transformations over time.

5.2 Limit and Perspectives

The main limitation of this article lies in its analytical focus on contemporary digital tools, at the expense of non-technological historical forms of resistance. For instance, the revolutions of 1848 in Europe showcased the power of physical networks structured around leaflets, pamphlets, and underground newspapers. These locally embedded forms of communication helped to cultivate tightly knit communities, where the circulation of information relied on interpersonal trust, orality, and proximity. Far from being archaic or inefficient, these methods formed the foundation of a shared political imagination, shaped by the slow pace of exchanges, the deep bonds of human relations, and the persistence of collective memory. By neglecting these aspects, the article overlooks a significant part of the history of political struggles, which cannot be reduced to technical infrastructures but is instead defined by subtle arrangements of territories, emotions, lived experiences, and concrete solidarities. A more balanced approach would have emphasized that resistance is shaped as much by technological innovation as by the quiet, resilient practices of marginalized groups, such as preppers. Wagner (2025) provides a compelling analysis of this dynamic, suggesting that prepper practices function not simply as defensive postures, but as proactive enactments of possible futures—what he terms "witnessing the future." History offers a rich diversity of logistical models, all of which we must fully explore and consider avoiding a narrow-centric and one-dimensional interpretation of dissidence.

From this perspective, future research must systematically examine the role of resistance logistics in shaping collective identities. This goes beyond simply transmitting information through ad hoc technologies; it involves creating a framework of shared meaning that is robust enough to mobilize individuals over time. Throughout history, media often deemed modest—such as revolutionary pamphlets, trench newspapers, and union bulletins—have had profound political effects. These forms of media have not only forged enduring allegiances but have also channeled social discontent into organized action. In a similar vein, contemporary digital groups, often dismissed as marginal or irrational, construct coherent worlds centered around narratives strengthened by the intensive circulation of content. Informational ecosystems do not emerge by chance; rather, they are built on precise logistics, including routines, relays, moderation, and shared memories. To view them merely as platforms for exchange is overly simplistic; in reality, they form the bedrock of emerging political subjectivities. Failing to recognize this function is to underestimate a central dynamic of contemporary protest. Far from being marginal, movements akin to prepping are establishing a form of dissent capable of enduring, growing, and, at times, crystallizing into visible and even influential organizations within the political and media spheres.

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