

On Exploitation

There's a very simple test you can apply to determine whether or not a market transaction is exploitative: If the transaction is made voluntarily and offers a better alternative to the parties involved, the transaction is *not* exploitative; If the transaction is made coercively and offers a worse alternative to one of the parties involved, the transaction is exploitative. In every instance, if neither party is coercing the other, then there's no exploitation. Of course, coercion may not always be direct, eg. a company might be paying or otherwise influencing the local, legal mafia (the "government") to diminish or completely remove alternatives for the other party. (Parents may even coerce their children into market transactions, thereby exploiting them.) Nothing else matters to this very important question. Just because *you* have better alternatives, that doesn't make an unimpressive market transaction exploitative. By all means create better alternatives if you think someone could get a better deal, but the moment you engage in coercion is the moment you yourself become the bad guy. Never forget that, and that's today's two cents.