Trusting Collective Action

I believe that our individual moral responsibility to lessen climate change is about collective action rather than individuals reducing their own emissions. The way our capitalist society is setup, climate change will not slow growth, but enhance it. Climate change will stimulate the economy and produce new opportunities for technology and development to help combat climate change. The upper class became rich through an industrialization period fueled by fossil fuels, which resulted in harmful emissions. The third-world countries will be unable to industrialize the same way due to lack of resources and the inevitable harm caused to the environment. Therefore my argument is as follows: The U.S and other wealthy countries industrialized through fossil fuels and still depend on them. These nations released too many emissions during industrialization, causing harm to the environment, which affects people in less fortunate areas even more. Industrialization should be fueled by clean and reusable energy sources to lessen the effect of climate change and impacts on poorer countries. Wealthy nations are collectively responsible for their emissions. The leaders in government with influence in wealthy nations have an obligation to promote cleaner and reusable energy sources, and they must assist underdeveloped nations industrialize with those energy sources.

The best objection to this argument is the challenging politics that come along with climate change, which stagnates government action. Despite the effects of climate change due to
the releasing of harmful emissions of greenhouse gasses, there is still a great divide in the United States in regards to the severity of the issue. If people in the United States cannot even agree on the action or lack of action that should take place, how is the U.S. supposed to go and help underdeveloped nations and less fortunate people. Although death tolls have increased, natural disasters, and record breaking weather events, there still seems to be an ignorance of how harmful emissions really are. The overall complexity of climate change makes it hard for anyone to actually agree on how to proceed to solve the problem. Additionally, especially countries like America value individualism and collective action led by the government may be hard to trust or follow through with. This exemplifies how tough it is to come to a consensus internally, and it would be hard to expect any improvement on foreign relations and agreeing on something with underdeveloped countries that have different cultures and average standards of living. Therefore, relying on governments to collectively come together and figure out a solution may be unrealistic.

It is necessary to trust our government leaders to lead us in the right direction of reducing our emissions and mitigating climate change. There are certain issues that must be addressed by the government rather than on an individual basis. For example, imagine turning off an air conditioning unit on a hot day to reduce emissions and not add to the waste heat that results from air conditioners, but knowing thousands and possibly millions of people are not. Not many people would do this, which is why it will take collective action and not individual actions to reduce climate change. People must turn to government policies and solutions and trust that they
will lead us in the right direction. Living in a more global world than ever it is critical to realize that everyone is affected by climate change and it is a moral obligation to help those less fortunate. As the issue gets worse and worse, representatives from different parties and governments will have to come together and address decreasing emissions and climate change.