## 1NC

### Off

Since World War I, violence has been normalized by the globalization of the state of exception when the law justifies its own suspension, transforming itself into a killing machine, and ushering in global civil war. Return to the legal normal authorizes such violent international aggression

Agamben, 5 Giorgio Agamben, famous philosopher, The State of Exception, pg. 85

It is perhaps possible at this point to look back upon the path trav- eled thus far and draw some provisional conclusions from our investi- gation of the state of exception. The juridical system of the West appears as a double structure, formed by two heterogeneous yet coordinated el- ements: one that is normative and juridical in the strict sense (which we can for convenience inscribe under the rubric potestas) and one that is anomic and metajuridical (which we can call by the name auctoritas).¶ The normative element needs the anomic element in order to be ap- plied, but, on the other hand, auctoritas can assert itself only in the val- idation or suspension of potestas. Because it results from the dialectic between these two somewhat antagonistic yet functionally connected elements, the ancient dwelling of law is fragile and, in straining to main- tain its own order, is always already in the process of ruin and decay. The state of exception is the device that must ultimately articulate and hold together the two aspects of the juridico-political machine by instituting a threshold of undecidability between anomie and nomos, between life and law, between auctoritas and potestas. It is founded on the essential fiction according to which anomie (in the form of auctoritas, living law, or the force of law) is still related to the juridical order and the power to suspend the norm has an immediate hold on life. As long as the two el- ements remain correlated yet conceptually, temporally, and subjectively distinct (as in republican Rome’s contrast between the Senate and the people, or in medieval Europe’s contrast between spiritual and temporal powers) their dialectic—though founded on a fiction—can nevertheless function in some way. But when they tend to coincide in a single per- son, when the state of exception, in which they are bound and blurred together, becomes the rule, then the juridico-political system transforms itself into a killing machine. 6.10 The aim of this investigation—in the urgency of the state of ex- ception “in which we live”—was to bring to light the fiction that governs this arcanum imperii [secret of power] par excellence of our time. What the “ark” of power contains at its center is the state of exception—but this is essentially an empty space, in which a human action with no re- lation to law stands before a norm with no relation to life.¶ This does not mean that the machine, with its empty center, is not effective; on the contrary, what we have sought to show is precisely that it has continued to function almost without interruption from World War One, through fascism and National Socialism, and up to our own time. Indeed, the state of exception has today reached its maximum worldwide deployment. The normative aspect of law can thus be obliter- ated and contradicted with impunity by a governmental violence that— while ignoring international law externally and producing a permanent state of exception internally—nevertheless still claims to be applying the law.¶ Of course, the task at hand is not to bring the state of exception back within its spatially and temporally defined boundaries in order to then reaffirm the primacy of a norm and of rights that are themselves ulti- mately grounded in it. From the real state of exception in which we live, it is not possible to return to the state of law [stato di diritto], for at issue now are the very concepts of “state” and “law.” But if it is possible to attempt to halt the machine, to show its central fiction, this is because between violence and law, between life and norm, there is no substantial articulation. Alongside the movement that seeks to keep them in rela- tion at all costs, there is a countermovement that, working in an inverse direction in law and in life, always seeks to loosen what has been artifi- cially and violently linked. That is to say, in the field of tension of our culture, two opposite forces act, one that institutes and makes, and one that deactivates and deposes. The state of exception is both the point of their maximum tension and—as it coincides with the rule—that which threatens today to render them indiscernible. To live in the state of ex- ception means to experience both of these possibilities and yet, by always separating the two forces, ceaselessly to try to interrupt the working of the machine that is leading the West toward global civil war.

Refuse attempts to reform the legal system and doom it to its own nihilistic destruction—we must refuse all conceptual apparatuses of capture

Prozorov, 10 Sergei Prozorov, professor of political and economic studies at the University of Helsinki, “Why Giorgio Agamben is an optimist,” Philosophy Social Criticism 2010 36: pg. 1065

In a later work, Agamben generalizes this logic and transforms it into a basic ethical imperative of his work: ‘[There] is often nothing reprehensible about the individual behavior in itself, and it can, indeed, express a liberatory intent. What is disgraceful – both politically and morally – are the apparatuses which have diverted it from their possible use. We must always wrest from the apparatuses – from all apparatuses – the possibility of use that they have captured.’32 As we shall discuss in the following section, this is to be achieved by a subtraction of ourselves from these apparatuses, which leaves them in a jammed, inoperative state. What is crucial at this point is that the apparatuses of nihilism themselves prepare their demise by emptying out all positive content of the forms-of-life they govern and increasingly running on ‘empty’, capable only of (inflict- ing) Death or (doing) Nothing.¶ On the other hand, this degradation of the apparatuses illuminates the ‘inoperosity’ (worklessness) of the human condition, whose originary status Agamben has affirmed from his earliest works onwards.33 By rendering void all historical forms-of-life, nihi- lism brings to light the absence of work that characterizes human existence, which, as irreducibly potential, logically presupposes the lack of any destiny, vocation, or task that it must be subjected to: ‘Politics is that which corresponds to the essential inoperability of humankind, to the radical being-without-work of human communities. There is pol- itics because human beings are argos-beings that cannot be defined by any proper oper- ation, that is, beings of pure potentiality that no identity or vocation can possibly exhaust.’34¶ Having been concealed for centuries by religion or ideology, this originary inoperos- ity is fully unveiled in the contemporary crisis, in which it is manifest in the inoperative character of the biopolitical apparatuses themselves, which succeed only in capturing the sheer existence of their subjects without being capable of transforming it into a positive form-of-life:¶ [T]oday, it is clear for anyone who is not in absolutely bad faith that there are no longer historical tasks that can be taken on by, or even simply assigned to, men. It was evident start- ing with the end of the First World War that the European nation-states were no longer capa- ble of taking on historical tasks and that peoples themselves were bound to disappear.35¶ Agamben’s metaphor for this condition is bankruptcy: ‘One of the few things that can be¶ declared with certainty is that all the peoples of Europe (and, perhaps, all the peoples of the Earth) have gone bankrupt’.36 Thus, the destructive nihilistic drive of the biopolitical machine and the capitalist spectacle has itself done all the work of emptying out positive forms-of-life, identities and vocations, leaving humanity in the state of destitution that Agamben famously terms ‘bare life’. Yet, this bare life, whose essence is entirely con- tained in its existence, is precisely what conditions the emergence of the subject of the coming politics: ‘this biopolitical body that is bare life must itself be transformed into the site for the constitution and installation of a form-of-life that is wholly exhausted in bare life and a bios that is only its own zoe.’37¶ The ‘happy’ form-of-life, a ‘life that cannot be segregated from its form’, is nothing but bare life that has reappropriated itself as its own form and for this reason is no longer separated between the (degraded) bios of the apparatuses and the (endangered) zoe that functions as their foundation.38 Thus, what the nihilistic self-destruction of the appara- tuses of biopolitics leaves as its residue turns out to be the entire content of a new form-of-life. Bare life, which is, as we recall, ‘nothing reprehensible’ aside from its con- finement within the apparatuses, is reappropriated as a ‘whatever singularity’, a being that is only its manner of being, its own ‘thus’.39 It is the dwelling of humanity in this irreducibly potential ‘whatever being’ that makes possible the emergence of a generic non-exclusive community without presuppositions, in which Agamben finds the possi- bility of a happy life.¶ [If] instead of continuing to search for a proper identity in the already improper and sense- less form of individuality, humans were to succeed in belonging to this impropriety as such, in making of the proper being-thus not an identity and individual property but a singularity without identity, a common and absolutely exposed singularity, then they would for the first time enter into a community without presuppositions and without subjects.40¶ Thus, rather than seek to reform the apparatuses, we should simply leave them to their self-destruction and only try to reclaim the bare life that they feed on. This is to be achieved by the practice of subtraction that we address in the following section.¶

The impact is the sovereign’s ability to exploit fundamental flaws in the legal system and continue the global biopolitical war—the ballot should side with the global countermovement against such violence

Gulli, 13 Bruno Gulli, professor of history, philosophy, and political science at Kingsborough College in New York, “For the critique of sovereignty and violence,” <http://academia.edu/2527260/For_the_Critique_of_Sovereignty_and_Violence>, pg. 1

We live in an unprecedented time of crisis. The violence that characterized the twentieth century, and virtually all known human history before that, seems to have entered the twenty-first century with exceptional force and singularity. True, this century opened with the terrible events of September 11. However, September 11 is not the beginning of history. Nor are the histories of more forgotten places and people, the events that shape those histories, less terrible and violent – though they may often be less spectacular. The singularity of this violence, this paradigm of terror, does not even simply lie in its globality, for that is something that our century shares with the whole history of capitalism and empire, of which it is a part. Rather, it must be seen in the fact that terror as a global phenomenon has now become self-conscious. Today, the struggle is for global dominance in a singularly new way, and war –regardless of where it happens—is also always global. Moreover, in its self-awareness, terror has become, more than it has ever been, an instrument of racism. Indeed, what is new in the singularity of this violent struggle, this racist and terrifying war, is that in the usual attempt to neutralize the enemy, there is a cleansing of immense proportion going on. To use a word which has become popular since Michel Foucault, it is a biopolitical cleansing. This is not the traditional ethnic cleansing, where one ethnic group is targeted by a state power – though that is also part of the general paradigm of racism and violence. It is rather a global cleansing, where the sovereign elites, the global sovereigns in the political and financial arenas (capital and the political institutions), in all kinds of ways target those who do not belong with them on account of their race, class, gender, and so on, but above all, on account of their way of life and way of thinking. These are the multitudes of people who, for one reason or the other, are liable for scrutiny and surveillance, extortion (typically, in the form of over- taxation and fines) and arrest, brutality, torture, and violent death. The sovereigns target anyone who, as Giorgio Agamben (1998) shows with the figure of homo sacer, can be killed without being sacrificed – anyone who can be reduced to the paradoxical and ultimately impossible condition of bare life, whose only horizon is death itself. In this sense, the biopolitical cleansing is also immediately a thanatopolitical instrument.¶ The biopolitical struggle for dominance is a fight to the death. Those who wage the struggle to begin with, those who want to dominate, will not rest until they have prevailed. Their fanatical and self-serving drive is also very much the source of the crisis investing all others. The point of this essay is to show that the present crisis, which is systemic and permanent and thus something more than a mere crisis, cannot be solved unless the struggle for dominance is eliminated. The elimination of such struggle implies the demise of the global sovereigns, the global elites – and this will not happen without a global revolution, a “restructuring of the world” (Fanon 1967: 82). This must be a revolution against the paradigm of violence and terror typical of the global sovereigns. It is not a movement that uses violence and terror, but rather one that counters the primordial terror and violence of the sovereign elites by living up to the vision of a new world already worked out and cherished by multitudes of people. This is the nature of counter-violence: not to use violence in one’s own turn, but to deactivate and destroy its mechanism. At the beginning of the modern era, Niccolò Machiavelli saw the main distinction is society in terms of dominance, the will to dominate, or the lack thereof. Freedom, Machiavelli says, is obviously on the side of those who reject the paradigm of domination:¶ [A]nd doubtless, if we consider the objects of the nobles and of the people, we must see that the first have a great desire to dominate, whilst the latter have only the wish not to be dominated, and consequently a greater desire to live in the enjoyment of liberty (Discourses, I, V).¶ Who can resist applying this amazing insight to the many situations of resistance and revolt that have been happening in the world for the last two years? From Tahrir Square to Bahrain, from Syntagma Square and Plaza Mayor to the streets of New York and Oakland, ‘the people’ speak with one voice against ‘the nobles;’ the 99% all face the same enemy: the same 1%; courage and freedom face the same police and military machine of cowardice and deceit, brutality and repression. Those who do not want to be dominated, and do not need to be governed, are ontologically on the terrain of freedom, always-already turned toward a poetic desire for the common good, the ethics of a just world. The point here is not to distinguish between good and evil, but rather to understand the twofold nature of power – as domination or as care.¶ The biopolitical (and thanatopolitical) struggle for dominance is unilateral, for there is only one side that wants to dominate. The other side –ontologically, if not circumstantially, free and certainly wiser—does not want to dominate; rather, it wants not to be dominated. This means that it rejects domination as such. The rejection of domination also implies the rejection of violence, and I have already spoken above of the meaning of counter-violence in this sense. To put it another way, with Melville’s (2012) Bartleby, this other side “would prefer not to” be dominated, and it “would prefer not to” be forced into the paradigm of violence. Yet, for this preference, this desire, to pass from potentiality into actuality, action must be taken – an action which is a return and a going under, an uprising and a hurricane. Revolution is to turn oneself away from the terror and violence of the sovereign elites toward the horizon of freedom and care, which is the pre- existing ontological ground of the difference mentioned by Machiavelli between the nobles and the people, the 1% (to use a terminology different from Machiavelli’s) and the 99%. What is important is that the sovereign elite and its war machine, its police apparatuses, its false sense of the law, be done with. It is important that the sovereigns be shown, as Agamben says, in “their original proximity to the criminal” (2000: 107) and that they be dealt with accordingly. For this to happen, a true sense of the law must be recuperated, one whereby the law is also immediately ethics. The sovereigns will be brought to justice. The process is long, but it is in many ways already underway. The recent news that a human rights lawyer will lead a UN investigation into the question of drone strikes and other forms of targeted killing (The New York Times, January 24, 2013) is an indication of the fact that the movement of those who do not want to be dominated is not without effect. An initiative such as this is perhaps necessarily timid at the outset and it may be sidetracked in many ways by powerful interests in its course. Yet, even positing, at that institutional level, the possibility that drone strikes be a form of unlawful killing and war crime is a clear indication of what common reason (one is tempted to say, the General Intellect) already understands and knows. The hope of those who “would prefer not to” be involved in a violent practice such as this, is that those responsible for it be held accountable and that the horizon of terror be canceled and overcome. Indeed, the earth needs care. And when instead of caring for it, resources are dangerously wasted and abused, it is imperative that those who know and understand revolt –and what they must revolt against is the squandering and irresponsible elites, the sovereign discourse, whose authority, beyond all nice rhetoric, ultimately rests on the threat of military violence and police brutality¶

### Off

**Text: We advocate the entirety of the aff sans the plan**

**It’s net beneficial – it solves better because it doesn’t start at the place of the state or include the pretended fiated action we will get links to**

**It’s legit – they get 100% of the plan to generate offense versus the cp, this is a necessary test against critical affirmatives**

**There is no internal link between the plan text and the solvency – we should recognize our own role in imperialism**

**Schlag, 90** (Pierre Schlag, professor of law@ univ. Colorado, stanford law review, november, page lexis)

In fact, **normative legal thought is so much in a hurry that it will tell you what to do even though there is not the slightest chance that you might actually be in a position to do it.** For instance, when was the last time you were in a position to put the difference principle n31 into effect, or to restructure [\*179] the doctrinal corpus of the first amendment? "In the future, we should. . . ." When was the last time you were in a position to rule whether judges should become pragmatists, efficiency purveyors, civic republicans, or Hercules surrogates? **Normative legal thought doesn't seem overly concerned with such worldly questions about the character and the effectiveness of its own discourse. It just goes along and proposes, recommends, prescribes, solves, and resolves. Yet despite its obvious desire to have worldly effects, worldly consequences, normative legal thought remains seemingly unconcerned that for all practical purposes, its only consumers are legal academics** and perhaps a few law students -- **persons who are virtually never in a position to put any of its wonderful normative advice into effect.**

**The assumption of 1AC solvency papers over the rough edges of the world with warm and fuzzy normative legal talk, emotionally disconnecting them from the implications of the speech act**

**Delgado 91** (richard delgado , colorado law professor, 139 pa. L. Rev. 933, april)

But what is the cash value of all this priest-talk in the law reviews, in the classrooms of at least the "better" schools, and in the opinions of at least some judges? Are normativos better than other people? **Are we better off for engaging in normative talk, either as speakers or listeners?** Pierre **Schlag,** for example, **has described normativity as a zero -- as a vacuous, self-referential system of talk, all** [\*954] **form and no substance, meaning nothing, and about itself.** n82 **This description may be too generous. Normativity may be more than a harmless tic prevalent only in certain circles.** 1. Permission to Ignore Suffering The history of organized religion shows that **intense immersion in at least certain types of normative system is no guarantee against cruelty, intolerance or superstition.** n83 In modern times, social scientists have tried to find a correlation between religious belief and altruistic behavior. In most studies, the correlation is nonexistent or negative. In one study, seminary students were observed as they walked past a well-dressed man lying moaning on the sidewalk. n84 Most ignored the man, even though they had just heard a sermon about the Good Samaritan. The proportion who stopped to offer aid was lower than that of passersby in general. The researchers, commenting on this and other studies of religion and helping behavior, hypothesized that religious people feel less need to act because of a sense that they are "chosen" people. n85 I believe this anesthetizing effect extends beyond religion. We confroxnt a starving beggar and immediately translate the concrete duty we feel into a normative (i.e., abstract) question. And once we see the beggar's demand in general, systemic terms, it is easy for us to pass him by without rendering aid. n86 Someone else, perhaps society (with my tax dollars), will take care of that problem. **Normativity** thus **enables us to ignore and smooth over the rough edges of our world, to tune out or redefine what would otherwise make a claim on us.** In the legal system, the clearest [\*955] examples of this are found in cases where the Supreme Court has been faced with subsistence claims.

**They are more interested in playing hermeneutic games than engaging in politics, the preoccupation with pretending to be policymakers traps them in a spectator position and bars them from recognizing the bureaucratic violence of legal praxis.**

**Schlag, 90** (Pierre Schlag, professor of law@ univ. Colorado, stanford law review, november, page lexis)

All of this can seem very funny. That's because it is very funny. It is also deadly serious. It is deadly serious, because all this **normative legal thought**, as Robert Cover explained, **takes place in a field of pain and death**. n56 And in a very real sense Cover was right. Yet as it takes place, **normative legal thought is playing language games -- utterly oblivious to the character of the language games it plays, and thus, utterly uninterested in considering its own rhetorical and political contributions (or lack thereof) to the field of pain and death.** **To be sure, normative legal thinkers are often genuinely concerned with reducing the pain and the death**. However, the problem is not what normative legal thinkers do with normative legal thought, but what normative legal thought does with normative legal thinkers. **What is missing in normative legal thought is any serious questioning, let alone tracing, of the relations that the practice, the rhetoric, the routine of normative legal thought have** (or do not have) **to the field of pain and death.** And there is a reason for that: Normative legal thought misunderstands its own situation. Typically, normative legal thought understands itself to be outside the field of pain and death and in charge of organizing and policing that field. It is as if the action of normative legal thought could be separated from the background field of pain and death. This theatrical distinction is what allows normative legal thought its own self-important, self-righteous, self-image -- its congratulatory sense of its own accomplishments and effectiveness. All this self-congratulation works very nicely so long as normative legal [\*188] thought continues to imagine itself as outside the field of pain and death and as having effects within that field. n57 Yet it is doubtful this image can be maintained. It is not so much the case that normative legal thought has effects on the field of pain and death -- at least not in the direct, originary way it imagines. Rather, it is more the case that **normative legal thought is the pattern, is the operation of the bureaucratic distribution and the institutional allocation of the pain and the death.** n58 And apart from the leftover ego-centered rationalist rhetoric of the eighteenth century (and our routine), there is nothing at this point to suggest that we, as legal thinkers, are in control of normative legal thought. The problem for us, as legal thinkers, is that **the normative appeal of normative legal thought systematically turns us away from recognizing that normative legal thought is grounded on an utterly unbelievable re-presentation of the field it claims to describe and regulate. The problem for us is that normative legal thought, rather than assisting in the understanding of present political and moral situations, stands in the way. It systematically reinscribes its own aesthetic -- its own fantastic understanding of the political and moral scene.** n59Until normative legal thought begins to deal with its own paradoxical postmodern rhetorical situation, **it will remain something of an irresponsible enterprise. In its rhetorical structure, it will continue to populate the legal academic world with individual humanist subjects who think themselves empowered Cartesian egos, but who are largely the manipulated constructions of bureaucratic practices** -- academic and otherwise.

### Off

Reject the 1AC’s call for the ballot –

It is a moment of interest convergence between the Affirmative and the judge – This rhetorical alliance with alterity is a technology of political demand that repeats the strategic attitude of the system it seeks to overturn – The guilty solidarity of the 1AC masks the privilege that prevents the AFF project from directly changing the lives of the people they invoke to warrant a ballot.

Chow, 93 – Andrew W. Mellon Professor of the Humanities @ Brown

(Rey, *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*, p. 16-17)

Why are "tactics" useful at this moment? As discussions about "multiculturalism,' "interdisciplinarity," "the third world intellectual," and other companion issues develop in the American academy and society today, and as rhetorical claims to political change and difference are being put forth, many deep-rooted, politically reactionary forces return to haunt us. Essentialist notions of culture and history; conservative notions of territorial and linguistic propriety, and the "otherness” ensuing from them; unattested claims of oppression and victimization that are used merely to guilt-trip and to control; sexist and racist reaffirmations of sexual and racial diversities that are made merely in the name of righteousness—all these forces create new "solidarities" whose ideological premises remain unquestioned. These new solidarities arc often informed by a strategic attitude which repeats what they seek to overthrow. The weight of old ideologies being reinforced over and over again is We need to remember as intellectuals that the battles we fight are battles of words. Those who argue the oppositional standpoint are not doing anything different from their enemies and are most certainly not directly changing the downtrodden lives of those who seek their survival in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan spaces alike. What academic intellectuals must confront is thus not their "victimization" by society at large (or their victimization-in-solidarity-with-the-oppressed), but the power, wealth, and privilege that ironically accumulate from their "oppositional" viewpoint, and the widening gap between the professed contents of their words and the upward mobility they gain from such words. (When Foucault said intellectuals need to struggle against becoming the object and instrument of power, he spoke precisely to this kind of situation.) The predicament we face in the West, where intellectual freedom shares a history with economic enterprise, is that "if a professor wishes to denounce aspects of big business, ... he will be wise to locate in a school whose trustees are big businessmen."28 Why should we believe in those who continue to speak a language of alterity-as-lack while their salaries and honoraria keep rising? How do we resist the turning-into-propriety of oppositional discourses, when the intention of such discourses has been that of displacing and disowning the proper? How do we prevent what begin as tactics—that which is "without any base where it could stockpile its winnings" (de Certeau, p. 37)—from turning into a solidly fenced-off field, in the military no less than in the academic sense?

It is a form of self-subalternization, where the judge is encouraged to found solidarity with the Affirmative Other by valorizing suffering portrayed in the 1AC – However, their rhetorical strategy amounts to nothing more than a sham renunciation authorized by the same structures of power that produce alterity in the first place, turning the case at a higher level of analysis.

Chow, 93 – Andrew W. Mellon Professor of the Humanities @ Brown

(Rey, *Writing Diaspora: Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies*, p. 10-11)

The Orientalist has a special sibling whom I will, in order to highlight her significance as a kind of representational agency, call the Maoist. Arif Dirlik, who has written extensively on the history of political movements in twentieth-century China, sums up the interpretation of Mao Zedong commonly found in Western Marxist analyses in terms of a "Third Worldist fantasy"—"a fantasy of Mao as a Chinese reincarnation of Marx who fulfilled the Marxist premise that had been betrayed in the West."16 The Maoist was the phoenix which arose from the ashes of the great disillusionment with Western culture in the 1960s and which found hope in the Chinese Communist Revolution.17 In the 1970s, when it became possible for Westerners to visit China as guided and pampered guests of the Beijing establishment, Maoists came back with reports of Chinese society's absolute, positive difference from Western society and of the Cultural Revolution as "the most important and innovative example of Mao's concern with the pursuit of egalitarian, populist, and communitarian ideals in the course of economic modernization" (Harding, p. 939). At that time, even poverty in China was regarded as "spiritually ennobling, since it meant that [the] Chinese were not possessed by the wasteful and acquisitive consumerism of the United States" (Harding, p. 941). Although the excessive admiration of the 1970s has since been replaced by an oftentimes equally excessive denigration of China, the Maoist is very much alive among us, and her significance goes far beyond the China and East Asian fields. Typically, the Maoist is a cultural critic who lives in a capitalist society hut who is fed up with capitalism—a cultural critic, in other words, who wants a social order opposed to the one that is supporting her own undertaking. The Maoist is thus a supreme example of the way desire works: What she wants is always located in the other, resulting in an identification with and valorization of that which she is not/does not have. Since what is valorized is often the other's deprivation—"having" poverty or "having" nothing—the Maoist's strategy becomes in the main a rhetorical renunciation of the material power that enables her rhetoric.

The subaltern is subsequently reduced to a fungible object, a passive object for the consumption of the debate community – the affirmative absorbs the power of alterity only to toss its carcass back into the dust

Chow, 93 (Rey, Andrew W. Mellon, Professor of the Humanities at Brown University, Writing Diaspora: Contemporary Tactics of Intervention in Contemporary Cultural Studies, Indiana University Press, pg. 12-13.)

In the “cultural studies” of the American academy in the 1990s. The Maoist is reproducing with prowess. We see this in the way terms such as “oppression,” “victimization,” and “subalternity” are now being used. Contrary to the Orientalist disdain for the contemporary native cultures in the non-West, the Maoist turns the precisely disdained other into the object of his/her study and, in some cases identification. In a mixture of admiration and moralist, the Maoist sometimes turns all people from non-Western cultures into a generalized “subaltern” that is then used to flog an equally generalized “West.” Because the representation of “the other” as such ignores (1) the class and intellectual hierarchies within these other cultures, which are usually as elaborate as those in the West, and (2) the discursive power relations structuring the Maoist’s mode of inquiry and valorization, it produces a way of talking in which notions of lack, subalternity, victimization and so forth are drawn upon indiscriminately, often with the intention of spotlighting the speaker’s own sense of alterity and political righteousness. A comfortably wealthy white American intellectual I know claimed that he was a “third world intellectual” citing as one of his credentials his marriage to a Western European woman of part-Jewish heritage; a professor of English complained about being “victimized” by the structured time at an Ivy League Institution, meaning that she needed to be on time for classes; a graduate student of upper-class background from one of the world’s poorest countries told his American friends that he was of poor peasant stock in order to authenticate his identity as a radical “third worlder representative; male and female academics across the U.S. frequently say they were “raped” when they report experiences of professional frustration and conflict. Whether sincere or delusional, such cases of self-dramatization all take the route of self-sub-alternization, which has increasingly become the assured means to authority and power. What these intellectuals are doing is robbing the terms of oppression of their critical and oppositional import, and thus depriving the oppressed of even the vocabulary of protest and rightful demand. The oppressed, whose voices we seldom hear, are robbed twice - the first time of their economic chances, the second time of their language, which is no longer distinguishable from those who have had our consciousnesses “raised.”

## 2NC

### OV

The biopolitical determination of the threshold beyond which life ceases to have juridical value creates the category of a “life devoid of value” which nullifies value to death – this the root cause of modern violence

Agamben, 98 – professor of philosophy at university of Verona (Giorgio, Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life, pg. 139-140)

It is not our intention here to take a position on the difficult ethical problem of euthanasia, which still today, in certain coun­tries, occupies a substantial position in medical debates and pro­vokes disagreement. Nor are we concerned with the radicaliry with which Binding declares himself in favor of the general admissibility of euthanasia. More interesting for our inquiry is the fact that the sovereignty of the living man over his own life has its immediate counterpart in the determination of a threshold beyond which life ceases to have any juridical value and can, therefore, be killed without the commission of a homicide. The new juridical category of “life devoid of value” (or “life unworthy of being lived”) corre­sponds exactly—even if in an apparently different direction—to the bare life of homo sacer and can easily be extended beyond the limits imagined by Binding. It is as if every valorization and every “politicization” of life (which, after all, is implicit in the sovereignty of the individual over his own existence) necessarily implies a new decision concerning the threshold beyond which life ceases to be politically relevant, becomes only “sacred life,” and can as such be eliminated without punishment. Every society sets this limit; every society—even the most modern—decides who its “sacred men” will be. It is even pos­sible that this limit, on which the politicization and the exceprio of natural life in the juridical order of the state depends, has done nothing but extend itself in the history of the West and has now— in the new biopolitical horizon of states with national sovereignty—moved inside every human life and every citizen. Bare life is no longer confined to a particular place or a definite category. It now dwells in the biological body of every living being.

### 2NC AT: FW

Representations and exposition are the organizing principles behind the debate which we can challenge to alter power

Agamben, 2000 – professor of philosophy at the College International de Philosophie in Paris (Giorgio, Means Without End: Notes on Politics, p. 93-95)

Exposition is the location of politics. If there is no ani­mal politics, that is perhaps because animals are always already in the open and do not try to take possession of their own exposition; they simply live in it without car­ing about it. That is why they are not interested in mir­rors, in the image as image. Human beings, on the other hand, separate images from things and give them a name precisely because they want to recognize themselves, that is, they want to take possession of their own very ap­pearance. Human beings thus transform the open into a world, that is, into the battlefield of a political struggle without quarter. This struggle, whose object is truth, goes by the name of History. It is happening more and more often that in porno­graphic photographs the portrayed subjects, by a calcu­lated stratagem, look into the camera, thereby exhibiting the awareness of being exposed to the gaze. This unex­pected gesture violently belies the fiction that is implicit in the consumption of such images, according to which the one who looks surprises the actors while remaining unseen by them: the latter, rather, knowingly challenge the voyeur’s gaze and force him to look them in the eyes. In that precise moment, the insubstantial nature of the human face suddenly comes to light. The fact that the actors look into the camera means that they show that they are simulating; nevertheless, they paradoxically ap­pear more real precisely to the extent to which they ex­hibit this falsification. The same procedure is used to­day in advertising: the image appears more convincing if it shows openly its own artifice. In both cases, the one who looks is confronted with something that concerns unequivocally the essence of the face, the very structure of truth. We may call tragicomedy of appearance the fact that the face uncovers only and precisely inasmuch as it hides, and hides to the extent to which it uncovers. In this way, the appearance that ought to have manifested human be­ings becomes for them instead a resemblance that be­trays them and in which they can no longer recognize themselves. Precisely because the face is solely the loca­tion of truth, it is also and immediately the location of simulation and of an irreducible impropriety. This does not mean, however, that appearance dissimulares what it uncovers by making it look like what in reality it is not: rather, what human beings truly are is nothing other than this dissimulation and this disquietude within the appearance. Because human beings neither are nor have to be any essence, any nature, or any specific destiny, their condition is the most empty and the most insubstantial of all: it is the truth. What remains hidden from them is not something behind appearance, but rather appearing itself, that is, their being nothing other than a face. The task of politics is to return appearance itself to appearance, to cause appearance itself to appear. The face, truth, and exposition are today the objects of a global civil war, whose battlefield is social life in its en­tirety, whose storm troopers are the media, whose victims are all the peoples of the Earth. Politicians, the media establishment, and the advertising industry have under­stood the insubstantial character of the face and of the community it opens up, and thus they transform it into a miserable secret that they must make sure to control at all costs. State power today is no longer founded on the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence — a mo­nopoly that states share increasingly willingly with other nonsovereign organizations such as the United Nations and terrorist organizations; rather, it is founded above all on the control of appearance (of doxa). The fact that politics constitutes itself as an autonomous sphere goes hand in hand with the separation of the face in the world of spectacle — a world in which human communication is being separated from itself. Exposition thus transforms itself into a value that is accumulated in images and in the media, while a new class of bureaucrats jealously watches over its management.

### 2NC AT: Perm

The only ethical position is to refuse the sovereign fiction of lines between inside and outside – the aff attempts to redraw the line which is an independent link

Edkins and Pin-Fat 05. Jenny Edkins, professor of international politics at Prifysgol Aberystwyth University (in Wales) and Veronique Pin-Fat, senior lecturer in politics at Manchester Universit, “Through the Wire: Relations of Power and Relations of Violence,” Millennium - Journal of International Studies 2005 34: pg. 14

One potential form of challenge to sovereign power consists of a refusal to draw any lines between zoe- and bios, inside and outside**.**59 As we have shown, sovereign power does not involve a power relation in Foucauldian terms. It is more appropriately considered to have become a form of governance or technique of administration through relationships of violence that reduce political subjects to mere bare or naked life. In asking for a refusal to draw lines as a possibility of challenge, then, we are not asking for the elimination of power relations and consequently, we are not asking for the erasure of the possibility of a mode of political being that is empowered and empowering, is free and that speaks: quite the opposite. Following Agamben, we are suggesting that it is only through a refusal to draw any lines at all between forms of life (and indeed, nothing less will do) that sovereign power as a form of violence can be contested and a properly political power relation (a life of power as potenza) reinstated. We could call this challenging the logic of sovereign power through refusal. Our argument is that we can evade sovereign power and reinstate a form of power relation by contesting sovereign power’s assumption of the right to draw lines, that is, by contesting the sovereign ban. Any other challenge always inevitably remains within this relationship of violence. To move outside it (and return to a power relation) we need not only to contest its right to draw lines in particular places, but also to resist the call to draw any lines of the sort sovereign power demands.¶ The grammar of sovereign power cannot be resisted by challenging or fighting over where the lines are drawn. Whilst, of course, this is a strategy that can be deployed, it is not a challenge to sovereign power per se as it still tacitly or even explicitly accepts that lines must be drawn somewhere (and preferably more inclusively). Although such strategies contest the violence of sovereign power’s drawing of a particular line, they risk replicating such violence in demanding the line be drawn differently**.** This is because such forms of challenge fail to refuse sovereign power’s line-drawing ‘ethos’, an ethos which, as Agamben points out, renders us all now homines sacri or bare life.¶ Taking Agamben’s conclusion on board, we now turn to look at how the assumption of bare life can produce forms of challenge. Agamben puts it in terms of a transformation:¶ This biopolitical body that is bare life must itself instead be transformed into the site for the constitution and installation of a form of life that is wholly exhausted in bare life and a bios that is only its own zoe-.... If we give the name form-of-life to this being that is only its own bare existence and to this life that, being its own form, remains inseparable from it we will witness the emergence of a field of research beyond the terrain defined by the intersection of politics and philosophy, medico-biological sciences and jurisprudence.60

### 2NC Link

2. Reform – it maintains the fluid nature of sovereign power – that’s Prozorov – their attempt to correct the harms of imperialism through piece-meal reform and economic integration makes global civil war inevitable

**Agamben 98.** Giorgio Agamben, professor of philosophy at the University of Verona, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life,* pg. 179

In this sense, our age is nothing but the implacable and methodical attempt to overcome the division dividing the people, to eliminate radically the people that is excluded. This attempt brings together, according to different modalities and horizons, **Right and Left**, capitalist countries and socialist countries, which are united in the project-which is in the last analysis **futile** but which has been partially realized in all industrialized countries-of **producing a single and undivided people.** The **obsession with development** is as effective as it is in our time because it coincides with the **biopolitical project** to produce an undivided people. The extermination of the Jews in Nazi Germany acquires a **radically new significance** in this light. As the people that refuses to be integrated into the national political body (it is assumed that every assimilation is actually only simulated), the Jews are the representatives par excellence and almost the living symbol of the people and of **the bare life** that modernity necessarily creates within itself, but whose presence it can no longer tolerate in any way. And we must see the extreme phase of the internal struggle that divides People and people in the lucid fury with which the German Yolk-representative par excellence of the People as a whole political body-sought to eliminate the Jews forever. With the Final Solution (which did, not by chance, involve Gypsies and others who could not be integrated), Nazism darkly and futilely sought to liber­ ate the political scene of the West from this intolerable shadow in order to produce the German Volk as the people that finally overcame **the origi­nal biopolitical fracture**. (This is why the Nazi leaders so obstinately repeated that in eliminating Jews and Gypsies, they were actually also working for the other European peoples.) Paraphrasing the Freudian postulate on the relation between ego and id, one could say that modern biopolitics is supported by the principle according to which "Where there is bare life, there will have to be a People"-on condition that one immediately add that the principle also holds in its inverse formulation: **"Where there is a People, there will be bare life."** The fracture that was believed to have been overcome by eliminating the people (the Jews who are its symbol) thus reproduces itself anew, transforming the entire German people into a sacred life consecrated to death, and **a biological body that must be infinitely purified** (through the elimination of the mentally ill and the bearers of hereditary diseases). And in a different yet analogous way, today's **democratico-capitalist project of eliminating the poor classes** through development not only **reproduces within itself the people that is excluded** but also transforms **the entire population of the Third World into bare life**. Only a politics that will have **learned to take the fundamental biopolitical fracture of the West into account** will be able to stop this oscillation and to **put an end to the civil war** that divides **the peoples and the cities of the earth**.

### 2NC AT: BTX Defense

No link – we are a criticism of sovereign power, which is distinct – sovereign power is the power to decide between life and death, while biopower seeks to promote and protect life

Roldan, 12 – B.A. in Criminology and Sociology from the University of Illinois, Chicago (Yolanda, “Sovereign Power and Biopower – Foucault,” <http://uicsocialtheory.weebly.com/13/post/2012/12/sovereign-power-and-biopower-foucault-yolanda-roldan.html)//bghs-BI>

Foucault explains power in depth to his readers. There are five things that he says about power. He says that power is not an object, power is relational, power is productive, and power is intentional. He explains that power can be gained and one way to gain power is by having knowledge. Foucault explains that power is continual and varies. Power is always changing over time. It has matrices of transformation and power is also persuasive. Foucault also says that power operates in a way that helps it reproduce itself. In his piece titled “History of Sexuality,” he tells us about sovereign power. This is the power that gives you the right over the ability to decide between life and death. He also explains that this has turned into the power to expose someone’s life to death. For example, sovereign power could be the power that a president has to send someone to war. He also talks about direct power and indirect power. Direct power is the punishment that a sovereign power is able to enforce. The indirect power is the power that the sovereign power has to expose someone’s life to death. Basically it is the right to take life or let live. One example that I thought of when reading this was our justice system and the death or life sentence. There are some states in our government that have the death sentence. This is the sentence that one receives when they commit a crime so horrible that the judge of that case believes that the criminal deserves to be put to death. In a way, that judge holds sovereign power. He is exercising his right to take a life when he sentences someone to death. He can also exercise his power to let live by sentencing someone to life in prison instead of death. A life sentence is when someone who commits a crime bad enough gets sentenced to spend the rest of their life in prison. Another type of power that Foucault talks about is Biopower. While sovereign power was a way that people in power would take lives, biopower was the exact opposite of that. Biopower is a way that someone can exert complete and total power over someone else. The reason for doing this would be to better promote life. Foucault explains that biopower is needed to protect lives instead of taking them. This transformed the system from the right to take life or let live to the right to foster life. An example that I thought of when reading this was universal health care. Universal healthcare is when a government supplies their whole country with healthcare. With universal health care no one has to pay for health care and no one has to pay for medical services. This is, in a way, the government exercising its right to promote life. If everyone has healthcare and is being taken care of all their medical issues, and the government is paying for it then they are promoting the life of their citizens.

## 1NR

### AT: Doesn’t Solve

**The CP solves best – criticizing their normative form opens up a space for reflection where true solvency becomes impossible.**

**Winter 91** (Steven L. June, Prof of Law @ U. of Miami, Texas Law Review ”On Building Houses”)

As this last argument suggests, **the focus on the complex, systemic nature of affairs need condemn us neither to stasis nor to undecidability**. Rather, the insight that cultural forms both constrain and enable subjectivity provides an alternative way of thinking about the problems of law and social structure. If, as some suggest, "[c]ritique is all there is," n63 then we hazard the kind of political quandary so poignantly illustrated by the legal decisions examined by Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic: no matter how eloquent the appeal to an alternative vision**, there remains the quite substantial risk that decision makers will evaluate those dissenting** **arguments or counter-narratives unreflectively** -- that is, through the prism of the dominant cultural assumptions and beliefs that make them who they are -- **and, thus, will be disabled from appreciating, let alone adopting, the perspective that is being offered**. n64 **In contrast**, the essays in this symposium offer a way of moving beyond mere critique to explore instead the role of cultural, cognitive, and socio-linguistic form in channelling, structuring, and configuring practice. We propose to investigate the concrete ways in which, both in the realm of thought and of action, animating form can and does have a distinctive politics. n65 This is what is meant by "the politics of form." n66 **The idea is to** [\*1610] **examine the prevailing structures of thought** "on the bias," so to speak**, in an attempt to reveal the way in which** directionality, predilection, and **normative precommitment are always already embedded in form**. n67 As Jeremy Paul suggests**, it is by opening a space for reflection in this way that legal theory can have a progressive political payoff. n68 Through these examinations of form and its practical-political consequences, we attempt to map the possibilities of a different, less empty frame for practice**. n69 Sixty years ago, Karl Llewellyn put the challenge gravely: "Life struggling against form, or through form to its will -- 'pity and terror --.' Law means so pitifully little to life. Life is so terrifyingly dependent on law."

### AT: Policy Good

Policymaking absolves individual responsibility for violence – ensures violence will be inevitable – independent reason to vote aff

**Kappeler 95** (Susanne, The Will to Violence, pgs 9-11)

War does not suddenly break out in a peaceful society; sexual violence is not the disturbance of otherwise equal gender relations. Racist attacks do not shoot like lightning out of a non-racist sky, and the sexual exploitation of children is no solitary problem in a world otherwise just to children. The violence of our most commonsense everyday thinking, and especially our personal will to violence, constitute the conceptual preparation, the ideological armament and the intellectual mobilization which make the 'outbreak' of war, of sexual violence , of racist attacks, of murder and destruction possible at all. 'We are the war,' writes Slavenka Drakulic at the end of her existential analysis of the question, 'what is war?': I do not know what war is, I want to tell my friend, but I see it everywhere . It is in the blood-soaked street in Sarajevo, after 20 people have been killed while they queued for bread. But it is also in your non-comprehension, in my unconscious cruelty towards you. in the fact that you have a yellow form [for refugees] and I don't, in the way in which it grows inside ourselves and changes our feelings, relationships, values - in short: us. We are the war. , , And I am afraid that we cannot hold anyone else responsible. We make this war possible , we permit it to happen. 'We are the war' - and we also are' the sexual violence , the racist violence , the exploitation and the will to violence in all its manifestations in a society in so-called 'peacetime", for we make them possible and we permit them to happen. 'We are the war' does not mean that the responsibility for a war is shared collectively and diffusely by an entire society - which would be equivalent to exonerating warlords and politicians and profiteers or, as Ulrich Beck says, upholding the notion of 'collective irresponsibility', where people are no longer held responsible for their actions, and where the conception of universal responsibility becomes the equivalent of a universal acquittal. 6 On the contrary, the object is precisely to analyse the specific and differential responsibility of everyone in their diverse situations. Decisions to unleash a war are indeed taken at particular levels of power by those in a position to make them and to command such collective action. We need to hold them clearly responsible for their decisions and actions without lessening theirs by any collective 'assumption' of responsibility. Yet our habit of focusing on the stage where the major dramas of power take place tends to obscure our sight in relation to our own sphere of competence, our own power and our own responsibility - leading to the well- known illusion of our apparent 'powerlessness' and its accompanying phenomenon - our so-called political disillusionment. Single citizens even more so those of other nations - have come to feel secure in their obvious non-responsibility for such large-scale political events as, say, the wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina or Somalia \_ since the decisions for such events are always made elsewhere. Yet our insight that indeed we are not responsible for the decisions of a Serbian general or a Croatian president tends to mislead us in to thinking that therefore we have no responsibility at all, not even for forming our own judgment, and thus into underrating the responsibility we do have within our own sphere of action. In particular, it seems to absolve us from having to try to see any relation between our own actions and those events, or to recognize the connections between those political decisions and our own personal decisions. It not only shows that we participate in what Beck calls 'organized irresponsibility', upholding the apparent lack of connection between bureaucratically, institutionally, nationally and also individually organized separate competences. It also proves the phenomenal and unquestioned alliance of our personal thinking with the thinking of the major power mongers. For we tend to think that we cannot 'do' anything , say, about a war, because we deem ourselves to be in the wrong situation; because we are not where the major decisions are made. Which is why many of those not yet entirely disillusioned with politics tend to engage in a form of mental deputy politics, in the style of 'What would I do if I were the general, the prime minister, the president, the foreign minister or the minister of defence?' Since we seem to regard their mega spheres of action as the only worthwhile and truly effective ones, and since our political analyses tend to dwell there first of all, any question of what I would do if I were indeed myself tends to peter out in the comparative insignificance of having what is perceived as 'virtually no possibilities': what I could do seems petty and futile. For my own action I obviously desire the range of action of a general, a prime minister, or a General Secretary of the UN - finding expression in ever more prevalent formulations like ‘I want to stop this war', 'I want military intervention ', 'I want to stop this backlash', or 'I want a moral revolution. '? 'We are this war', however, even if we do not command the troops or participate in so-called peace talks, namely as Drakulic says, in our 'non- comprehension' : our willed refusal to feel responsible for our own thinking and for working out our own understanding, preferring innocently to drift along the ideological current of prefabricated arguments or less than innocently taking advantage of the advantages these offer. And we 'are' the war in our 'unconscious cruelty towards you', our tolerance of the 'fact that you have a yellow form for refugees and I don 't' - our readiness, in other words, to build identities, one for ourselves and one for refugees, one of our own and one for the 'others'. We share in the responsibility for this war and its violence in the way we let them grow inside us, that is, in the way we shape 'our feelings, our relationships, our values' according to the structures and the values of war and violence.

### AT: McClean

Nitty-gritty policy details isn’t good education

Frase 13 (Peter Frase, PhD student in sociology at the CUNY Graduate Center, predoctoral scholar at the LIS Cross-National Data Center, April 16th 2013, “The Perils of Wonkery,” <http://www.peterfrase.com/2013/04/the-perils-of-wonkery/>)

But rather than dismiss Excel-gate as much ado about nothing, maybe we can use it as a cudgel against the pernicious rise of the “policy wonk” as a model for journalism. As Bhaskar Sunkara noted in a recent article for In These Times, the wonk is a new iteration of American journalism’s obsession with “objectivity”, in this case filtered through the predilections of the “technocrat, obsessed with policy details, bereft of politics, earnestly searching for solutions to the world’s problems through the dialectic of an Excel spreadsheet.” The Reinhart-Rogoff revelations do more than just reveal the folly of relying on the wrong spreadsheets—they expose the shallowness and dishonesty that pervades much of the wonk-journalist milieu.¶ To return to a familiar whipping boy, let’s review the initial reaction to Reinhart-Rogoff’s paper last summer, over at Ezra Klein’s Wonkblog at the Washington Post website. A post by Suzy Khimm was entitled “Study: Long-term deficits are linked to 24 percent lower growth”, and it simply repeated the study’s claims without critique. For added truthiness, the post is embellished with a graph reproduced from the paper, demonstrating the difference in GDP growth between a group of low-debt and high-debt countries.¶ As we now know, that graph was based on erroneous data marshaled in support of a logically flimsy premise. But while the data errors wouldn’t be revealed for months, not everyone was fooled. Matt Yglesias—a writer often lumped in with wonks like Klein— dismissed the Reinhart-Rogoff paper as “confused correlation-mongering”, on the grounds that the reverse causal story about debt ratios and growth was far more plausible. (Incidentally, the way Yglesias approached Reinhart and Rogoff’s claims demonstrates how poorly he fits the mode of the Ezra Klein-style wonk-journalist. In contrast to the wonky preoccupation with empirical studies and pretty graphs, Yglesias has argued that “evidence is overrated”, and he often offers positions based on his own ideological predilections and reasoning from first principles.)¶ This is an approach that can get you into trouble in other ways, but it does sidestep one of the big problems confronting the wonk. The function of the wonk is to translate the empirical findings of experts for the general public. And he is supposed to be distinguished by an immersion in the details of studies and policy papers. But if the wonk wants to cover a wide range of subjects, they will necessarily have far less expertise than the people whose findings are being conveyed. Hence it becomes necessary to make a concealed argument from authority. When Wonkblog presents the findings of Reinhart and Rogoff without comment, they are implicitly telling us, “trust these people—they’re famous academic economists”. This is because they don’t have the ability to do what people like Paul Krugman did, and actually assess the correctness of the famous economists’ claims.¶ Performing this con on the public is dangerous enough. But insofar as the wonk gets high on his own supply, and starts to trust the findings of congenial academics without verifying, the temptation to take shortcuts can be overpowering. It’s easy to read the abstract and the conclusion of a paper and trumpet its findings, without looking too closely at whatever equations or models lie in between. This isn’t actually any more hardheaded than relying on one’s feelings, but it’s an appealing way to give one’s prejudices a fact-like veneer. That’s what seems to have happened to Ezra Klein’s understudy Dylan Matthews, who uncritically accepted some claims about the effect of teachers’ strikes on student achievement, which Doug Henwood was able to easily pick apart by actually reading the studies he was referring to.¶ This wouldn’t be so aggravating if the wonks were more open about their ideological orientation. If Yglesias promoted a study finding a relationship between strict occupational licensing and slow economic growth, I’d know to look carefully into the details, since his pre-existing views on that subject are well-known. With the wonks, though, close reading and an understanding of ruling class ideology are required to extract the political orientations that are guiding their judgment.¶ As the policy wonk has risen in prestige, we seem to have reached the point where this entire class of commentators is highly susceptible to what I’ll call “Charlie Rose disease”. It’s a malady named for the host of the eponymous TV show, who has always impressed me with his ability to convey an impression of knowledge and gravitas to his viewer. If you watch his show and actually listen to him talk, you’ll quickly notice that Rose is a shallow thinker even by television standards, and generally quite ignorant about the things he interviews people about. But everything about him—from his face to his cadence to his posture to his austere black-background set to having his show on public television—works together to produce the image of intellectual seriousness, even more than for most TV news hosts.¶ ¶ And so it is with the wonk—he needs to appear to be deeply knowledgeable about a wide range of obscure and technical subjects. But this entails concealing both one’s ideological biases and one’s substantive lack of knowledge, and relying on the borrowed prestige of academics and experts. In doing so, the wonk becomes the conduit for the experts, or more exactly a crucial means by which their authority is reproduced. The wonk takes the expert’s pronouncements at face value because they are serious, mainstream figures, and the fact that journalists do this reinforces their seriousness and mainstream-ness. One could hardly devise a better way of policing ideological boundaries and maintaining the illusion that the ruling ideology is merely bi-partisan common sense.¶ The unraveling of the Reinhart-Rogoff “fact” about debt and growth was only unusual because the supporting research was unusually sloppy. In that sense, critics are correct that there’s nothing particularly special about this one case. But the very absurdity of the episode makes it useful as a means of unmasking the entire corrupt enterprise of policy wonk journalism and its “just the facts, ma’am” pretensions.