### zizek

**We turn the system against itself– their fear of cooption turns solvency**

**Zizek, 98** – Professor of Philosophy at Institute of Social Sciences at University of Ljubljana

(Slavoj, Law and the Postmodern Mind, “Why Does the Law need an Obscene Supplement?” Pg 91-94)

Finally, the point about inherent transgression is not that every opposition, every attempt at subversion, is automatically "coopted**.**" On the contrary, the very fear of being coopted that makes us search for more and more "radical**,"** "pure" attitudes**,** is the supreme strategy of suspension or marginalization**.** The point is rather that true subversion is not always where it seems to be. Sometimes, a small distance is much more explosive for the system than an ineffective radical rejection. In religion, a small heresy can be more threatening than an outright atheism or passage to another religion; for a hard-line Stalinist, a Trotskyite is infinitely more threatening than a bourgeois liberal or social democrat. As le Carre put it, one true revisionist in the Central Committee is worth more than thousand dissidents outside it. It was easy to dismiss Gorbachev for aiming only at improving the system, making it more efficient-he nonetheless set in motion its disintegration. So one should also bear in mind the obverse of the inherent transgression: one is tempted to paraphrase Freud's claim from The Ego and the Id that man is not only much more immoral than he believes, but also much more moral than he knows-the System is not only infinitely more resistant and invulnerable than it may appear (it can coopt apparently subversive strategies, they can serve as its support), it is also infinitely more vulnerable (a small revision etc, can have large unforeseen catastrophic consequences). Or, to put it in another way: the paradoxical role of the unwritten superego injunction is that, with regard to the explicit, public Law, it is simultaneously transgressive (superego suspends, violates, the explicit social rules) and more coercive (superego consists of additional rules that restrain the field of choice by way of prohibiting the possibilities allowed for, guaranteed even, by the public Law). From my personal history, I recall the moment of the referendum for the independence of Slovenia as the exemplary case of such a forced choice: the whole point, of course, was to have a truly free choice-but nonetheless, in the pro-independence euphoria, every argumentation for remaining within Yugoslavia was immediately denounced as treacherous and disloyal. This example is especially suitable since Slovenes were deciding about a matter that was literally "transgressive" (to break from Yugoslavia with its constitutional order), which is why the Belgrade authorities denounced Slovene referendum as unconstitutional-one was thus ordered to transgress theLaw ... The obverse of the omnipotence of the unwritten is thus that**,** if one ignores them, they simply cease to exist, in contrast to the written law that exists (functions) whether one is aware of it or not**-**or, as the priest in Kafka's The Trial put it, law does not want anything from you, it only bothers you if you yourself acknowledge it and address yourself to it with a demand ... When, in the late eighteenth century, universal human rights were proclaimed, this universality, ofcourse, concealed the fact that they privilege white, men of property; however, this limitation was not openly admitted, it was coded in apparently tautological supplementary qualifications like "all humans have rights, insofar as they truly are. rational and free," " which then implicitly excludes the mentally ill, "savages," criminals, children, women.'. . So, if, in this situation, a poor black woman disregards this unwritten, implicit, qualification and demands human rights, also for herself, she just takes the letter ofthe discourse of rights "more literally than it was meant" (and thereby redefines its universality, inscribing it into a different hegemonic chain). "Fantasy" designates precisely this unwritten framework that tells us how are we to understand the letter of Law. The lesson of this is that-sometimes, at least-the truly subversive thing is not to disregard the explicit letter of Law on behalf of the underlying fantasies, but to stick to this letter against the fantasy that sustains it. Is-at a certain level, at least-this not the outcome of the long conversation between Josepf K. and the priest that follows the priest's narrative on the Door of the Law in The Trial?-the uncanny effect of this conversation does not reside in the fact that the reader is at a loss insofar as he lacks the unwritten interpretive code or frame ofreference that would enable him to discern the hidden Meaning, but, on the contrary, in that thepriest's interpretation of the parable on the Door of the Law disregards all standard frames of unwritten rumles and reads the text in an "absolutely literal" way. One could also approach this deadlock via. Lacan's notion of the specifically symbolic mode of deception: ideology "cheats precisely by letting us know that its propositions (say, on universal human rights)' are not to be read a la lettre, but against thebackground of a set of unwritten rules. Sometimes, at least, the most effective anti-ideological subversion of the official discourse of human rights consists in reading it in an excessively "literal" way, disregarding the set of underlying unwritten rules. The need for unwritten rules thus bears witness to, confirms, this vulnerability: the system is compelled to allow for possibilities of choices that must never actually take place since they would disintegrate the system**,** and the function of the unwritten rules is precisely to prevent the actualization of these choices formally allowed by the system. One can see how unwritten rules are correlative to, the obverseof, the empty symbolic gesture and/or the forced choice: unwritten rules prevent the subject from effectively accepting what is offered in the empty gesture, from taking the choice literally and choosing the impossible, that the choice of which destroys the system. In the Soviet Union of the 1930s and 1940s, to take the most extreme example, it was not only prohibited to criticize Stalin, it was perhaps even more prohibited to enounce publicly this prohibition, i.e., too state that one is prohibited to criticize Stalin-the system needed to maintain the appearance that one is allowed to criticize Stalin, i.e., thatthe absence of this criticism (and the fact that there is no opposition party or movement, that theParty got 99.99% of the votes at elections) simply demonstrates that Stalin is effectively the best and (almost) always right. In Hegelese, this appearance qua appearance was essential.  
This dialectical tension between the vulnerability and invulnerability of the System also enables us to denounce the ultimate racist and/or sexist trick, that of "two birds in the bush instead of a bird in hand": when women demand' simple equality, quasi-"feminists" often pretend to offer them "much more" (the role of the warm and wise "conscience of society," elevated above the vulgar everyday competition and struggle for domination ...)-the only proper answer to this offer, of course, is "No, thanks! Better is the enemy of the Good! We do not want more, just equality!" Here, at least, the last lines in Now Voyager ("Why reach for the moon, when we can have the stars?") are wrong. It is homologous with the native American who wants to become integrated into the predominant "white" society, and a politically correct progressive liberal endeavors to convince him that, he is thereby renouncing his very unique prerogative, the authentic native culture and tradition-no thanks, simple equality is enough, I also wouldn't mind my part of consumerist alienation! ... A modest demand of the excluded group for the full participation at the society's universal rights is much more threatening for the system than the apparently much more "radical" rejection of the predominant "social values" and the assertion of the superiority of one's own culture. For a true feminist, Otto Weininger's assertion that, although women are "ontologically false," lacking the proper ethical stature, they should be acknowledged the same rights as men in public life, is infinitely more acceptable than the false elevationof women that makes them "too good" for the banality of men's rights.

### ecoprag good

#### Eco-pragmatism avoids totalizing theory and allows solutions to the environmental issues of the squo

Hirokawa 2 (Keith Hirokawa, J.D. from the UConn and LL.M. from the Northwestern School of Law, 2002, "Some Pragmatic Observations About Radical Critique In Environmental Law," Stanford Environmental Law Journal, Volume 21, June; lexis; Kristof)

By rejecting commitments to theory, pragmatists are denied the benefit of having a justifying principle (such as free will, equality, utility, ecocentrism, etc.) under which they can rally support. However, what pragmatists lose by rejecting meta-theory they replace by widening the field of potential solutions. **Avoiding commitment to** a **substantive meta-theory frees the environmental thinker from worry about whether the solutions proposed for a given problem are consistent with an ultimate theoretical grounding**; that is, the pragmatist is not bound by deductive reasoning within the confines of any particular analytic scheme. Visionary reasoning becomes an eclectic array of possibilities, limited only by those contextual needs that make the inquiry important in the first place. The turn to pragmatism thus symbolizes a rejection of the alleged [\*251] relationship between theory and answers to practical questions. To the pragmatist, this rejection comes for very good reason. Competing conclusions can often be derived from the same incomplete set of premises, and divergent theories can often produce the same conclusions. Pragmatists redirect human inquiry to avoid the indeterminacy of theory, since the "knowledge of obstacles is not itself an obstacle unless it leads to defeatism; for pragmatists it serves as a spur to seek a way to overcome those obstacles." n118 In the final analysis, although theories are important, the pragmatist warns against theory commitments, because theories provide "no more than commentary on practice, based on premises drawn from that practice itself." n119 Accordingly, the pragmatic position against theory is not a broad, sweeping dismissal of every idea derived from a theoretical framework. n120 Rather, **the pragmatist is free to consider a variety of ideas, approaches and solutions without committing to particular theoretical foundations**. The method and strength of problem solving, n121 if not the purpose, is to ensure conversation participants [\*252] that their theories are duly considered. n122 **The resulting formation of policy is "inclusive, treating current theories as perspectives, each of which can add to the understanding of law**." n123 **Pragmatism**, then, **is a helpful tool** (especially **to environmental debate**) **because of its freedom from any particular method of inquiry and any particular metaphysical "good"** of society. For the pragmatist, **theories** "**are not** Euclidean axioms or Kantian categorical **imperatives, but** graffiti, **practical guidelines to be noticed** by the alertly street-wise **when context makes them applicable**." n124 **When unbounded by consistency** with or loyalty to any particular theory, **all relevant ideas become useful to the resolution** of a dilemma. The lesson from pragmatism is that to see the law as something more than a refined, yet interminably eclectic conglomerate of ideas, taken from all forms of social and cultural practices, would be to give too much credit to our insight into the nature of justice. The resulting amalgam - the plurality of perspectives arranged for inclusive discourse - is not mandated by pragmatism. n125 Nonetheless, since pragmatism is in its most useful capacity when put to the task of dispute resolution, pragmatism inevitably finds itself confronted with opposing and incompatible perspectives. A pragmatic conclusion is one in which those opposing and incompatible perspectives are represented. To this end, some pragmatists have tried to surmount the foundationalists' problem of theory-hope (that the right theory will supply the right solutions) by proposing pluralist perspectives to bridge the gaps between competing paradigms. Pluralism serves as a helpful model for pragmatism's [\*253] application. n126 In summary, pragmatic inquiry illustrates three main themes. First, **pragmatism embodies "anti-foundationalism" in that it** is not loyal to any particular substantive theory. Second, pragmatism **allows negotiation between** purportedly **uncompromising positions for the purpose of solving real problems, due** in large part **to its lack of dependency on any "truths" claimed** in these positions. Finally, particular theory determines the right answers to difficult questions. The **pragmatist uses these tools to transcend barriers between alternative perceptions by critically examining such perspectives to determine how each of them can be applied in a helpful, non-exclusive manner**. **These tools can be applied to debates over environmental protection, which were** above portrayed as **deadlocked dialogues between deeply held beliefs**. Below, the problems of frustrated belief are contrasted to examples of pragmatic environmentalism, verifying the potential benefits of legal pragmatism for advocates and judges engaged in environmental disputes.

#### Even if their ideas are good, their presentation fails. The perm frames the alt in a persuasive manner

Hirokawa 2 (Keith Hirokawa, J.D. from the UConn and LL.M. from the Northwestern School of Law, 2002, "Some Pragmatic Observations About Radical Critique In Environmental Law," Stanford Environmental Law Journal, Volume 21, June; lexis; Kristof)

**Pragmatism's success in** the **environmental debate is owed to its** [\*257] **understanding of the operation of context as a constraint on persuasion and discourse**. **Persuasion** between foundational theories **may result from the attempt to reconcile differing approaches**. **Pragmatists rely on a reconciliation-based description of how paradigms** and belief systems **transform in the face of competing paradigmatic structures**, n147 **in which new** problems, predictions and **solutions can be translated into an existing structure** of beliefs **by displacing the fewest other beliefs**. **Effective dialogue** on solutions espoused from otherwise incommensurable positions simply **requires** a touch of **flexibility toward traditional philosophical questions**. n148 **In applying this** maxim **to legal change, the lesson** to be learned from the pragmatist's understanding of paradigm shifts **is that revolutionary ideals can be presented in light of dominant beliefs,** rather than in spite of them.

#### Pragmatism can situate anthropocentrism within a dialogic forum. Totalizing critique cuts off any possibility of transcending cultural norms.

Hirokawa 2 (Keith Hirokawa, J.D. from the UConn and LL.M. from the Northwestern School of Law, 2002, "Some Pragmatic Observations About Radical Critique In Environmental Law," Stanford Environmental Law Journal, Volume 21, June; lexis; Kristof)

Recent decades have witnessed a resurgence of experiments in testing these limits of anthropocentrism. **The pragmatists**, in particular, **have set out to defend a human perspective that is not limited by anthropocentric interests**. n205 **They have found that human insights create a context in which environmentally protective doctrines come to light** in common terms and concepts. **Besides avoiding** some of the more **agitating epistemological debates, the** [\*272] **human perspective limits dialogue only to the extent of our ability to empathize and theorize**. **It is because humans are able to seek** both economic and **non-use values, while reconciling** the competing **ends, that the human perspective** is **demands attention.** Our **philosophical underpinnings may** in fact **be confined by our distinctively human perspective, but they are concurrently liberated by our sense of selves**, "**characterized** not so much **by** [**our**] ability to produce a culture but by [our] **ability to transcend** old **cultural forms**." n206

### a2 rc

**solves**

Roffe 05 Jon philosopher http://www.iep.utm.edu/deleuze/

Gilles Deleuze began his career with a number of idiosyncratic yet rigorous historical studies of figures outside of the Continental tradition in vogue at the time. His first book, Empirisism and Subjectivity, isa study of Hume, interpreted by Deleuze to be a radical subjectivist. Deleuze became known for writing about other philosophers with new insights and different readings, interested as he was in liberating philosophical history from the hegemony of one perspective. He wrote on Spinoza, Nietzche, Kant, Leibniz and others, including literary authors and works, cinema, and art. Deleuze claimed that he did not write “about” art, literature, or cinema, but, rather, undertook philosophical “encounters” that led him to new concepts. As a constructivist, he was adamant that philosophers are creators, and that each reading of philosophy, or each philosophical encounter, ought to inspire new concepts. Additionally, according to Deleuze and his concepts of difference, there is no identity, and in repetition, nothing is ever the same. Rather, there is only difference: copies are something new, everything is constantly changing, and reality is a becoming, not a being.

#### Race and class CAN’T be the root of our aff – be skeptical of their ev

Schlosberg 13 (David Schlosberg; Environmental Politics Volume 22, Issue 1, 2013 Special Issue: Coming of Age? Environmental Politics at 21; “Theorising environmental justice: the expanding sphere of a discourse”; pages 37-55; KDUB)

Another major focus of environmental justice scholarship has always been a move beyond the simple description and documentation of inequity into a thorough analysis of the underlying reasons for that injustice. Initially, the central explanatory focus was racism. Environmental justice wasn’t simply about establishing the fact that more environmental bads and risks were being put on minority communities – it endeavoured to explore the question of why those communities were devalued in the first place. One of the original popularisers of the term environmental racism was Benjamin Chavis, then head of the United Church of Christ’s Commission on Racial Justice – the organisation that published the influential study of Toxic Wastes and Race. The practice, and experience, of racism has been at the heart of environmental justice discourse in the United States – so much so that Getches and Pellow (2002) once made the argument that the term, and movement, should actually be limited to communities of colour. Pellow’s (2004, 2007) work has clearly extended an analysis of racial discrimination, and connected it to the practices of capital. Following that analysis, Mohai et al. (2009) lay out three interrelated causal factors for environmental injustice. First, economic considerations address both the impoverishment of impacted populations and the reasoning for industrial externalisation of social and environmental costs. Second, industry and government seek the path of least resistance to development, and poor and racial minority communities make easier targets. Finally, a distinct form of racism simply associates communities of colour with pollution. Any and all of these cultural and institutional structures contribute to the construction of inequity, misrecognition, exclusion, and the generalised injustice confronted by communities and movement organisations. Still, the central idea is that generalised social injustices are manifest in environmental conditions, among other ways.

#### Specifically in the context of Mexico

Carruthers 7 (David V. Carruthers; “Environmental justice and the politics of energy on the US–Mexico border”; Environmental Politics Volume 16, Issue 3, 2007; pages 394-413; KDUB)

Consider race. Environmental justice appeared in the US as an extension of civil rights struggles into environmental health; the environmental justice movement built directly on that rhetoric, organisational experience, and those institutions. If we think of environmental justice in such strict terms, only in parts of the Caribbean and Brazil might we find a comparable legacy of slavery, segregation, and racial struggle. Yet race-based struggles for rights and citizenship have been present across centuries of Latin American history. Latin America’s indigenous people face some of the region’s most egregious social and environmental inequities, though the fusion of environmental and justice concerns takes very different forms around the region. We should also not expect the geographic and socioeconomic assertions of US-styled environmental justice to hold in other contexts. US analysts confirm the disproportionate siting of industrial hazards in minority communities by mapping the hazards over race or income data. Yet in urban northern Mexico, we do not find clear correlations between poverty or ethnicity and environmental risk. Industrial hazards are widely distributed throughout the metropolitan zones and outskirts, and risks faced by lower and working class residents are not consistently greater than those faced by the middle or even upper middle classes. While we often find higher risks facing the poorest, most recent immigrants, that is more typically a function of urban growth patterns that produce squatter settlements near factories; it is not a counterpart to policy choices that deliberately impose hazards on minority communities – what David Pellow calls the ‘perpetrator–victim scenario’ (2000b)

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#### Historical materialism fails in the context of our aff

Hovden 99 (Eivind Hovden; Senior Research Fellow at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Norway; 1999; “As if nature doesn't matter: Ecology, regime theory and¶ international relations”; Environmental Politics, 8:2, 50-74; KDUB)

Marxism is, of course, a natural focal point of any theoretical challenge¶ to the mainstream of IR theory. Indeed, Saurin's [1996] critique of Smith is¶ clearly inspired by Marxism. Saurin lists a number of authors that have¶ challenged the environmentalist mainstream - Michael Redclift, David¶ Pepper, Carolyn Merchant, Murray Bookchin, and Robyn Eckersley - but¶ somehow suggests that they are united by an understanding that¶ 'environmental change was crucially determined by ... the ownership of the¶ means of production and the control over the criteria of exchange' [Saurin,¶ 1996: 84]. This is arguably a controversial picture of the landscape of¶ radical ecologists that oppose the mainstream of environmentalism, since¶ much radical environmentalist thought has been at pains to distance itself¶ from Marxism [Eckersley, 1992: Chs.4 and 6; Dobson, 1995: Ch.5; Benton,¶ 1989, 1992, 1993; Clark, 1989; Enzenberger, 1974; Grundmann, 1991;¶ Jung, 1983; Routley, 1981; Tolman 1981; Zimmerman, 1979]. Even if we¶ accept Saurin's sample as representative of radical environmentalism, it is¶ doubtful whether Eckersley fits at all with Saurin's description of the field,¶ and Bookchin's relationship to Marxism is highly ambivalent.18 Saurin's use¶ of Marx hide the long history of antagonism and mutual contempt between¶ Marxism and ecological thought. While one should not deny the obvious¶ affiliations between the political left and radical environmentalism,¶ Marxism as such remains one of the less promising starting points for an¶ alternative IR theoretical approach to environmental issues.

#### our praxis resolves the negative impacts to cap

Schlosberg 13 (David Schlosberg; Environmental Politics Volume 22, Issue 1, 2013 Special Issue: Coming of Age? Environmental Politics at 21; “Theorising environmental justice: the expanding sphere of a discourse”; pages 37-55; KDUB)

Environmental justice and sustainable materialism But it is not simply the rebound effect of climate change that has pushed a conception of environmental justice into broader engagement of the relationship between environment and social justice. The discussion of climate change illustrates the centrality of this connection between the condition of the natural world and the material experience of everyday life. This concern has led to another key development – a focus on more reconstructive material practices and sustainable relationships with the environment. While most well-known environmental justice battles have been reactions to inequity, threats to health or capabilities more generally, or responses to misrecognition and exclusion from decision-making, there has been a growth of groups using environmental justice and sustainability to design and implement more just and sustainable practices of everyday life. So we see the environmental justice movement making demands for investment in environmental technologies and jobs, food justice, and liveable communities more generally. The prominent green jobs and community-building work of Van Jones (2009), along with the ‘just sustainability’ frame of Julian Agyeman (2005), are examples of the potential of an environmental justice praxis that sees just communities as based on a working, sustainable relationship with the natural world. This approach is especially obvious in movements for food justice and just energy development. These movements directly take on both unjust practices and institutions and unsustainable environmental processes. They are not satisfied with purely individualistic or consumerist responses to environmental concerns – it is not about simply installing one’s own rooftop solar panels, or getting a Whole Foods in the neighbourhood. The focus is on building new practices and institutions for sustainability – practices and institutions that embody not only principles of environmental or climate justice, but a broader sense of sustainability as well. Call it a more reconstructive environmental justice, based on a conception of sustainable materialism. In many communities, a growing focus is on resisting, rethinking, and redesigning basic institutions that embody problematic practices connected to our basic material needs. So the response to food deserts is not buying organic veggies at a natural foods megamart, but getting more involved in growing and sharing food in community supported agriculture, collective gardening, urban farms, farmers markets (Gottlieb and Joshi 2010, Alcon and Agyeman 2011). The idea of the food justice movement is to transform our relationship with food, its production, transportation, and consumption. It is not simply about supplying a basic need; it is, in addition, awareness that such basic needs that supply the functioning of a community should themselves be sourced without creating injustices. In terms of energy, many environmental justice communities are organising around the development of community-wide local generation and networking of solar and wind.13 The idea of just energy transition is to replace destructive practices – for example, the damage done to the environment by coal mining and burning, and the abuse of local autonomy by mining companies. This concept of environmental justice shifts from resistance to reconstruction, aims to transform both dominating and unsustainable practices of production and consumption, and works to sustainably rebuild the material relationships we have with the resources we use every day. All while supplying a host of basic needs. These trends can be framed in at least three important ways. First, such practices are clearly a Foucauldian form of resistance to the relations that contribute to the continued reproduction of unsustainable practices; movement groups simply want to step out of the processes where they themselves are part of the creation of injustice. Second, they represent practices of equity, recognition, participation, and the delivery of basic capabilities in just and inclusive ways. Third, they embody the institutionalisation of a new form of sustainable materialism and the direct involvement of groups in the development of institutions that re-imagine, and reconstruct, our relationship with the natural world. These new movements and efforts illustrate environmental justice moving toward a form of just sustainability that embodies not only a variety of themes of justice, but also a thorough engagement in everyday material life – the things that pass through our bodies, the practices we use to transform the natural world, and the institutions we can shape collectively (Gabrielson and Paraday 2010). Many environmental justice movements, in this way, have expanded beyond a reactive position to environmental conditions, and now refuse to participate in practices that create or circulate injustice, propose and create new counterinstitutions and practices, and, crucially, embrace a more sustainable relationship between just communities and a working environment.

#### The affirmative is a necessary advocacy to resist neoliberalism

Carruthers 7 (David V. Carruthers; “Environmental justice and the politics of energy on the US–Mexico border”; Environmental Politics Volume 16, Issue 3, 2007; pages 394-413; KDUB)

Globalisation and Environmental Justice Starting with the debt crisis of the early 1980s, Latin American governments have acceded to the mandates of international creditors and financial institutions, implementing strict restructuring policies to stabilise currencies, reduce inflation, shrink the role of the state in the economy, introduce greater competitiveness, create a favourable climate for corporate investment, and eliminate barriers to trade. While the controversies surrounding the ‘Washington Consensus’ economic programme lie beyond my scope here, it has by now provoked broad popular resistance across Latin America, as people react against crippling austerity programmes, deepening economic polarisation, the erosion of basic economic security, the collapse of small farms and businesses, and insurmountable household debt. Efforts to constrain or renegotiate the process, character, and terms of international economic integration are now central to the region’s politics (Finnegan, 2003; Kingstone, 2006). The US–Mexico border presents a microcosm of North–South relations, reflecting the forms, tensions, and consequences of neoliberal globalisation. It hosts one of the world’s densest concentrations of the myriad ‘transnational advocacy networks’ that have emerged with aspirations to humanise the workings of the global economy (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Brooks & Fox, 2002; Hogenboom et al., 2003). An important thread of this story originated in the early 1990s with a network of labour and citizens’ campaigns from Mexico, the US, and Canada to challenge and renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Transnational citizen activism captured the world’s attention a few years later in the street protests of the 1999 World Trade Organization ministerial meeeting in Seattle. Since then, a broader global justice movement calling for debt relief and reform of the institutions of global trade and finance has made its presence felt at dozens of meetings of regional and international institutions across the globe. Transnational activism incorporates important elements of environmental justice, on a global scale. Environmental injustices are not ‘relegated to local failures in wealthy nations’, but are instead ‘symptomatic of systemic tendencies of globalization’ (Byrne et al., 2002b: 8). Global systems of production and distribution parcel out costs and benefits unfairly, accruing special benefits to international capital, domestic subsidiaries, and locally allied industrial and agricultural elites. Consuming classes enjoy a cornucopia of inexpensive manufactures and foods while the ‘poor neighbourhoods’ of the global South pay disproportionate human and environmental costs in the form of exploitive, low-wage labour and unchecked environmental devastation. Without corrections, free trade regimes reward those producers most effective at pushing the negative externalities of production onto nature, the poor, and future generations. As the cases below will demonstrate, Baja California’s environmental justice activists are acutely tuned to this global dimension: For most people in Mexico the environment means forests, species.We’re breaking away from that. We want to focus on human beings . . . If we think of the world as neighbourhoods, then it’s obvious – the poor countries pay the environmental costs. Mexico is a poor neighbourhood. (Cerda, 2002) We’re very aware of the fact that they want to put this here because they don’t want it there. There is absolutely no doubt in anyone’s mind about that . . . they’re going to put this on our side of the border and all the benefits are going to go to the other side. That is ingrained in people’s minds as border inhabitants. (Garcı´a Zendejas, 2005)

### nietzsche

#### The only way we can become the Übermensch is by embracing the finitude of our lives and the enormousness of nature

Becker 73 (Earnest, The Denial of Death, pg 73, Ph.D ins Cultural Anthropology, was a professor the University of California at Berkely, San Franciso State College, and Simon Fraser University, and founder of The Ernest Becker Foundation; Kristof)

Here Rank joins Kierkegaard in the belief that one should not stop and circumscribe his life with beyonds that are near at hand, or a bit further out, or created by oneself. One should reach for the highest beyond of religion: man should cultivate the passivity of renunciation to the highest powers no matter how diffcult it is. Anything less is less than full development, even if it seems like weakness and compromise to the best thinkers. Nietzsche railed at the Judeo-Christian renunciatory morality; but as Rank said, he “overlooked the deep need in the human being for just that kind of morality… .”34 Rank goes so far as to say that the “need for a truly religious ideology … is inherent in human nature and its fulfillment is basic to any kind of social life.”35 Do Freud and others imagine that surrender to God is masochistic, that to empty oneself is demeaning? Well, answers Rank, it represents on the contrary the furthest reach of the self, the highest idealization man can achieve. It represents the fulfillment of the Agape love-expansion, the achievement of the truly creative type. Only in this way, says Rank, only by surrendering to the bigness of nature on the highest, least-fetishized level, can man conquer death. In other words, the true heroic validation of one’s life lies beyond sex, beyond the other, beyond the private religion—all these are makeshifts that pull man down or that hem him in, leaving him torn with ambiguity. Man feels inferior precisely when he lacks “true inner values in the personality,” when he is merely a reflex of something next to him and has no steadying inner gyroscope, no centering in himself. And in order to get such centering man has to look beyond the “thou,” beyond the consolations of others and of the things of this world.36

#### Acting and assumptions are key to survival

Nietzsche 1882 (The Gay Science, Kaufmann translation. TL)

Origin of the logical.- How did logic come into existence in man's head? Certainly out of illogic, whose realm originally must have been immense. **Innumerable beings who made inferences in a way different from ours perished**; for all that, their ways might have been truer. **Those**. for example, **who did not** know how to **find** often enough what is "equal" as regards both **nourishment and hostile animals**-those. in other words, **who subsumed things too slowly and cautiously-were favored with a lesser probability of survival than those who guessed immediately upon encountering similar instances that they must be equal.** The dominant tendency. however, to treat as equal what is merely similar-an illogical tendency. for **nothing is really equal**-is what ·first created any basis for logic. In order that the concept of substance could originate which is indispensable for logic although in the strictest sense nothing real corresponds to it- it was likewise necessary that for a long time one did not see nor perceive the changes in things. **The beings that did not see so precisely had an advantage over those that saw everything "in flux”.** · At bottom, every high degree of caution in making inferences and **every skeptical tendency constitute a great danger for life. No living beings would have survived if the opposite tendency-to affirm** rather than suspend judgment, to err and make up things rather than wait, to assent **rather than negate.** to pass judgment rather than be just-**had not been bred to the point where it became extraordinarily strong.** The course of logical ideas and inferences in our brain today corresponds to a process and a struggle among impulses that are, taken singly, very illogical and unjust. **We generally experience only the result of this struggle** because this primeval mechanism now runs its course so quickly and is so well concealed.

#### Ressentiment is silly—avoiding it by rejecting active compassion is life-negating

Frazer 6

The Review of Politics (2006), 68: 49-78 Cambridge University Press

Michael Frazer's research focuses on Enlightenment political philosophy and its relevance for contemporary political theory. His current book project, “The Enlightenment of Sympathy: Justice and the Moral Sentiments in the Eighteenth Century and Today,” defends a psychologically holistic approach to political reflection through an examination of such authors as David Hume, Adam Smith and J. G. Herder. Dr. Frazer has also published articles on Maimonides, Nietzsche, John Rawls and Leo Strauss in such journals as "Political Theory" and "The Review of Politics." After receiving his B.A. from Yale University and his Ph.D. from Princeton University, Dr. Frazer spent the 2006-7 academic year as a postdoctoral research associate in the Political Theory Project at Brown University.

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There is a second way in which the painful experience of compassion can threaten human excellence. Not only do we risk developing contempt for all but the suffering masses, but we also risk developing contempt for the compassion that forces us to suffer with them. The terrible experience of shared suffering might lead some of the would-be great on a futile quest to abolish human misery. Others, however, are likely to conclude that their sympathetic pain could be most efficiently relieved by extirpating the faculties responsible for it. When we do not hate the suffering of others, but only our own sharing of this suffering, we seek only to banish compassion from our own breasts. Doing so, however, requires us to shield ourselves from the troubling awareness of our fellows' plight, to sever the imaginative and emotional bonds which connect us to others. It requires that we turn against our own strength of intelligence and imagination, that we sacrifice knowledge for ignorance by denying our insights into the human condition. Some of us might succeed in turning ourselves into such isolated, unthinking beings, but such individuals are not destined for creative achievement.

By contrast, the natural philosopher, poet, or psychologist—the born and inevitable unriddler of human souls—could no more destroy his own sense of compassion than he could abolish the human suffering which compassion compels him to share. A futile quest to extirpate his sympathetic sentiments would only turn such an individual against the world, against life, and against himself; in the end, it might even destroy him. Zarathustra does not pass the greatest test of his strength by purging compassion from his psyche. To the contrary, he affirms his painful experience of the emotion as creativity-enhancing and life-promoting. In doing so, Nietzsche's protagonist warns against those who unduly oppose compassion as well as those who unduly celebrate it. Both sides treat pain as something to be soothed away rather than harnessed for creative purposes; they differ only in whether the pain to be alleviated is our own or that of others. From the ethically authoritative perspective of life, both can be seen as opponents of human flourishing.

### 2AC – Nietzsche

#### Perm do both - embrace compassion because it’s difficult and fraught with risk

Frazer 6

The Review of Politics (2006), 68: 49-78 Cambridge University Press

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#### Meaning is transient – we should stop suffering when we can

Mitchell Smolkin, doctor who specializes in depression, Understanding Pain, 1989 p75-79

For Camus, the absurdity of the human condition consists in the incongruity between what humans naturally desire, and the reality of the world. Humans naturally desire not to be injured and killed. They desire to understand life and to find meaning in living. They desire to feel at home in the universe. Despite these natural needs, [humanity] man is confronted with a silent universe that does not answer human questions about meaning. He is surrounded by irrational destructiveness, and by the spectre of suffering and pain hurtling out of the void capriciously at human recipients with no regard for their relative merits. Man is estranged from a universe which seems so antagonistic to his natural needs. He feels homeless, in exile, a stranger in his own land. He [Humanity] hears his “nights and days filled always, everywhere with the eternal cry of human pain.”56 Man has been “sentenced, for an unknown crime to an indeterminate period of punishment. And while a good many people adapted themselves to confinement and carried out their humdrum lives as before, there were others who rebelled, and whose one idea was to break loose from the prison house.” Like Ivan Karamozov (Bk V, Chap 4), Camus refuses to accept the idea that future goods such as Divine salvation or eternal happiness “can compensate for a single moment of human suffering,”57 or a child’s tears. Both Ivan Karamozov and Camus believe that “if evil is essential to Divine creation, then creation is unacceptable.” They wish to replace “the reign of grace by the reign of justice.”58 They both assert that no good man would accept salvation on these terms. “There is no possible salvation for the man who feels real compassion,” because he would side with the damned and for their sake reject eternity.59 What is to be gained by rebellion, what are its dangers, and how does one avoid merely “beating the sea with rods” in a nihilistic orgy? With great perceptiveness, Camus discusses these issues in The Rebel. He begins by outlining the entire history of nihilistic rebellion. He admits that once God is declared dead and life meaningless, there is the tendency to rebel in anger by engaging in irrational acts of violence and destruction. Andre Breton has written that the simplest surrealistic act consists “in going out in the Street, revolver in hand, and shooting at random into the crowd.”6° Camus cites “the struggle between the will to be and the desire for annihilation, between the yes and the no, which we have discovered again and again at every stage of rebellion.”61 Citing numerous historical examples, he continually warns against this degeneration of rebellion into crime and murder. Another danger of rebellion which Camus discusses is the sub- stitution of human gods and concepts of salvation for the dead God. This error is more subtle than shooting at random into the crowd, but leads to much more killing and human suffering than the nihilist sniper. Camus criticizes “Nietzsche, at least in his theory of super-humanity, and Marx before him, with his classless society, [who] both replace The Beyond by the Later On.”62 In this respect, these thinkers have not abandoned the notion that history marches toward redemption in which some messianic goal will be realized. Camus urges moderation in the quest for distant goals. He writes, “the absolute is not attained nor, above all, created through history. Politics is not religion, or if it is, then it is nothing but the inquisition.”63 He contrasts rebellion, which he applauds with revolution which leads to murder in the name of vague future goals. “Revolution consists in loving[those] a man who does not yet exist,” and in murdering [those] men who do exist.64 “He who dedicates himself to this history, dedicates himself to nothing, and in his turn is nothing.”65 In The Plague, the character Tarrou renounces his revolutionary past. He states, For many years I’ve been ashamed, mortally ashamed of having been, even with the best intentions, even at many removes, a murderer in my turn. . . All I maintain is that on this earth there are pestilences and there are victims, and its up to us, so far as possible, not to join forces with the pestil- ences.66 Though obviously attuned to the dangers of rebellion, he insists that “these consequences are in no way due to rebellion itself, or at least they occur to the extent that the rebel forgets his original purpose.”67 What is the original purpose that has been forgotten? Rebellion begins because the rebel denounces the lack of justice in the world. He denounces the idea that the end, whether it be the coming of the messianic age, or the revo- lution, or eternal bliss, justifies means which involve so much suffering. Once injustice and suffering are denounced, [people] man needs to exert all his effort against injustice and in solidarity with the sufferers in the world. Killing existing men for a questionable future good, would not be a rational method of exhibi ting solidarity with the sufferers. Nor would solidarity be shown by stoical acceptance of the status quo. Camus urges his rebels to renounce murder completely and work for justice and for a decrease in suffering. Like Dr. Rieux in The Plague, one should take the victim’s side and “share with his fellow citizens the only certitude they have in common—love, exile, suffering.”68 What can be accomplished through rebellion? Camus’ goals are modest. He realizes that the rebel is doomed to “a never ending defeat,”69 in that death, finitude and suffering will always conquer him. He realizes that after [humanity] man has mastered everything in creation that can be mastered and rectified everything that can be rectified, children will still die unjustly even in a perfect society. Even by his greatest effort man can only purpose to diminish arithmetically the sufferings of the world. But the injustice and the suffering will remain and, no matter how limited they are, they will not cease to be an outrage.7° However, there are ephemeral victories and rewards for the rebel. He [One] who dedicates [oneself] himself for the duration of his life to the house he builds, to the dignity of [hu]mankind, dedicates himself the earth and reaps from it the harvest that sows its seed and sustains the world again and again. Those whose desires are limited to man and his humble yet formidable love, should enter, if only now and then, into their reward. They know that if there is one thing one can always yearn for and sometimes attain, it is human love. Society must be arranged to limit injustice and suffering as much as possible so that each individual has the leisure and freedom to pursue his own search for meaning. Future utopias must be renounced, and “history can no longer be presented as an object of worship.”74 “It is time to forsake our age and its adolescent furies,” and to aim for what is possible—more justice, solidarity, and love among [people] men. The rebel must “reject divinity in order to share in the struggles and destiny of all men.”75 Redemption is impossible. Human dignity and love can intermittently be achieved with struggle and constant vigilance against the plague bacillus that “never dies or disappears for good. .. [but can] rouse up its rats again and send them forth to die in a happy city.”76

#### There is no opposition between arguing for pragmatic change in the world and affirming life in a Nietzschean sense---their refusal of change and reform is self-delusion that withdraws from the world and denies an important aspect of life

May 5 (Todd, Professor of Philosophy at Clemson University, September 2005, “To change the world, to celebrate life,” Philosophy & Social Criticism, Vol. 31, No. 5-6)

For those among us who seek in philosophy a way to grapple with our lives rather than to solve logical puzzles; for those whose reading and whose writing are not merely appropriate steps toward academic advancement but a struggle to see ourselves and our world in a fresher, clearer light; for those who find nourishment among impassioned ideas and go hungry among empty truths: there is a struggle that is often waged within us. It is a struggle that will be familiar to anyone who has heard in Foucault’s sentences the stammering of a fellow human being struggling to speak in words worth hearing. Why else would we read Foucault?

We seek to conceive what is wrong in the world, to grasp it in a way that offers us the possibility for change. We know that there is much that is, to use Foucault’s word, ‘intolerable’. There is much that binds us to social and political arrangements that are oppressive, domineering, patronizing, and exploitative. We would like to understand why this is and how it happens, in order that we may prevent its continuance. In short, we want our theories to be tools for changing the world, for offering it a new face, or at least a new expression. There is struggle in this, struggle against ideas and ways of thinking that present themselves to us as inescapable. We know this struggle from Foucault’s writings. It is not clear that he ever wrote about anything else. But this is not the struggle I want to address here.

For there is, on the other hand, another search and another goal. They lie not so much in the revisioning of this world as in the embrace of it. There is much to be celebrated in the lives we lead, or in those led by others, or in the unfolding of the world as it is, a world resonant with the rhythms of our voices and our movements. We would like to understand this, too, to grasp in thought the elusive beauty of our world. There is, after all, no other world, except, as Nietzsche taught, for those who would have created another one with which to denigrate our own. In short, we would like our thought to celebrate our lives.

To change the world and to celebrate life. This, as the theologian Harvey Cox saw, is the struggle within us.1 It is a struggle in which one cannot choose sides; or better, a struggle in which one must choose both sides. The abandonment of one for the sake of the other can lead only to disaster or callousness.

Forsaking the celebration of life for the sake of changing the world is the path of the sad revolutionary. In his preface to Anti-Oedipus, Foucault writes that one does not have to be sad in order to be revolutionary. The matter is more urgent than that, however. One cannot be both sad and revolutionary. Lacking a sense of the wondrous that is already here, among us, one who is bent upon changing the world can only become solemn or bitter. He or she is focused only on the future; the present is what is to be overcome. The vision of what is not but must come to be overwhelms all else, and the point of change itself becomes lost. The history of the left in the 20th century offers numerous examples of this, and the disaster that attends to it should be evident to all of us by now.

The alternative is surely not to shift one’s allegiance to the pure celebration of life, although there are many who have chosen this path. It is at best blindness not to see the misery that envelops so many of our fellow humans, to say nothing of what happens to sentient nonhuman creatures. The attempt to jettison world-changing for an uncritical assent to the world as it is requires a self-deception that I assume would be anathema for those of us who have studied Foucault. Indeed, it is anathema for all of us who awaken each day to an America whose expansive boldness is matched only by an equally expansive disregard for those we place in harm’s way.

This is the struggle, then. The one between the desire for life-celebration and the desire for world-changing. The struggle between reveling in the contingent and fragile joys that constitute our world and wresting it from its intolerability. I am sure it is a struggle that is not foreign to anyone who is reading this. I am sure as well that the stakes for choosing one side over another that I have recalled here are obvious to everyone. The question then becomes one of how to choose both sides at once.

#### Suffering is not inevitable – engagement is necessary to celebrate life and withdrawing inward forecloses opportunities to change our surroundings

May 5 – Philosophy Professor at Clemenson University (Todd, “To change the world, to celebrate life,” Philosophy & Social Criticism 2005 Vol 31 No. 5–6 p. 517–531)

There are many ways to conceive the bond between world-changing and life-celebrating. Let me isolate two: one that runs from Merleau-Ponty to Foucault, from the body’s chiasmic relation with the world to the politics of its practices; and the other one running back in the opposite direction. The ontology Merleau-Ponty offers in his late work is one of wonder. Abandoning the sterile philosophical debates about the relation of mind and body, subject and object, about the relation of reason to that which is not reason, or the problem of other minds, his ontology forges a unity of body and world that puts us in immediate contact with all of its aspects. No longer are we to be thought the self-enclosed creatures of the philosophical tradition. We are now in touch with the world, because we are of it. Art, for example, does not appeal solely to our minds; its beauty is not merely a matter of the convergence of our fac- ulties. We are moved by art, often literally moved, because our bodies and the work of art share the same world. As Merleau-Ponty says, ‘I would be at great pains to say where is the painting I am looking at. For I do not look at it as I do a thing; I do not fix it in its place. My gaze wanders in it as in the halos of Being. It is more accurate to say that I see according to it, or with it, than that I see it.’7 It is only because my body is a fold of this world that art can affect me so. But this affection is also a vulnerability. As my look can happen according to a work of art, so it can happen according to a social practice. And even more so in proportion as that social practice and its effects are suffused through the world in which I carry on my life, the world my body navigates throughout the day, every day. I do not have a chance to look according to a painting by Cezanne very often; but I do encounter the effects of normalization as it has filtered through the practices of my employment, of my students’ upbringing, and of my family’s expectations of themselves and one another. The vulnerability of the body, then, is at once its exposure to beauty and its opening to what is intolerable. We might also see things from the other end, starting from politics and ending at the body. I take it that this is what Foucault suggests when he talks about bodies and pleasures at the end of the first volume of the History of Sexuality. If we are a product of our practices and the conception of ourselves and the world that those practices have fostered, so to change our practices is to experiment in new possibilities both for living and, inseparably, for conceiving the world. To experiment in sexu- ality is not to see where the desire that lies at the core of our being may lead us; that is simply the continuation of our oppression by other means. Rather, it is to construct practices where what is at issue is no longer desire but something else, something that might go by the name of bodies and pleasures. In doing so, we not only act differently, we think differently, both about ourselves and about the world those selves are inseparable from. And because these experiments are practices of our bodies, and because our bodies are encrusted in the world, these experiments become not merely acts of political resistance but new folds in the body/ world nexus. To construct new practices is to appeal to aspects or possibilities of the world that have been previously closed to us. It is to offer novel, and perhaps more tolerable, engagements in the chiasm of body and world. Thus we might say of politics what Merleau-Ponty has said of painting, that we see according to it. Here, I take it, is where the idea of freedom in Foucault lies. For Foucault, freedom is not a metaphysical condition. It does not lie in the nature of being human, nor is it a warping, an atomic swerve, in the web of causal relations in which we find ourselves. To seek our freedom in a space apart from our encrustation in the world is not so much to liberate ourselves from its influence as to build our own private prison. Foucault once said: There’s an optimism that consists in saying that things couldn’t be better. My optimism would consist rather in saying that so many things can be changed, fragile as they are, bound up more with circumstances than with necessities, more arbitrary than self-evident, more a matter of complex, but temporary, historical circumstances than with inevitable anthropological constraints . . .8 That is where to discover our freedom. And what happens from there? From the meetings, from the rallies, from the petitions and the teach-ins? What happens next? There is, after all, always a next. If you win this time – end aid to the contras, divest from apartheid South Africa, force debt-forgiveness by techno- logically advanced countries – there is always more to do. There is the de-unionization of workers, there are gay rights, there is Burma, there are the Palestinians, the Tibetans. There will always be Tibetans, even if they aren’t in Tibet, even if they aren’t Asian. But is that the only question: Next? Or is that just the question we focus on? What’s the next move in this campaign, what’s the next campaign? Isn’t there more going on than that? After all, engaging in political organizing is a practice, or a group of practices. It contributes to making you who you are. It’s where the power is, and where your life is, and where the intersection of your life and those of others (many of whom you will never meet, even if it’s for their sake that you’re involved) and the buildings and streets of your town is. This moment when you are seeking to change the world, whether by making a suggestion in a meeting or singing at a rally or marching in silence or asking for a signature on a petition, is not a moment in which you don’t exist. It’s not a moment of yours that you sacrifice for others so that it no longer belongs to you. It remains a moment of your life, sedimenting in you to make you what you will become, emerging out of a past that is yours as well. What will you make of it, this moment? How will you be with others, those others around you who also do not cease to exist when they begin to organize or to protest or to resist? The illusion is to think that this has nothing to do with you. You’ve made a decision to participate in world-changing. Will that be all there is to it? Will it seem to you a simple sacrifice, for this small period of time, of who you are for the sake of others? Are you, for this moment, a political ascetic? Asceticism like that is dangerous.

### Sdf

#### Legal scholarship is good and grants meaning to the individual who writes it

Carlson ’99(David Gray Carlson November, 1999 Professor of Law, @ Cardozo School of

Law, Columbia Law Review DUELLISM IN MODERN AMERICAN JURISPRUDENCE)

Vicarious participation in litigation or legislation can nevertheless be defended as a participation in culture itself. Law professors can contribute to that culture by making law more coherent, and in this sense their project is at least as worthy as any that philosophy,history or astrophysics [\*1951] could devise. Law has an objective structure that exceeds mere subjectivity. This objective structure can be altered by hard work. An altered legal world, however, is not the point. Evidence of consequential impact is gratifying, but this is simply what mere egotism requires. It is in the work itself that the value of legal scholarship can be found. Work is what reconciles the failure of the unhappy consciousness to achieve justice. Work is, in Hegel's view, desire held in check, fleetingness staved off... work forms and shapes the thing. The negative relation to the object becomes its form and something permanent.... This negative middle term or the formative activity is at the same time the individuality or pure being-for-self of consciousness which now... acquires an element of permanence. n317 Hegel, then, gives a spiritual turn to that worthy slogan "publish or perish."By working the law, lawyers, judges, private citizens, and even academics can make it more permanent, more resilient, more "existential," n318 but, more to the point, they make themselves more resilient, more "existential." n319 Work on law can increase freedom - the positive freedom that relieves the worker of "anxiety" - fear of disappearance into the Real. n320 When work is done, the legal universe swells and fills itself out - like an appetite that "grows by what it feeds on." n321 But far more important, the self gains a place in the world by the very work done. Work is the means of "subjective destitution" or "narcissistic loss" n322 - the complete externalization of the subject and the surrender of the fantasy support upon which the subject otherwise depends. In Lacanian terms, "subjective destitution" is the wages of cure at the end of analysis. n323 Or, in Hegelian terms, cure is "the ascesis that is necessary if consciousness is to reach genuine philosophic knowledge." n324 In this state, we precisely lose the suspicion that law (i.e., the big Other) does not exist. n325 In Hegel's inspirational words: Each individual consciousness raises itself out of its allotted sphere, no longer finds its essence and its work in this particular sphere, but grasps itself as the Notion of will, grasps all spheres as [ \*1952] the essence of this will, and therefore can only realize itself in a work which is a work of the whole. n326

#### Only a combination of normative judgments and critical thinking about them allows for anything to get done in life

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To relinquish these assumptions is to embrace a reality that is infinitely more complex and nuanced than could ever be dreamt of in a rationalist philosophy. n232 But one person's nuanced complexity is another person's Cartesian Anxiety - "the position that either there is objective truth or anything goes." n233 Fear of the "wild profusion of existing things" n234 dies hard. [\*531] The point is that we should (whoops, another normative recommendation)embrace the tension that exists between those who declare that normativity strangles theoretical discourse and the reality that normative judgments are an intrinsic part of how our species functions. We need not construct an either/or dichotomy; for instance, we can assert that normativity itself may be inescapable, but that some versions may be less noxious than others. Or that it may be more useful in some contexts than in others. Indeed , when faced with some atrocities, it may be immoral to refrain from making normative prescription**s.**In making any of these assertions, we are once again privileging ego-centered reason (in adjudicating which forms or contexts are more appropriate), but to do otherwise is to engage in the fiction that one can get through a day merely describing phenomena. If that were the case, we would spend the day standing in front of the closet describing its contents rather than, as we do each morning, making a normative judgment about what we should wear to a given occasion and moving on. It is good exercise to try to do without normativity; it opens one up to diverse descriptions of reality and discourages premature analytical streamlining. n235 But complete abstention seems impossible.

#### The alternative is silence and inaction which reinforces oppression and turns the critique

Blomley 94 (Nicholas K. Blomley – Professor of Geography at Simon Fraser University, 1994, “Activism and the Academy”, http://www.praxis-epress.org/CGR/CG\_Whole.pdf) //MD

So **why the silence?** Several reasons spring to mind. One likely option is that, **for many, it is not an issue, given that many progressive academics seem to think that “activist” work is not really “intellectual” work. If people engage in “external” struggle, they do so “on their own time,” as citizens.** Certainly this is something that tenure committees seem to believe. For example, my university carefully codes it as “community service” and weighs it as some small percentage of my total academic worth. **That uncoupling of the categories “academic” and “activist” seems, for me, difficult to sustain.** I was struck by the view of one friend, who noted that **she did not see herself as an academic occasionally engaged in activism, but thought of herself as an activist who happens to be an academic.** It could also be said that **such a distancing evades** a special charge – what Noam Chomsky once termed **the political “responsibility of intellectuals.” Intellectuals** in the academy **enjoy a special privilege that comes from political liberty, access to information, and freedom of expression. “For a privileged minority”, Chomsky** (1969, 324) **insists, “Western democracy provides the leisure, the facilities, and the training to seek the truth behind the veil of misrepresentation, ideology and class interest through which the events of current history are presented to us.” To neglect that responsibility is,** at the very best, **to acquiesce to oppression.** **There are more** recent **reasons for this self-silencing,** perhaps, **as we** come to embrace a postmodern humility, and **caution against speaking for the Other.** Although such a prudence is laudable, **it can** also all too easily **become a self-serving excuse for inaction.** We certainly need to be alert to the perils of the academic colonization of community life, but **we should** also **avoid** any **romantic assumptions of some authentically ‘pure’ field of activism.** The activists I have encountered have all had complex, and occasionally self-serving, agendas. **As we all occupy multiple subject positions, so activism is a field of contradiction and diversity.**