## 1

#### Your decision should answer the resolutional question: Is the enactment of topical action better than the status quo or a competitive option?

#### 1. “Resolved” before a colon reflects a legislative forum

Army Officer School ’04 (5-12, “# 12, Punctuation – The Colon and Semicolon”, <http://usawocc.army.mil/IMI/wg12.htm>)

The colon introduces the following: a.  A list, but only after "as follows," "the following," or a noun for which the list is an appositive: Each scout will carry the following: (colon) meals for three days, a survival knife, and his sleeping bag. The company had four new officers: (colon) Bill Smith, Frank Tucker, Peter Fillmore, and Oliver Lewis. b.  A long quotation (one or more paragraphs): In The Killer Angels Michael Shaara wrote: (colon) You may find it a different story from the one you learned in school. There have been many versions of that battle [Gettysburg] and that war [the Civil War]. (The quote continues for two more paragraphs.) c.  A formal quotation or question: The President declared: (colon) "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." The question is: (colon) what can we do about it? d.  A second independent clause which explains the first: Potter's motive is clear: (colon) he wants the assignment. e.  After the introduction of a business letter: Dear Sirs: (colon) Dear Madam: (colon) f.  The details following an announcement For sale: (colon) large lakeside cabin with dock g.  A *formal* resolution, after the word "resolved:"

Resolved: (colon) That this council petition the mayor.

#### 2. “USFG should” means the debate is solely about a policy established by governmental means

Ericson ’03 (Jon M., Dean Emeritus of the College of Liberal Arts – California Polytechnic U., et al., The Debater’s Guide, Third Edition, p. 4)

The Proposition of Policy: Urging Future Action In policy propositions, each topic contains certain key elements, although they have slightly different functions from comparable elements of value-oriented propositions. 1. An agent doing the acting ---“The United States” in “The United States should adopt a policy of free trade.” Like the object of evaluation in a proposition of value, the agent is the subject of the sentence. 2. The verb *should*—the first part of a verb phrase that urges action. 3. An action verb to follow *should* in the *should*-verb combination. For example, *should adopt* here **means to put a** program or **policy into action though governmental means**. 4. A specification of directions or a limitation of the action desired. The phrase *free trade*, for example, gives direction and limits to the topic, which would, for example, eliminate consideration of increasing tariffs, discussing diplomatic recognition, or discussing interstate commerce. Propositions of policy deal with future action. Nothing has yet occurred. The entire debate is about whether something ought to occur. What you agree to do, then, when you accept the *affirmative side* in such a debate is to offer sufficient and compelling reasons for an audience to perform the future action that you propose.

#### They claim to win the debate for reasons other than the desirability of topical action. That undermines preparation and clash. Changing the question now leaves one side unprepared, resulting in shallow, uneducational debate. Requiring debate on a communal topic forces argument development and develops persuasive skills critical to any political outcome.

#### Debate over a controversial point of action creates argumentative stasis—that’s key to avoid a devolution of debate into competing truth claims, which destroys the decision-making benefits of the activity

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Debate is a means of settling differences, so there must be a controversy, a difference of opinion or a conflict of interest before there can be a debate. If everyone is in agreement on a feet or value or policy, there is no need or opportunity for debate; the matter can be settled by unanimous consent. Thus, for example, it would be pointless to attempt to debate "Resolved: That two plus two equals four,” because there is simply no controversy about this state­ment. Controversy is an essential prerequisite of debate. Where there is no clash of ideas, proposals, interests, or expressed positions of issues, there is no debate. Controversy invites decisive choice between competing positions. Debate cannot produce effective decisions without clear identification of a question or questions to be answered. For example, general argument may occur about the broad topic of illegal immigration. How many illegal immigrants live in the United States? What is the impact of illegal immigration and immigrants on our economy? What is their impact on our communities? Do they commit crimes? Do they take jobs from American workers? Do they pay taxes? Do they require social services? Is it a problem that some do not speak English? Is it the responsibility of employers to discourage illegal immigration by not hiring undocumented workers? Should they have the opportunity to gain citizenship? Does illegal immigration pose a security threat to our country? Do illegal immigrants do work that American workers are unwilling to do? Are their rights as workers and as human beings at risk due to their status? Are they abused by employers, law enforcement, housing, and businesses? How are their families impacted by their status? What is the moral and philosophical obligation of a nation state to maintain its borders? Should we build a wall on the Mexican border, establish a national identification card, or enforce existing laws against employers? Should we invite immigrants to become U.S. citizens? Surely you can think of many more concerns to be addressed by a conversation about the topic area of illegal immigration. Participation in this “debate” is likely to be emotional and intense. However, it is not likely to be productive or useful without focus on a particular question and identification of a line demarcating sides in the controversy. To be discussed and resolved effectively, controversies are best understood when seated clearly such that all parties to the debate share an understanding about the objec­tive of the debate. This enables focus on substantive and objectively identifiable issues facilitating comparison of competing argumentation leading to effective decisions. Vague understanding results in unfocused deliberation and poor deci­sions, general feelings of tension without opportunity for resolution, frustration, and emotional distress, as evidenced by the failure of the U.S. Congress to make substantial progress on the immigration debate. Of course, arguments may be presented without disagreement. For exam­ple, claims are presented and supported within speeches, editorials, and advertise­ments even without opposing or refutational response. Argumentation occurs in a range of settings from informal to formal, and may not call upon an audi­ence or judge to make a forced choice among competing claims. Informal dis­course occurs as conversation or panel discussion without demanding a decision about a dichotomous or yes/no question. However, by definition, debate requires "reasoned judgment on a proposition. The proposition is a statement about which competing advocates will offer alternative (pro or con) argumenta­tion calling upon their audience or adjudicator to decide. The proposition pro­vides focus for the discourse and guides the decision process. Even when a decision will be made through a process of compromise, it is important to iden­tify the beginning positions of competing advocates to begin negotiation and movement toward a center, or consensus position. It is frustrating and usually unproductive to attempt to make a decision when deciders are unclear as to what the decision is about. The proposition may be implicit in some applied debates (“Vote for me!”); however, when a vote or consequential decision is called for (as in the courtroom or in applied parliamentary debate) it is essential that the proposition be explicitly expressed (“the defendant is guilty!”). In aca­demic debate, the proposition provides essential guidance for the preparation of the debaters prior to the debate, the case building and discourse presented during the debate, and the decision to be made by the debate judge after the debate. Someone disturbed by the problem of a growing underclass of poorly educated, socially disenfranchised youths might observe, “Public schools are doing a terri­ble job! They' are overcrowded, and many teachers are poorly qualified in their subject areas. Even the best teachers can do little more than struggle to maintain order in their classrooms." That same concerned citizen, facing a complex range of issues, might arrive at an unhelpful decision, such as "We ought to do some­thing about this” or, worse, “It’s too complicated a problem to deal with." Groups of concerned citizens worried about the state of public education could join together to express their frustrations, anger, disillusionment, and emotions regarding the schools, but without a focus for their discussions, they could easily agree about the sorry state of education without finding points of clarity or potential solutions. A gripe session would follow. But if a precise question is posed—such as “What can be done to improve public education?”—then a more profitable area of discussion is opened up simply by placing a focus on the search for a concrete solution step. One or more judgments can be phrased in the form of debate propositions, motions for parliamentary debate, or bills for legislative assemblies, The statements "Resolved: That the federal government should implement a program of charter schools in at-risk communities” and “Resolved; That the state of Florida should adopt a school voucher program" more clearly identify specific ways of dealing with educational problems in a manageable form, suitable for debate. They provide specific policies to be investigated and aid discussants in identifying points of difference. This focus contributes to better and more informed decision making with the potential for better results. In aca­demic debate, it provides better depth of argumentation and enhanced opportu­nity for reaping the educational benefits of participation. In the next section, we will consider the challenge of framing the proposition for debate, and its role in the debate. To have a productive debate, which facilitates effective decision making by directing and placing limits on the decision to be made, the basis for argument should be clearly defined. If we merely talk about a topic, such as ‘"homeless­ness,” or “abortion,” Or “crime,” or “global warming,” we are likely to have an interesting discussion but not to establish a profitable basis for argument. For example, the statement “Resolved: That the pen is mightier than the sword” is debatable, yet by itself fails to provide much basis for dear argumen­tation. If we take this statement to mean *Iliad* the written word is more effec­tive than physical force for some purposes, we can identify a problem area: the comparative effectiveness of writing or physical force for a specific purpose, perhaps promoting positive social change. (Note that “loose” propositions, such as the example above, may be defined by their advocates in such a way as to facilitate a clear contrast of competing sides; through definitions and debate they “become” clearly understood statements even though they may not begin as such. There are formats for debate that often begin with this sort of proposition. However, in any debate, at some point, effective and meaningful discussion relies on identification of a clearly stated or understood proposition.) Back to the example of the written word versus physical force. Although we now have a general subject, we have not yet stated a problem. It is still too broad, too loosely worded to promote weII-organized argument. What sort of writing are we concerned with—poems, novels, government documents, web­site development, advertising, cyber-warfare, disinformation, or what? What does it mean to be “mightier" in this context? What kind of physical force is being compared—fists, dueling swords, bazookas, nuclear weapons, or what? A more specific question might be, “Would a mutual defense treaty or a visit by our fleet be more effective in assuring Laurania of our support in a certain crisis?” The basis for argument could be phrased in a debate proposition such as “Resolved: That the United States should enter into a mutual defense treaty with Laurania.” Negative advocates might oppose this proposition by arguing that fleet maneuvers would be a better solution. This is not to say that debates should completely avoid creative interpretation of the controversy by advo­cates, or that good debates cannot occur over competing interpretations of the controversy; in fact, these sorts of debates may be very engaging. The point is that debate is best facilitated by the guidance provided by focus on a particular point of difference, which will be outlined in the following discussion.

#### Decisionmaking is the most portable and flexible skill—key to all facets of life and advocacy

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*Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making*, Thirteen Edition

In the spring of 2011, facing a legacy of problematic U.S, military involvement in Bosnia, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and criticism for what some saw as slow sup­port of the United States for the people of Egypt and Tunisia as citizens of those nations ousted their formerly American-backed dictators, the administration of President Barack Obama considered its options in providing support for rebels seeking to overthrow the government of Muammar el-Qaddafi in Libya. Public debate was robust as the administration sought to determine its most appropriate action. The president ultimately decided to engage in an international coalition, enforcing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 through a number of measures including establishment of a no-fly zone through air and missile strikes to support rebels in Libya, but stopping short of direct U.S. intervention with ground forces or any occupation of Libya. While the action seemed to achieve its immediate objectives, most notably the defeat of Qaddafi and his regime, the American president received both criticism and praise for his mea­sured yet assertive decision. In fact, the past decade has challenged American leaders to make many difficult decisions in response to potentially catastrophic problems. Public debate has raged in chaotic environment of political division and apparent animosity, The process of public decision making may have never been so consequential or difficult. Beginning in the fall of 2008, Presidents Bush and Obama faced a growing eco­nomic crisis and responded in part with '’bailouts'' of certain Wall Street financial entities, additional bailouts of Detroit automakers, and a major economic stimu­lus package. All these actions generated substantial public discourse regarding the necessity, wisdom, and consequences of acting (or not acting). In the summer of 2011, the president and the Congress participated in heated debates (and attempted negotiations) to raise the nation's debt ceiling such that the U.S. Federal Govern­ment could pay its debts and continue government operations. This discussion was linked to a debate about the size of the exponentially growing national debt, gov­ernment spending, and taxation. Further, in the spring of 2012, U.S. leaders sought to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapon capability while gas prices in the United States rose, The United States considered its ongoing military involvement in Afghanistan in the face of nationwide protests and violence in that country1 sparked by the alleged burning of Korans by American soldiers, and Americans observed the actions of President Bashir Al-Assad and Syrian forces as they killed Syrian citizens in response to a rebel uprising in that nation and considered the role of the United States in that action. Meanwhile, public discourse, in part generated and intensified by the cam­paigns of the GOP candidates for president and consequent media coverage, addressed issues dividing Americans, including health care, women's rights to reproductive health services, the freedom of churches and church-run organiza­tions to remain true to their beliefs in providing (or electing not to provide) health care services which they oppose, the growing gap between the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans and the rest of the American population, and continued high levels of unemployment. More division among the American public would be hard to imagine. Yet through all the tension, conflict was almost entirely ver­bal in nature, aimed at discovering or advocating solutions to growing problems. Individuals also faced daunting decisions. A young couple, underwater with their mortgage and struggling to make their monthly payments, considered walking away from their loan; elsewhere a college sophomore reconsidered his major and a senior her choice of law school, graduate school, or a job and a teenager decided between an iPhone and an iPad. Each of these situations called for decisions to be made. Each decision maker worked hard to make well-reasoned decisions. Decision making is a thoughtful process of choosing among a variety of options for acting or thinking. It requires that the decider make a choice. Life demands decision making. We make countless individual decisions every day. To make some of those decisions, we work hard to employ care and consider­ation: others scorn to just happen. Couples, families, groups of friends, and co­workers come together to make choices, and decision-making bodies from committees to juries to the U.S. Congress and the United Nations make deci­sions that impact us all. Every profession requires effective and ethical decision making, as do our school, community, and social organizations. We all engage in discourse surrounding our necessary decisions every day. To refinance or sell one’s home, to buy a high-performance SUV or an eco­nomical hybrid car, what major to select, what to have for dinner, what candi­date to vote for, paper or plastic, all present us with choices. Should the president deal with an international crisis through military invasion or diplomacy? How should the U.S. Congress act to address illegal immigration? Is the defendant guilty as accused? Should we watch The Daily Show or the ball game? And upon what information should I rely to make my decision? Certainly some of these decisions are more consequential than others. Which amendment to vote for, what television program to watch, what course to take, which phone plan to purchase, and which diet to pursue—all present unique challenges. At our best, we seek out research and data to inform our decisions. Yet even the choice of which information to attend to requires decision making. In 2006, Time magazine named YOU its "Person of the Year.” Congratulations! Its selection was based on the participation not of “great men” in the creation of his­tory, but rather on the contributions of a community of anonymous participants in the evolution of information. Through blogs, online networking, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Wikipedia, and many other “wikis," and social networking sites, knowledge and truth are created from the bottom up, bypassing the authoritarian control of newspeople, academics, and publishers. Through a quick keyword search, we have access to infinite quantities of information, but how do we sort through it and select the best information for our needs? Much of what suffices as information is not reliable, or even ethically motivated. The ability of every decision maker to make good, reasoned, and ethical deci­sions' relies heavily upon their ability to think critically. Critical thinking enables one to break argumentation down to its component parts in order to evaluate its relative validity and strength, And, critical thinking offers tools enabling the user to better understand the' nature and relative quality of the message under consider­ation. Critical thinkers are better users of information as well as better advocates. Colleges and universities expect their students to develop their critical thinking skills and may require students to take designated courses to that end. The importance and value of such study is widely recognized. The executive order establishing California's requirement states; Instruction in critical thinking is designed to achieve an understanding of the relationship of language to logic, which would lead to the ability to analyze, criticize and advocate ideas, to reason inductively and deductively, and to reach factual or judgmental conclusions based on sound inferences drawn from unambigu­ous statements of knowledge or belief. The minimal competence to be expected at the successful conclusion of instruction in critical thinking should be the ability to distinguish fact from judgment, belief from knowledge, and skills in elementary inductive arid deductive processes, including an under­standing of die formal and informal fallacies of language and thought. Competency in critical thinking is a prerequisite to participating effectively in human affairs, pursuing higher education, and succeeding in the highly com­petitive world of business and the professions. Michael Scriven and Richard Paul for the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking Instruction argued that the effective critical thinker: raises vital questions and problems, formulating them clearly and precisely; gathers and assesses relevant information, using abstract ideas to interpret it effectively; comes to well-reasoned conclusions and solutions, testing them against relevant criteria and standards; thinks open-mindedly within alternative systems of thought, recognizing, and assessing, as need be, their assumptions, implications, and practical con­sequences; and communicates effectively with others in figuring our solutions to complex problems. They also observed that critical thinking entails effective communication and problem solving abilities and a commitment to overcome our native egocentrism and sociocentrism,"1 Debate as a classroom exercise and as a mode of thinking and behaving uniquely promotes development of each of these skill sets. Since classical times, debate has been one of the best methods of learning and applying the principles of critical thinking. Contemporary research confirms the value of debate. One study concluded: The impact of public communication training on the critical thinking ability of the participants is demonstrably positive. This summary of existing research reaffirms what many ex-debaters and others in forensics, public speaking, mock trial, or argumentation would support: participation improves die thinking of those involved,2 In particular, debate education improves the ability to think critically. In a com­prehensive review of the relevant research, Kent Colbert concluded, "'The debate-critical thinking literature provides presumptive proof ■favoring a positive debate-critical thinking relationship.11'1 Much of the most significant communication of our lives is conducted in the form of debates, formal or informal, These take place in intrapersonal commu­nications, with which we weigh the pros and cons of an important decision in our own minds, and in interpersonal communications, in which we listen to argu­ments intended to influence our decision or participate in exchanges to influence the decisions of others. Our success or failure in life is largely determined by our ability to make wise decisions for ourselves and to influence the decisions of’ others in ways that are beneficial to us. Much of our significant, purposeful activity is concerned with making decisions. Whether to join a campus organization, go to graduate school, accept a job offer, buy a car or house, move to another city, invest in a certain stock, or vote for Garcia—these are just a few Of the thousands of deci­sions we may have to make. Often, intelligent self-interest or a sense of respon­sibility will require us to win the support of others. We may want a scholarship or a particular job for ourselves, a customer for our product, or a vote for our favored political candidate. Some people make decision by flipping a coin. Others act on a whim or respond unconsciously to “hidden persuaders.” If the problem is trivial—such as whether to go to a concert or a film—the particular method used is unimportant. For more crucial matters, however, mature adults require a reasoned methods of decision making. Decisions should be justified by good reasons based on accurate evidence and valid reasoning.

## 2

#### The aff commodifies the suffering of citizens of the border and Mexicans in exchange for your ballot in the debate economy---playing a game where we move scenarios of suffering around like chess pieces for our own personal enjoyment is the most unethical form of intellectual imperialism

Baudrillard 94 [Jean, “The Illusion of the End” p. 66-71]

We have long denounced the capitalistic, economic exploitation of the poverty of the 'other half of the world' [['autre monde]. We must today denounce the moral and sentimental exploitation of that poverty - charity cannibalism being worse than oppressive violence. The extraction and humanitarian reprocessing of a destitution which has become the equivalent of oil deposits and gold mines. The extortion of the spectacle of poverty and, at the same time, of our charitable condescension: a worldwide appreciated surplus of fine sentiments and bad conscience. We should, in fact, see this not as the extraction of raw materials, but as a waste-reprocessing enterprise. Their destitution and our bad conscience are, in effect, all part of the waste-products of history- the main thing is to recycle them to produce a new energy source.¶ We have here an escalation in the psychological balance of terror. World capitalist oppression is now merely the vehicle and alibi for this other, much more ferocious, form of moral predation. One might almost say, contrary to the Marxist analysis, that material exploitation is only there to extract that spiritual raw material that is the misery of peoples, which serves as psychological nourishment for the rich countries and media nourishment for our daily lives. The 'Fourth World' (we are no longer dealing with a 'developing' Third World) is once again beleaguered, this time as a catastrophe-bearing stratum. The West is whitewashed in the reprocessing of the rest of the world as waste and residue. And the white world repents and seeks absolution - it, too, the waste-product of its own history.¶ The South is a natural producer of raw materials, the latest of which is catastrophe. The North, for its part, specializes in the reprocessing of raw materials and hence also in the reprocessing of catastrophe. Bloodsucking protection, humanitarian interference, Medecins sans frontieres, international solidarity, etc. The last phase of colonialism: the New Sentimental Order is merely the latest form of the New World Order. Other people's destitution becomes our adventure playground . Thus, the humanitarian offensive aimed at the Kurds - a show of repentance on the part of the Western powers after allowing Saddam Hussein to crush them - is in reality merely the second phase of the war, a phase in which charitable intervention finishes off the work of extermination. We are the consumers of the ever delightful spectacle of poverty and catastrophe, and of the moving spectacle of our own efforts to alleviate it (which, in fact, merely function to secure the conditions of reproduction of the catastrophe market ); there, at least, in the order of moral profits, the Marxist analysis is wholly applicable: we see to it that extreme poverty is reproduced as a symbolic deposit, as a fuel essential to the moral and sentimental equilibrium of the West.¶ In our defence, it might be said that this extreme poverty was largely of our own making and it is therefore normal that we should profit by it. There can be no finer proof that the distress of the rest of the world is at the root of Western power and that the spectacle of that distress is its crowning glory than the inauguration, on the roof of the Arche de la Defense, with a sumptuous buffet laid on by the Fondation des Droits de l'homme, of an exhibition of the finest photos of world poverty. Should we be surprised that spaces are set aside in the Arche d' Alliance. for universal suffering hallowed by caviar and champagne? Just as the economic crisis of the West will not be complete so long as it can still exploit the resources of the rest of the world, so the symbolic crisis will be complete only when it is no longer able to feed on the other half's human and natural catastrophes (Eastern Europe, the Gulf, the Kurds, Bangladesh, etc.). We need this drug, which serves us as an aphrodisiac and hallucinogen. And the poor countries are the best suppliers - as, indeed, they are of other drugs. We provide them, through our media, with the means to exploit this paradoxical resource, just as we give them the means to exhaust their natural resources with our technologies. Our whole culture lives off this catastrophic cannibalism, relayed in cynical mode by the news media, and carried forward in moral mode by our humanitarian aid, which is a way of encouraging it and ensuring its continuity, just as economic aid is a strategy for perpetuating under-development. Up to now, the financial sacrifice has been compensated a hundredfold by the moral gain. But when the catastrophe market itself reaches crisis point, in accordance with the implacable logic of the market, when distress becomes scarce or the marginal returns on it fall from overexploitation, when we run out of disasters from elsewhere or when they can no longer be traded like coffee or other commodities, the West will be forced to produce its own catastrophe for itself , in order to meet its need for spectacle and that voracious appetite for symbols which characterizes it even more than its voracious appetite for food. It will reach the point where it devours itself. When we have finished sucking out the destiny of others, we shall have to invent one for ourselves. The Great Crash, the symbolic crash, will come in the end from us Westerners, but only when we are no longer able to feed on the hallucinogenic misery which comes to us from the other half of the world.¶ Yet they do not seem keen to give up their monopoly. The Middle East, Bangladesh, black Africa and Latin America are really going flat out in the distress and catastrophe stakes, and thus in providing symbolic nourishment for the rich world. They might be said to be overdoing it: heaping earthquakes, floods, famines and ecological disasters one upon another, and finding the means to massacre each other most of the time. The 'disaster show' goes on without any let-up and our sacrificial debt to them far exceeds their economic debt. The misery with which they generously overwhelm us is something we shall never be able to repay. The sacrifices we offer in return are laughable (a tornado or two, a few tiny holocausts on the roads, the odd financial sacrifice) and, moreover, by some infernal logic, these work out as much greater gains for us, whereas our kindnesses have merely added to the natural catastrophes another one immeasurably worse: the demographic catastrophe, a veritable epidemic which we deplore each day in pictures.

#### And---they are the brokers of trauma on the academic market

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This article begins with a brief look at Khulumani Support Group, a support group for victims of apartheid-era human rights abuses. After apartheid, after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), these victims were still busy producing the stuff of dramatic public and personal memories. Though there were a range of actors involved in soliciting, promoting, circulating and consuming these stories of trauma, it is the global brokers of traumatic memory – the students and professors, the journalists, the documentary filmmakers, the visiting priests, politicians and psychologists – in whom I am most interested. As I worked with Khulumani, a name for this process of painful, repeated narrativisation about the past presented itself – traumatic storytelling – and an image of the routes of these narratives, the transactions involved, the sites and meanings of consumption took shape in the form of the metaphor of political economy. This political economy of traumatic storytelling was a frequent topic of conversation and controversy among group members, who had grown skeptical of the benefits of participating in this global flow of narrative. This article sketches an outline of this political economy of traumatic storytelling, raises questions about intellectual property rights in the circulation and consumption of traumatic narratives, and explores the recent, ambivalent moves by Khulumani to take back some control over these valued, circulating narrative objects. ¶ Signs of injury’ in circulation In the past two decades, the scope of intellectual property law has been greatly expanded to include a variety of objects, images and ideas that might be called ‘cultural property’ (Handler 2003). Songs, artworks, stories, graphic designs, totems and ritual artefacts have increasingly been brought under the umbrella of a variety of ‘rights regimes’ that seek to protect the rights, especially of marginalised indigenous groups, to maintain control over, and benefit materially from these ‘objects/products’ of their culture (Berryman 1994; Boyle 1996). This article considers a particular – and perhaps peculiar – cultural phenomenon that is only now beginning to emerge as a form of intellectual property in need of ‘protection’. Traumatic storytelling is an increasingly common activity in post-conflict, democratising societies, an activity that produces an ever-expanding volume of narratives of traumatic suffering and recovery. These narratives, solicited by truth commissions, journalists, academics and therapists, now circulate the world through particular relations of production, exchange and consumption and structure what I describe below as a ‘global political economy of traumatic storytelling’. Some victim storytellers in South Africa are pushing for the recognition of these stories as a form of intellectual property and are seeking a range of protections against the manipulation and marketisation of their stories of abuse. How this situation came about and what it might mean for the public sphere’s engagement with images and narratives of abuse, are the subjects of this article.¶ My first encounter with these disillusioned ‘victims of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)’, as they sometimes identified themselves, came through the monthly meetings of the Khulumani Support Group, a victim support and advocacy group in Cape Town. Khulumani is composed of victims of apartheid-era political violence and the Cape Town group was started in coordination with the Cape Town Trauma Centre, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) offering trauma debriefing and counselling to victims of political and criminal violence. The group arose out of monthly meetings that the Trauma Centre and Khulumani held jointly to provide advocacy services to victims and to gently introduce them to the principles and benefits of counselling (Harper and Colvin 2000). Part of every monthly meeting is devoted to ‘storytelling’. At each meeting there are typically between three and seven speakers. The stories are usually short, and the speakers are calm and measured in their narration. They begin with a brief introduction, continue through a summary of key events and people and end with a comment on how they are doing today. These stories are ‘tight’, reduced to the essential elements needed to make a point. During the storytelling there is little intervention from the facilitators. After the story, a facilitator will offer some very quick comments about the psychological experiences of the speaker and audience. After these brief comments, the floor is reopened and new speakers come forward until the time is up.¶ The process of storytelling in these meetings reflects both the model of memory laid out by the TRC as well as some of the features of what Levy and Sznaider (2002) termed ‘cosmopolitan memory’: stories of traumatic suffering, reduced to the most important, shocking and morally obvious details of harm, circulated less as specific histories in need of specific interventions or response but more as ‘signs of injury, symbols of the moral bankruptcy of apartheid and the means of group identity formation through a common rejection of apartheid morality. ¶ Elsewhere, I describe the narrative work of victims as ‘traumatic storytelling’ (Colvin 2004). I use this term to underscore three characteristic dimensions of the particular kind of storytelling in which I am interested. First, it is storytelling specifically about trauma, the traumas of apartheid in particular. It is a kind of storytelling that does not easily admit the ambiguous or the unspectacular. Second, it is storytelling framed through the psychotherapeutic language of trauma. In particular, it is storytelling that typically narrates the conventional psychodynamic stages of trauma: traumatic event followed by, in various combinations, numbness, intrusion, denial, anxiety, a narrative ‘working through’ and, finally, acceptance and integration through storytelling. Third, it is a kind of storytelling that can itself be traumatic for the teller. The TRC’s investment in traumatic storytelling was in part a manifestation of the broader globalisation of psychiatric knowledge about trauma (Breslau 2000). Traumatic storytelling was not only something that was ‘of the moment’ in global forms of popular culture – on middle-class talk shows, magazines and movies. It also was (and remains) a practice sustained by a range of political, institutional and individual advocates. There is a large and growing network of ‘trauma centers’ throughout the world (Summerfield 1999). Globalising forms of trauma discourse and practice also run parallel with globalising forms of political intervention. Peacekeeping troops, conflict resolution experts, diplomats, scholars of democratisation – all can often be found in the same hot spots of post-conflict intervention as trauma counsellors and debriefers. These experts at political and psychic reconstruction are inevitably accompanied by journalists and researchers who are eager to report on the latest forms of post-conflict healing and keen to circulate the latest stories of traumatic violence. They reproduce these traumatic stories and circulate them globally for consumption by a diverse array of audiences. Taken together these diffuse actors, institutions and interests – and the narratives of suffering that are produced, circulated and consumed – form a global network for the circulation of traumatic storytelling. This wide circuit of narrative flow is sustained by a constant stream of journalists, researchers, politicians, priests and psychologists who fly to the next hot spot – today South Africa, tomorrow Iraq – asking permission to record, interpret and circulate ‘victims’ stories’.¶ These stories were circulated beyond the spaces of monthly meetings and interview rooms, into other countries, other cultures and other histories that were largely unknown to group members.1 Khulumani members had a keen sense of this wide-ranging flow of their narratives. They often spoke to me – sometimes with pride and sometimes with frustration and suspicion – about the fact that people in the United States of America, the Netherlands, England, Sweden, Denmark and ‘even the Ivory Coast’ knew their story. These lines of narrative circulation were often described in great detail. Two group members, Monwabisi and Thembile, both clearly remembered every interview and informal encounter they had had with foreign researchers. When I knew the researcher as well, Monwa and Thembile would frequently ask if I had heard from them, if they had produced something with their stories and if other people were learning about Khulumani and the situation of victims in South Africa. ¶ Anxieties of alienation: Commodifying the signs of injury As their stories are increasingly documented and circulated within widening global circuits of media, academic and activist knowledge production, group members are increasingly anxious and frustrated with the personal and political implications of storytelling. They say that they, the victims, should not have to do so much work for so little gain. Traumatic storytelling has not brought them reparations, it has not eased their poverty, it has not forced perpetrators to confess or beneficiaries to admit their own liability. Only on occasion has it seemed to ease the psychological effects of trauma. More often than not, after the brief ‘intervention’ – at the TRC or monthly meeting – they are left to go home alone, with little follow-up support.¶ The various criticisms levelled at traumatic storytelling by members of Khulumani were not unique to this group. Complaints about the TRC and its storytelling practice were well established long before this support group was started (see Ross 2003: 32). The ideas that this kind of storytelling might be a culturally foreign and inflexible mode of individual healing or that storytelling might be a limited response to wider social, political and material needs were not particularly new either. During the first few months of my work with the Trauma Centre and the support group, I indeed encountered all of these criticisms. I quickly discovered another, unexpected aspect of storytelling, though, that introduced a new level of complexity. This new dimension was most clearly brought home to me during the first monthly meetings I attended. Trauma Centre staff involved with the group had warned me that Khulumani had recently been reviewing their standard practice of allowing researchers to sit in on monthly meetings and ask for interviews afterwards. I had long been aware of their ambivalence on this issue and was preparing myself to be asked to stop attending future meetings. Instead of discussing whether or not to allow researchers to attend, however, I soon discovered that the group had been discussing the going ‘market price’ for their stories, comparing notes on compensation with members of other groups who had recently worked with researchers and journalists. The discussion was apparently remarkably detailed and precise, with estimates for a standard one-and-a-half to two-hour recitation ranging from R100 to R150.2 Some complained that these figures were too low and recommended a minimum fee of R200. Maureen said that she would charge no less than R500 because she told a good story. Shirley said that most researchers were from rich countries and ‘R100 was not a lot of money… [we] should negotiate for the benefit of the group as a whole … [we] should not forget that we have bargaining power’. Many people in Trafficking trauma: Intellectual property rights and the political economy of traumatic storytelling 175 the meeting had had contact with researchers, or even worked as ‘lay’ researchers themselves. There were also debates around how to choose group members who would participate in research and how to divide the potential proceeds of these narrative exchanges. In the end, a provisional decision was taken to try and allocate research ‘opportunities’ equally and to divide any proceeds evenly between the individual and the group at large. Despite all of this planning, however, very little money changed hands in such a systematic fashion. Most researchers and journalists got away with paying nothing and those who did pay often conducted these transactions privately, with the standard price of a story ranging between R80 and R100. More often than not, however, when money did change hands, it went towards ‘expenses’ (transport and food) or ‘time’ rather than for the stories themselves. ¶ Despite the lack of systematic exchanges of money for stories, however, it soon became clear that each group member’s ‘story’ had not only been objectified – as a ‘thing’ that a member ‘had’ – but had come to function as a commodity as well. As I spent more time with the group and saw the many connections that these narrative transactions produced beyond the boundaries of the group, I began to imagine the work of storytelling as part of a larger network of relations of production and exchange. For Khulumani, the most visible participants in this system were the Trauma Centre, the TRC, local and foreign researchers and journalists and documentary filmmakers. Less obvious relations of exchange could have included the government agencies victims applied to for social services, other NGOs they came into contact with, international funding organisations, foreign governments, local beneficiaries, perpetrators and other victims. What I encountered, then, when I started working with Khulumani was a heavily storied and documented kind of victim–subject engaged in a process of narrative production and exchange with a range of interlocutors, near and far. In order to describe this phenomenon and look more broadly at the full range of its memorial demands and transactions, I developed a metaphor of the ‘global political economy of traumatic storytelling’. Tracing the circulation of narratives, the involvement of a multitude of actors and the creation of a range of new subjects, object, relationships and meanings, is also a way of opening a discussion about some of the broader effects of the global fascination with the traumatic memories of victims of human rights abuses. In this paper, I am particularly concerned with the consequences of Khulumani’s reluctant embrace of this political economy and its emerging sense that their stories of violation not only ‘belonged’ to them in an abstract way, but were a form of property as well. Wrestling for the means of production¶ One effect of this market for narratives of suffering is that traumatic storytelling has become the major way in which many victims negotiate relationships with Christopher J. Colvin 176 others. Their position in a field of relations between the international community, their national government, civil society, the media and the academy increasingly depends on their ability to produce and circulate engaging stories of suffering and recovery. In the process, victims’ stories become commodified objects that move out into the wider world and structure an entire network of subjects, objects, meanings and relationships. Some other effects include 1 the regulation of the narrative content and structure of stories wherein what sells and what does not become part of shaping the stories people tell 2 the shortening of stories into easily consumable packages that fit within the lines of a membership form, pension application, television interview or case history 3 the evolution of the idea that victims have a single story, ‘my story,’ a unitary, bounded and unchanging narrative that incorporates all that is essential in the ‘story of a victim’ 4 an anxiety over alienation from their story, once commodified.

#### Translating misery into capital is a perverse system of neoimperial academia---vote negative to reject their cherry-picking of misery and refuse to engage in the trauma economy

Tomsky 11 (Terri, Ph.D in English from U-British Columbia, postdoctoral fellow in cultural memory at the University of Alberta From Sarajevo to 9/11: Travelling Memory and the Trauma Economy, Parallax Volume 17, Issue 4, 2011)

In contrast to the cosmopolitization of a Holocaust cultural memory,1 there exist experiences of trauma that fail to evoke recognition and subsequently, compassion and aid. What is it exactly that confers legitimacy onto some traumatic claims and anonymity onto others? This is not merely a question of competing victimizations, what geographer Derek Gregory has criticized as the process of ‘cherry-picking among [ . . . ] extremes of horror’, but one that engages issues of the international travel, perception and valuation of traumatic memory.2 This seemingly arbitrary determination engrosses the e´migre´ protagonist of Dubravka Ugresic’s 2004 novel, The Ministry of Pain, who from her new home in Amsterdam contemplates an uneven response to the influx of claims by refugees fleeing the Yugoslav wars: The Dutch authorities were particularly generous about granting asylum to those who claimed they had been discriminated against in their home countries for ‘sexual differences’, more generous than to the war’s rape victims. As soon as word got round, people climbed on the bandwagon in droves. The war [ . . . ] was something like the national lottery: while many tried their luck out of genuine misfortune, others did it simply because the opportunity presented itself.3¶ Traumatic experiences are described here in terms analogous to social and economic capital. What the protagonist finds troubling is that some genuine refugee claimants must invent an alternative trauma to qualify for help: the problem was that ‘nobody’s story was personal enough or shattering enough. Because death itself had lost its power to shatter. There had been too many deaths’.4 In other words, the mass arrival of Yugoslav refugees into the European Union means that war trauma risks becoming a surfeit commodity and so decreases in value. I bring up Ugresic’s wry observations about trauma’s marketability because they enable us to conceive of a trauma economy, a circuit of movement and exchange where traumatic memories ‘travel’ and are valued and revalued along the way.¶ Rather than focusing on the end-result, the winners and losers of a trauma ‘lottery’, this article argues that there is, in a trauma economy, no end at all, no fixed value to any given traumatic experience. In what follows I will attempt to outline the system of a trauma economy, including its intersection with other capitalist power structures, in a way that shows how representations of trauma continually circulate and, in that circulation enable or disable awareness of particular traumatic experience across space and time. To do this, I draw extensively on the comic nonfiction of Maltese-American writer Joe Sacco and, especially, his retrospective account of newsgathering during the 1992–1995 Bosnian war in his 2003 comic book, The Fixer: A Story From Sarajevo.5 Sacco is the author of a series of comics that represent social life in a number of the world’s conflict zones, including the Palestinian territories and the former Yugoslavia. A comic artist, Sacco is also a journalist by profession who has first-hand experience of the way that war and trauma are reported in the international media. As a result, his comics blend actual reportage with his ruminations on the media industry. The Fixer explores the siege of Sarajevo (1992–1995) as part of a larger transnational network of disaster journalism, which also critically, if briefly, references the September eleventh, 2001 attacks in New York City. Sacco’s emphasis on the transcultural coverage of these traumas, with his comic avatar as the international journalist relaying information on the Bosnian war, emphasizes how trauma must be understood in relation to international circuits of mediation and commodification. My purpose therefore is not only to critique the aesthetic of a travelling traumatic memory, but also to call attention to the material conditions and networks that propel its travels.¶ Travelling Trauma Theorists and scholars have already noted the emergence, circulation and effects of traumatic memories, but little attention has been paid to the travelling itself. This is a concern since the movement of any memory must always occur within a material framework. The movement of memories is enabled by infrastructures of power, and consequently mediated and consecrated through institutions. So, while some existing theories of traumatic memory have made those determining politics and policies visible, we still don’t fully comprehend the travel of memory in a global age of media, information networks and communicative capitalism.6 As postcolonial geographers frequently note, to travel today is to travel in a world striated by late capitalism. The same must hold for memory; its circulation in this global media intensive age will always be reconfigured, transvalued and even commodified by the logic of late capital.¶ While we have yet to understand the relation between the travels of memory (traumatic or otherwise) and capitalism, there are nevertheless models for the circulation of other putatively immaterial things that may prove instructive. One of the best, I think, is the critical insight of Edward W. Said on what he called ‘travelling theory’.7 In 1984 and again in 1994, Said wrote essays that described the reception and reformulation of ideas as they are uprooted from an original historical and geographical context and propelled across place and time. While Said’s contribution focuses on theory rather than memory, his reflections on the travel and transformation of ideas provide a comparison which helpfully illuminates the similar movements of what we might call ‘travelling trauma’. Ever attendant to the historical specificities that prompt transcultural transformations, the ‘Travelling Theory’ essays offers a Vichian humanist reading of cultural production; in them, Said argues that theory is not given but made. In the first instance, it emanates out of and registers the sometimes urgent historical circumstances of its theorist.¶ Subsequently, he maintains, when other scholars take up the theory, they necessarily interpret it, additionally integrating their own social and historical experiences into it, so changing the theory and, often, authorizing it in the process. I want to suggest that Said’s bird’s eye view of the intellectual circuit through which theory travels, is received and modified can help us appreciate the movement of cultural memory. As with theory, cultural memories of trauma are lifted and separated from their individual source as they travel; they are mediated, transmitted and institutionalized in particular ways, depending on the structure of communication and communities in which they travel.¶ Said invites his readers to contemplate how the movement of theory transforms its meanings to such an extent that its significance to sociohistorical critique can be drastically curtailed. Using Luka´ cs’s writings on reification as an example, Said shows how a theory can lose the power of its original formulation as later scholars take it up and adapt it to their own historical circumstances. In Said’s estimation, Luka´ cs’s insurrectionary vision became subdued, even domesticated, the wider it circulated. Said is especially concerned to describe what happens when such theories come into contact with academic institutions, which impose through their own mode of producing cultural capital, a new value upon then. Said suggests that this authoritative status, which imbues the theory with ‘prestige and the authority of age’, further dulls the theory’s originally insurgent message.8 When Said returned to and revised his essay some ten years later, he changed the emphasis by highlighting the possibilities, rather than the limits, of travelling theory.¶ ‘Travelling Theory Reconsidered’, while brief and speculative, offers a look at the way Luka´ cs’s theory, transplanted into yet a different context, can ‘flame [ . . . ] out’ in a radical way.9 In particular, Said is interested in exploring what happens when intellectuals like Theodor Adorno and Franz Fanon take up Luka´ cs: they reignite the ‘fiery core’ of his theory in their critiques of capitalist alienation and French colonialism. Said is interested here in the idea that theory matters and that as it travels, it creates an ‘intellectual [ . . . ] community of a remarkable [ . . . ] affiliative’ kind.10 In contrast to his first essay and its emphasis on the degradation of theoretical ideas, Said emphasizes the way a travelling theory produces new understandings as well as new political tools to deal with violent conditions and disenfranchized subjects. Travelling theory becomes ‘an intransigent practice’ that goes beyond borrowing and adaption.11 As Said sees it, both Adorno and Fanon ‘refuse the emoluments offered by the Hegelian dialectic as stabilized into resolution by Luka´ cs’.12 Instead they transform Luka´ cs into their respective locales as ‘the theorist of permanent dissonance as understood by Adorno, [and] the critic of reactive nationalism as partially adopted by Fanon in colonial Algeria’.13¶ Said’s set of reflections on travelling theory, especially his later recuperative work, are important to any account of travelling trauma, since it is not only the problems of institutional subjugation that matter; additionally, we need to affirm the occurrence of transgressive possibilities, whether in the form of fleeting transcultural affinities or in the effort to locate the inherent tensions within a system where such travel occurs. What Said implicitly critiques in his 1984 essay is the negative effects of exchange, institutionalization and the increasing use-value of critical theory as it travels within the academic knowledge economy; in its travels, the theory becomes practically autonomous, uncoupled from the theorist who created it and the historical context from which it was produced. This seems to perfectly illustrate the international circuit of exchange and valuation that occurs in the trauma economy.¶ In Sacco’s The Fixer, for example, it is not theory, but memory, which travels from Bosnia to the West, as local traumas are turned into mainstream news and then circulated for consumption. By highlighting this mediation, The Fixer explicitly challenges the politics that make invisible the maneuvers of capitalist and neoimperial practices. Like Said, Sacco displays a concern with the dissemination and reproduction of information and its consequent effects in relation to what Said described as ‘the broader political world’.14 Said’s anxiety relates to the academic normativization of theory (a ‘tame academic substitution for the real thing’15), a transformation which, he claimed, would hamper its uses for society.¶ A direct line can be drawn from Said’s discussion of the circulation of discourse and its (non)political effects, and the international representation of the 1992–1995 Bosnian war. The Bosnian war existed as a guerre du jour, the successor to the first Gulf War, receiving saturation coverage and represented daily in the Western media. The sustained presence of the media had much to do with the proximity of the war to European cities and also with the spectacular visibility of the conflict, particularly as it intensified. The bloodiest conflict to have taken place in Europe since the Second World War, it displaced two million people and was responsible for over 150,000 civilian casualties.16 Yet despite global media coverage, no decisive international military or political action took place to suspend fighting or prevent ethnic cleansing in East Bosnia, until after the massacre of Muslim men and boys at Srebrenica in 1995. According to Gregory Kent, western perceptions about the war until then directed the lack of political will within the international community, since the event was interpreted, codified and dismissed as an ‘ethnic’, ‘civil’ war and ‘humanitarian crisis’, rather than an act of (Serbian) aggression against (Bosnian) civilians.17¶ The rather bizarre presence of a large international press corps, hungry for drama and yet comfortably ensconced in Sarajevo’s Holiday Inn amid the catastrophic siege of that city, prompted Jean Baudrillard to formulate his theory of the hyperreal. In an article for the Paris newspaper Libe´ration in 1993, Baudrillard writes of his anger at the international apathy towards the Bosnian crisis, denouncing it as a ‘spectral war’.18 He describes it as a ‘hyperreal hell’ not because the violence was in a not-so-distant space, but because of the way the Bosnians were ‘harassed by the [international] media and humanitarian agencies’.19 Given this extensive media coverage, it is important to evaluate the role of representative discourses in relation to violence and its after effects. To begin with, we are still unsure of the consequences of this saturation coverage, though scholars have since elaborated on the racism framing much of the media discourses on the Yugoslav wars.20 More especially, it is¶ the celebrity of the Bosnian war that makes a critical evaluation of its current status in today’s media cycle all the more imperative. Bosnia’s current invisibility is fundamentally related to a point Baudrillard makes towards the end of his essay: ‘distress, misery and suffering have become the raw goods’ circulating in a global age of ‘commiseration’.21 The ‘demand’ created by a market of a sympathetic, yet selfindulgent spectators propels the global travel of trauma (or rather, the memory of that trauma) precisely because Bosnian suffering has a ‘resale value on the futures markets’.22 To treat traumatic memory as currency not only acknowledges the fact that travelling memory is overdetermined by capitalism; more pertinently, it recognizes the global system through which traumatic memory travels and becomes subject to exchange and flux. To draw upon Marx: we can comprehend trauma in terms of its fungible properties, part of a social ‘relation [that is] constantly changing with time and place’.23 This is what I call the trauma economy. By trauma economy, I am thinking of economic, cultural, discursive and political structures that guide, enable and ultimately institutionalize the representation, travel and attention to certain traumas.¶ The Trauma Economy in Joe Sacco’s The Fixer Having introduced the idea of a trauma economy and how it might operate, I want to turn to Sacco because he is acutely conscious of the way representations of trauma circulate in an international system. His work exposes the infrastructure and logic of a trauma economy in war-torn Bosnia and so echoes some of the points made by Said about the movement of theory. As I examine Sacco’s critical assessment of the Bosnian war, I want to bear in mind Said’s discussion about the effects of travel on theory and, in particular, his two contrasting observations: first, that theory can become commodified and second, that theory enables unexpected if transient solidarities across cultures. The Fixer takes up the notion of trauma as transcultural capital and commodity, something Sacco has confronted in his earlier work on Bosnia.24 The Fixer focuses on the story of Neven, a Sarajevan local and the ‘fixer’ of the comic’s title, who sells his services to international journalists, including Sacco’s avatar. The comic is¶ set in 2001, in postwar Sarajevo and an ethnically partitioned and economically devastated Bosnia, but its narrative frequently flashes back to the conflict in the mid- 1990s, and to what has been described as ‘the siege within the siege’.25 This refers not just to Sarajevo’s three and a half year siege by Serb forces but also to its backstage: the concurrent criminalization of Sarajevo through the rise of a wartime black market economy from which Bosniak paramilitary groups profited and through which they consolidated their power over Sarajevan civilians. In these flashbacks, The Fixer addresses Neven’s experience of the war, first, as a sniper for one of the Bosniak paramilitary units and, subsequently, as a professional fixer for foreign visitors, setting them up with anything they need, from war stories and tours of local battle sites to tape recorders and prostitutes. The contemporary, postwar scenes detail the ambivalent friendship between Neven and Sacco’s comic avatar. In doing so, The Fixer spares little detail about the economic value of trauma: Neven’s career as a fixer after all is reliant on what Sacco terms the ‘flashy brutality of Sarajevo’s war’.26 Even Neven admits as much to his interlocutor, without irony, let alone compassion: ‘“When massacres happened,” Neven once told me, “those were the best times. Journalists from all over the world were coming here”’.27¶ The Fixer never allows readers to forget that Neven provides his services in exchange for hard cash. So while Neven provides vital – indeed for Sacco’s avatar often the only – access to the stories and traumas of the war, we can never be sure whether he is a reliable witness or merely an opportunistic salesman. His anecdotes have the whiff of bravura about them. He expresses pride in his military exploits, especially his role in a sortie that destroyed several Serb tanks (the actual number varies increasingly each time the tale is told). He tells Sacco that with more acquaintances like himself, he ‘could have broken the siege of Sarajevo’.28 Neven’s heroic selfpresentation is consistently undercut by other characters, including Sacco’s avatar, who ironically renames him ‘a Master in the School of Front-line Truth’ and even calls upon the reader to assess the situation. One Sarajevan local remembers Neven as having a ‘big imagination’29; others castigate him as ‘unstable’30; and those who have also fought in the war reject his claims outright, telling Sacco, ‘it didn’t happen’.31¶ For Sacco’s avatar though, Neven is ‘a godsend’.32 Unable to procure information from the other denizens of Sarajevo, he is delighted to accept Neven’s version of events: ‘Finally someone is telling me how it was – or how it almost was, or how it could have been – but finally someone in this town is telling me something’.33 This discloses the true value of the Bosnian war to the Western media: getting the story ‘right’ factually is less important than getting it ‘right’ affectively. The purpose is to extract a narrative that evokes an emotional (whether voyeuristic or empathetic) response from its audience. Here we see a good example of the way a traumatic memory circulates in the trauma economy, as it travels from its site of origin and into a fantasy of a reality. Neven’s mythmaking – whether motivated by economic opportunism, or as a symptom of his own traumatized psyche – reflects back to the international community a counter-version of mediated events and spectacular traumas that appear daily in the Western media. It is worth adding that his mythmaking only has value so long as it occurs within preauthorized media circuits.¶ When Neven attempts to bypass the international journalists and sell his story instead directly to a British magazine, the account of his wartime ‘action against the 43 tanks’ is rejected on the basis that they ‘don’t print fiction’.34 The privilege of revaluing and re-narrating the trauma is reserved for people like Sacco’s avatar, who has no trouble adopting a mythic and hyperbolic tone in his storytelling: ‘it is he, Neven, who has walked through the valley of the shadow of death and blown things up along the way’.35¶ Yet Neven’s urge to narrate, while indeed part of his job, is a striking contrast to the silence of other locals. When Sacco arrives in Sarajevo in 2001 for his follow-up story, he finds widespread, deliberate resistance to his efforts to gather first-hand testimonies. Wishing to uncover the city’s ‘terrible secrets’, Sacco finds his ‘research has stalled’, as locals either refuse to meet with him or cancel their appointments.36 The suspiciousness and hostility Sacco encounters in Sarajevo is a response precisely to the international demand for trauma of the 1990s. The mass media presence during the war did little to help the city’s besieged residents; furthermore, international journalists left once the drama of war subsided to ‘the last offensives grinding up the last of the last soldiers and civilians who will die in this war’.37 The media fascination¶ with Sarajevo’s humanitarian crisis was as intense as it was fleeting and has since been described as central to the ensuing ‘compassion fatigue’ of Western viewers.38 In contrast to this coverage, which focused on the casualties and victims of the war, The Fixer reveals a very different story: the rise of Bosniak paramilitary groups, their contribution (both heroic and criminal) to the war and their ethnic cleansing of non- Muslim civilians from the city. Herein lies the appeal of Neven, a Bosnian-Serb, who has fought under Bosnian- Muslim warlords defending Sarajevo and who considers himself a Bosnian citizen first before any other ethnic loyalty. For not only is Sacco ignorant about the muddled ethnic realities of the war, its moral ambiguities and its key players but he also wants to hear Neven’s shamelessly daring and dirty account of the war, however unreliable. As Sacco explains, he’s ‘a little enthralled, a little infatuated, maybe a little in love and what is love but a transaction’.39 Neven – a hardened war veteran – provides the goods, the first-hand experience of war and, for Sacco’s avatar, that is worth every Deutschemark, coffee and cigarette. He explains in a parenthetical remark to his implied reader: ‘I would be remiss if I let you think that my relationship with Neven is simply a matter of his shaking me down. Because Neven was the first friend I made in Sarajevo . . . [he’s] travelled one of the war’s dark roads and I’m not going to drop him till he tells me all about it’.40 Sacco’s assertion here suggests something more than a mutual exploitation. The word ‘friend’ describing Sacco’s relationship to Neven is quickly replaced by the word ‘drop’. Having sold his ‘raw goods’, Neven finds that the trauma economy in the postwar period has already devalued his experience by disengaging with Bosnia’s local traumas. As Sacco suggests, ‘the war moved on and left him behind [ . . . ] The truth is, the war quit Neven’.41 The Neven of 2001 is not the brash Neven of old, but a pasty-looking unemployed forty-year old and recovering alcoholic, who takes pills to prevent his ‘anxiety attacks’.42 His wartime actions lay heavily on his conscience, despite his efforts to ‘stash [ . . . ] deep’ his bad memories.43 The Fixer leaves us with an ironic fact: Neven, who has capitalized on trauma during the war, is now left traumatized and without capital in the postwar situation.¶ Juxtaposing Traumas in a Global Age¶ Sacco’s depiction of the trauma economy certainly highlights the question of power and exploitation, since so many of the interactions between locals and international visitors are shaped by the commodity market of traumatic memories. And while The Fixer provides a new perspective of the Bosnian war, excoriating the profit-seeking objectives of both the media and the Bosnian middle-men amid life-altering events, its general point about the capitalistic vicissitudes of the trauma economy is not significantly different from that sustained in the narratives of Aleksandar Hemon, Rajiv Chandrasekaran or Art Spiegelman.44What distinguishes Sacco’s work is the way it also picks up the possibility described in Edward Said’s optimistic re-reading of travel: the potential for affiliation. 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Juxtaposing Traumas in a Global Age Sacco’s depiction of the trauma economy certainly highlights the question of power and exploitation, since so many of the interactions between locals and international visitors are shaped by the commodity market of traumatic memories. And while The Fixer provides a new perspective of the Bosnian war, excoriating the profit-seeking objectives of both the media and the Bosnian middle-men amid life-altering events, its general point about the capitalistic vicissitudes of the trauma economy is not significantly different from that sustained in the narratives of Aleksandar Hemon,¶ Rajiv Chandrasekaran or Art Spiegelman.44What distinguishes Sacco’s work is the way it also picks up the possibility described in Edward Said’s optimistic re-reading of travel: the potential for affiliation. As I see it, Sacco’s criticism isn’t leveled merely at the moral grey zone created during the Bosnian war: he is more interested in the framework of representations themselves that mediate, authorize, commemorate and circulate trauma in different ways. suffering’.48 Instead, the panel places Sacco’s (Anglophone) audience within the familiar, emotional context of the September 11, 2001 attacks, with their attendant anxieties, shock and grief and so contributes to a blurring of the hierarchical lines set up between different horrors across different spaces. Consequently, I do not see Sacco’s juxtaposition of traumas as an instance of what Michael Rothberg calls, ‘competitive memory’, the victim wars that pit winners against losers.49 Sacco gestures towards a far more complex idea that takes into account the highly mediated presentations of both traumas, which nonetheless evokes Rothberg’s notion of multidirectional memory by affirming the solidarities of trauma alongside their differences. In drawing together these two disparate events, Sacco’s drawings echo the critical consciousness in Said’s ‘Travelling Theory’ essay. Rather than suggesting one trauma is, or should be, more morally legitimate than the other, Sacco is sharply attentive to the way trauma is disseminated and recognized in the political world. The attacks on theWorld Trade Centre, like the siege of Sarajevo, transformed into discursive form epitomize what might be called victim narratives. In this way, the United States utilized international sympathy (much of which was galvanized by the stunning footage of the airliners crashing into the towers) to launch a retaliatory campaign against Afghanistan and, later, Iraq. In contrast, Bosnia in 1992 faced a precarious future, having just proclaimed its independence. As we discover in The Fixer, prior to Yugoslavia’s break-up, Bosnia had been ordered to return its armaments to the Yugoslav National Army (JNA), which were then placed ‘into the hands of the rebel Serbs’, leaving the Bosnian government to ‘build an army almost from scratch’.50 The analogy between 9/11 and 1992 Sarajevo is stark: Sarajevo’s empty landscape in the panel emphasizes its defencelessness and isolation. The Fixer constantly reminds the reader about the difficulties of living under a prolonged siege in ‘a city that is cut off and being starved into submission’.51 In contrast, September 11, 2001 has attained immense cultural capital because of its status as a significant U.S. trauma. This fact is confirmed by its profound visuality, which crystallized the spectacle and site of trauma. Complicit in this process, the international press consolidated and legitimated the event’s symbolic power, by representing, mediating and dramatizing the trauma so that, as SlavojZ ˇ izˇek writes, the U.S. was elevated into ‘the sublime victim of Absolute Evil’.52 September 11 was constructed as an exceptional event, in terms of its irregular circumstances and the symbolic enormity both in the destruction of iconic buildings and in the attack on U.S. soil. Such a construction seeks to overshadow perhaps all recent international traumas and certainly all other U.S. traumas and sites of shock. Sacco’s portrayal, which locates September eleven in Sarajevo 1992, calls into question precisely this claim towards the singularity of any trauma. The implicit doubling and prefiguring of the 9/11 undercuts the exceptionalist rhetoric associated with the event. Sacco’s strategy encourages us to think outside of hegemonic epistemologies, where one trauma dominates and becomes more meaningful than others. Crucially, Sacco reminds his audience of the cultural imperialism that frames the spectacle of news and the designation of traumatic narratives in particular.¶ Postwar Bosnia and Beyond 2001 remains, then, both an accidental and a significant date in The Fixer. While the (Anglophone) world is preoccupied with a new narrative of trauma and a sense of historical rupture in a post 9/11 world, Bosnia continues to linger in a postwar limbo. Six years have passed since the war ended, but much of Bosnia’s day-to-day economy remains coded by international perceptions of the war. No longer a haven for aspiring journalists, Bosnia is now a thriving economy for international scholars of trauma and political theory, purveyors of thanotourism,53 UN peacekeepers and post-conflict nation builders (the ensemble of NGOs, charity and aid workers, entrepreneurs, contractors, development experts, and EU government advisors to the Office of the High Representative, the foreign overseer of the protectorate state that is Bosnia). On the other hand, many of Bosnia’s locals face a grim future, with a massive and everincreasing unemployment rate (ranging between 35 and 40%), brain-drain outmigration, and ethnic cantonments. I contrast these realities of 2001 because these circumstances – a flourishing economy at the expense of the traumatized population – ought to be seen as part of a trauma economy. The trauma economy, in other words, extends far beyond the purview of the Western media networks. In discussing the way traumatic memories travel along the circuits of the global media, I have described only a few of the many processes that transform traumatic events into fungible traumatic memories; each stage of that process represents an exchange that progressively reinterprets the memory, giving it a new value. Media outlets seek to frame the trauma of the Bosnian wars in ways that are consistent with the aims of pre-existing political or economic agendas; we see this in Sacco just as easily as in Ugresic’s assessment of how even a putatively liberal state like the Netherlands will necessarily inflect the value of one trauma over another. The point is that in this circulation, trauma is placed in a marketplace; the siege of Sarajevo, where an unscrupulous fixer can supply western reporters with the story they want to hear is only a concentrated example of a more general phenomenon. Traumatic memories are always in circulation, being revalued in each transaction according to the logic of supply and demand. Victim and witness; witness and reporter; reporter and audience; producer and consumer: all these parties bargain to suit their different interests. The sooner we acknowledge the influence of these interests, the closer we will come to an understanding of how trauma travels.

## Case

#### No impact

**Dickinson**, associate professor of history – UC Davis, **‘4**

(Edward, Central European History, 37.1)

In short, the continuities between early twentieth-century biopolitical discourse and the practices of the welfare state in our own time are unmistakable. Both are instances of the “disciplinary society” and of biopolitical, regulatory, social-engineering modernity, and they share that genealogy with more authoritarian states, including the National Socialist state, but also fascist Italy, for example. And it is certainly fruitful to view them from this very broad perspective. **But that analysis can easily become superficial and misleading**, because it obfuscates the **profoundly different** strategic and local dynamics of power in the two kinds of regimes. Clearly the democratic welfare state is not only formally but also substantively **quite different from totalitarianism.** Above all, again, it has nowhere developed the fateful, radicalizing dynamic that characterized National Socialism (or for that matter Stalinism), the psychotic logic that leads from economistic population management to mass murder. Again, there is always the potential for such a discursive regime to generate coercive policies. In those cases in which the regime of rights does not successfully produce “health,” such a system can —and historically does— create compulsory programs to enforce it. But again, there are political and policy potentials and constraints in such a structuring of biopolitics that are very different from those of National Socialist Germany. Democratic biopolitical regimes require, enable, and incite a degree of self-direction and participation that is **functionally incompatible** with authoritarian or totalitarian structures. And this pursuit of biopolitical ends through a regime of democratic citizenship does appear, historically, to have imposed increasingly **narrow limits on coercive policies**, and to have generated a “logic” or imperative of increasing liberalization. Despite limitations imposed by political context and the slow pace of discursive change, I think this is the unmistakable message of the really very impressive waves of legislative and welfare reforms in the 1920s or the 1970s in Germany.90

Of course it is not yet clear whether this is an irreversible dynamic of such systems. Nevertheless, such regimes are characterized by sufficient degrees of autonomy (and of the potential for its expansion) for sufé cient numbers of people that I think it becomes useful to conceive of them as productive of a strategic coné guration of power relations that might fruitfully be analyzed as a condition of “liberty,” just as much as they are productive of constraint, oppression, or manipulation. At the very least, **totalitarianism cannot be the sole orientation point** for our understanding of biopolitics, the only end point of the logic of social engineering.

**This notion is not at all at odds with the core of Foucauldian** (and Peukertian) **theory.** Democratic welfare states are regimes of power/knowledge no less than early twentieth-century totalitarian states; these systems are not “opposites,” in the sense that they are two alternative ways of organizing the same thing. But they are two very different ways of organizing it. The concept “power” should not be read as a universal stiè ing night of oppression, manipulation, and entrapment, in which all political and social orders are grey, are essentially or effectively “the same.” Power is a set of social relations, in which individuals and groups have varying degrees of autonomy and effective subjectivity. And discourse is, as Foucault argued, “tactically polyvalent.” Discursive elements (like the various elements of biopolitics) can be combined in different ways to form parts of quite different strategies (like totalitarianism or the democratic welfare state); they cannot be assigned to one place in a structure, but rather circulate. The varying possible constellations of power in modern societies create “multiple modernities,” modern societies with quite **radically differing potentials.**91

#### Focus on exception depoliticizes violence, rendering it uncontestable.

Jef Huysmans 8, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) at the Open University, UK, The Jargon of Exception—On Schmitt, Agamben and the Absence of Political Society, International Political Sociology (2008) 2, 165–183

Even if one would argue that Agamben’s framing of the current political conditions are valuable for understanding important changes that have taken place in the twentieth century and that are continuing in the twenty ﬁrst, they also are to a considerable extent depoliticizing. Agamben’s work tends to guide the analysis to unmediated, factual life. For example, some draw on Agamben to highlight the importance of bodily strategies of resistance. One of the key examples is individual refugees protesting against their detention by sewing up lips and eyes. They exemplify how individualized naked life resists by deploying their bodily, biological condition against sovereign biopolitical powers (for example, Edkins and Pin-Fat 2004:15–17). I follow Adorno and others, however, that such a conception of bodily, naked life is not political. It ignores how this life only exists and takes on political form through various socioeconomic, technological, scientiﬁc, legal, and other mediations. For example, the images of the sewed-up eyelids and lips of the individualized and biologized refugees have no political signiﬁcance without being mediated by public media, intense mobilizations on refugee and asylum questions, contestations of human rights in the courts, etc. It is these mediations that are the object and structuring devices of political struggle. Reading the politics of exception as the central lens onto modern conceptions of politics, as both Agamben and Schmitt do, erases from the concept of politics a rich and constitutive history of sociopolitical struggles, traditions of thought linked to this history, and key sites and temporalities of politics as well as the central processes through which individualized bodily resistances gain their sociopolitical signiﬁcance.

#### The affirmative’s demand for a pure rejection of sovereignty results in scagegoating–the impact is massive violence

**Moreiras**, professor, romance studies and literature – Duke University, **‘4**

(Alberto, *CR: The New Centennial Review*, 4.3)

But Rasch remains a Schmittian, not a Benjaminian. For him, no interruption of the political principle of reason—the ultimate principle of political order, the nomos of the nomos, the principle of sovereign exception, which he persuasively shows to be a case of the logical law of the excluded middle (Rasch 2002, 38–42)—is possible **without** risking the collapse of the political into an eschatology of the end of the world, which is the same as an eschatology of radical origin: “to be liberated from the structure of sovereignty is to be returned to a natural state of innocence” (48). Rasch is suspicious of Benjamin’s—and Agamben’s—pure violence as the harbinger of a “completely new politics” that might in fact **accomplish** **nothing** but an exclusion of the political (38). As he says in a different essay, “the political does not exist to usher in the good life by eliminating social antagonism; rather, it exists to serve as the medium for an acceptably limited and therefore productive conflict in the inevitable absence of any final, universally accepted vision of the good life” (Rasch n.d., 30–31). Rasch opposes a politics of the katechon—a properly Schmittian politics of the containment of evil—to the **messianic** **politics** of the reestablishment of natural innocence that he detects in Agamben’s Homo Sacer.12 Is there, in fact, in Agamben’s State of Exception, an “appeal to the ontological hope” of “infinite perfectibility” (Rasch n.d., 29)? And, a fortiori, is that also what is behind Derrida’s Voyous? The crucial question here concerns the determination of a **practical** understanding of the political beyond every messianic delusion. Messianic delusion turns everypoliticsinto a kind of **ultrapolitics** whose political effectivity then **wavers between the inane and the catastrophic**. An alternative question is: are onto-theological politics the only possible politics for our age? R E A S O N B E YOND R E A S O N Autoimmunity is said to refer to “this strange illogical logic through which a living being can spontaneously destroy, in an autonomous fashion, that which, in it, is destined to protect it against the other, to immunize it against the intrusive aggression of the other” (Derrida 2003, 173). Autoimmunity is therefore a kind of “death drive” (215) that can be related to the structure of betrayal as self-betrayal, which, as we saw, Lacan considers a radical structure of the human relationship to being. For Lacan, the abandonment of the ethical imperative not to give ground on one’s desire is ultimately an accommodation to the real from which there is no return; the path back of the “ordinary man” into his own business is blocked once he has paid the price of accommodation to the service of goods and has betrayed the structure of his desire: “once one has crossed that boundary . . . there is no way back. It might be possible to do some repair work, but not to undo it” (Lacan 1992, 321). This betrayal formalizes politics—just as it formalizes religion—for Lacan. Lacanian politics, to the extent that they are understood to be a politics of the subject, are framed by a postrevolutionary service of goods, in which a sublimated jouissance waits infinitely, and uselessly, for the formation of the universal State. Is an alternative frame for contemporary politics available? Both Derrida and Agamben radicalize Schmitt’s intuition regarding the necessity of a transformation in the concept of the political given the exhaustion of the political order of modernity. The political order of modernity has exhausted itself through autoimmunitary developments— something that Schmitt anticipated both in his partisan theory, through the projection of the figure of the total counterpartisan that follows “the inevitability of a moral compulsion,” and in his investigation of the notion of a nomos of the earth, which reaches an unexpected arrest in the notion of the Kantian unjust enemy. If both Derrida and Agamben can be said to be Schmittian to a certain extent, in spite of their fundamental antagonism to the German thinker, it is precisely insofar as both of them take as point of departure for their investigations of political sovereignty some of Schmitt’s crucial theories. Derrida makes it very clear through a sort of disavowing avowal: “One did not have to wait for Schmitt to know that the sovereign is he who decides exceptionally and performatively on the exception, he who guards or gives himself the right to suspend the law; or to know that this juridico-political concept, like all the others, secularizes a theological heritage” (2003, 211–12). And Agamben of course makes Schmitt a crucial reference in both Homo Sacer and State of Exception.13 Both of them are interested, not, like Rasch, in a reassertion of sovereignty as the only possible pragmatic framing for a conceptualization of the political today, but rather in a dismantling of the claims of sovereignty as ultimate political claims, or as the ultimate claims of the political. They want to explore the contemporary troubles of sovereignty, troubles in sovereignty—what Derrida can and does call in French mal de souveraineté (196). These troubles are autoimmunity troubles: sovereignty ultimately suffers from itself, as it is its action that ultimately dooms it to face, in a certain far-from-reassuring impotence, the absolute threat or the anomic terror of the real. Can we then think of politics not beyond sovereignty, but rather as not exhausted by the sovereign frame? Is there a position—a properly political position—that can establish a distance from sovereignty without dreaming, like the Lacanian ordinary man, of the messianic fulfillment of the universal State, when desire will coincide absolutely with itself (and when, therefore, there will be nothing but the sovereign, as sovereign desire)? If there is a position, if it is possible to work out a position that can think of sovereignty without being absolutely circumscribed by sovereignty, that position will have accomplished a derangement of onto-theology. It will not have gotten rid of it, just as it will not have gotten rid of sovereignty, but it will have displaced onto-theology, and its political translation as sovereignty theory, from the horizon of the political. Derrida uses the shorthand “nonsovereign god” for this possibility, echoing Heidegger but also displacing Heidegger.14 And Agamben talks about the liberation of anomy, as a solicitation of the deep historical compromise of violence and the law. If violence becomes the “thing” of politics for Agamben, this is so to the extent that “human action” must “rescind the link between violence and the law” in order to expose the violence of the law, rather than the lawfulness of violence (which is the Schmittian project). But the reference to human action is already revealing of a limit in Agamben’s project. Certainly human action is an unavoidable referent for politics. But Agamben is still under the Lacanian determination, if on the side of the hero. His project, a liberation of pure violence, is a tragic project to the extent that it leads the hero towards what Sophocles calls até. Of até Lacan says: “It is an irreplaceable little word. It designates the limit that human life can only briefly cross. The text of the Chorus is significant and insistent—ektos atas. Beyond this até, one can only spend a brief period of time, and that’s where Antigone wants to go. . . . One learns from Antigone’s own mouth testimony on the point she has reached: she literally cannot stand it any more. . . . She lives with the memory of the intolerable drama of the one whose descendence has just been destroyed in the figure of her two brothers. She lives in the house of Creon; she is subject to his law; and that is something she cannot bear” (Lacan 1992, 262–63). Agamben, like the tragic hero, situates himself “with relation to the goal of desire” (265), namely, in the relentless pursuit of a liberation from the sovereign law that has created a permanent state of exception: the ineluctable violence of the state as the house of Creon. **To liberate pure violence in order to destroy the law**: of this one could say what Lacan says of the tragic hero, namely, “he knows what he is doing. He always manages to cause things to come crashing down on his head” (275). Agamben defines the contemporary state as one in which “the norm rules, but it is not applied (it does not have force) and . . . acts that have no legal value acquire the force. . . . The state of exception is an anomic space, where what is set in place is a force of law without law . . . , where act and power are radically separated” (52). If the contemporary state, the contemporary embodiment of the law, is absolute exception, understood as absolute oppression, and if only a liberation of violence from its lawful capture can release an appropriate politics, this politics’ human action, like Antigone, stands in “as a pure and simple relationship of the human being to that of which he miraculously happens to be the bearer, namely, the signifying cut that confers on him the indomitable power of being what he is in the face of everything that may oppose him. Anything at all may be invoked in connection with this, and that’s what the Chorus does in the fifth act when it evokes the god that saves. Dionysos is this god; otherwise why would he appear here? There is nothing Dionysiac about the act and the countenance of Antigone. Yet she pushes to the limit the realization of something that might be called the pure and simple desire of death as such. She incarnates that desire” (282). A politics of heroic desire, in the ineluctable fulfillment of the ethical imperative, might be conceived to be an antisovereign politics, but it is still a subjective politics of catastrophe. At the limit, the hero does not abandon the horizon of sovereignty: **the hero simply inverts i**t, and puts it at the service of an intensely mystical jouissance, “the passage that allows access to the justice that one of Benjamin’s posthumous fragments defines as a state of the world in which it appears as an absolutely inappropriatable and unjuridifiable good” (Agamben 2003, 83).

#### The drug war is key to avoiding Mexican state collapse

Bonner, 10

(Senior Principal of the Sentinel HS Group. He was Administrator of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration from 1990 to 1993 and Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection from 2001 to 2005, The New Cocaine Cowboys, Foreign Affairs, July/August)

The recent headlines from Mexico are disturbing: U.S. consular official gunned down in broad daylight; Rancher murdered by Mexican drug smuggler; Bomb tossed at U.S. consulate in Nuevo Laredo. This wave of violence is eerily reminiscent of the carnage that plagued Colombia 20 years ago, and it is getting Washington’s attention. **Mexico is in the throes of a battle against powerful drug cartels, the outcome of which will determine who controls the country’s law enforcement, judicial, and political institutions**. It will decide whether the state will destroy the cartels and put an end to the culture of impunity they have created. Mexico could become a first-world country one day, but it will never achieve that status until it breaks the grip these criminal organizations have over all levels of government and strengthens its law enforcement and judicial institutions. It cannot do one without doing the other. Destroying the drug cartels is not an impossible task. Two decades ago, Colombia was faced with a similar—and in many ways more daunting—struggle. In the early 1990s, many Colombians, including police officers, judges, presidential candidates, and journalists, were assassinated by the most powerful and fearsome drug-trafficking organizations the world has ever seen: the Cali and Medellín cartels. Yet within a decade, the Colombian government defeated them, with Washington’s help. The United States played a vital role in supporting the Colombian government, and it should do the same for Mexico. The stakes in Mexico are high. If the cartels win, these criminal enterprises will continue to operate outside the state and the rule of law, undermining Mexico’s democracy. The outcome matters for the United States as well—if the drug cartels succeed, the United States will share a 2,000-mile border with a narcostate controlled by powerful transnational drug cartels that threaten the stability of Central and South America.

#### Collapses US hegemony

Westhawk, 8

(Advisor to the State Department and the National Intelligence Council on irregular warfare issues; Editor of the Small Arms Journal; Former Director of Research at the Fremont Group, 12/21, "Now that would change everything," http://westhawk.blogspot.com/2008/12/now-that-would-change-everything.html)

Yes, **the “rapid collapse” of Mexico would change everything with respect to the global security environment**. Such a collapse would have enormous humanitarian, constitutional, economic, cultural, and security implications for the U.S. It would seem the U.S. federal government, indeed American society at large, **would have little ability to focus serious attention on much else in the world**. The hypothetical collapse of Pakistan is a scenario that has already been well discussed. In the worst case, the U.S. would be able to isolate itself from most effects emanating from south Asia. However, there would be no running from a Mexican collapse.

#### American power solves nuclear war and dampens all conflict

Barnett ‘11

Thomas, American military geostrategist and Chief Analyst at Wikistrat, “The New Rules: Leadership Fatigue Puts U.S., and Globalization, at Crossroads,” <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/8099/the-new-rules-leadership-fatigue-puts-u-s-and-globalization-at-crossroads>, AM

Let me be more blunt: As the guardian of globalization, **the U.S. military has been the greatest force for peace the world has ever known**. Had America been removed from the global dynamics that governed the 20th century, the mass murder never would have ended. Indeed, it's entirely conceivable **there would** now **be no** identifiable **human civilization left**, **once nuclear weapons entered the** killing **equation**. But the world did not keep sliding down that path of perpetual war. Instead, America stepped up and changed everything by ushering in our now-**perpetual great-power peace**. We introduced the international liberal trade order known as globalization and played loyal Leviathan over its spread. What resulted was the collapse of empires, an explosion of democracy, the persistent spread of human rights, the liberation of women, the doubling of life expectancy, a roughly 10-fold increase in adjusted global GDP and a profound and persistent reduction in battle deaths from state-based conflicts. That is what American "hubris" actually delivered. Please remember that the next time some TV pundit sells you the image of "unbridled" American military power as the cause of global disorder instead of its cure. With self-deprecation bordering on self-loathing, we now imagine a post-American world that is anything but. Just watch who scatters and who steps up as the Facebook revolutions erupt across the Arab world. While we might imagine ourselves the status quo power, we remain the world's most vigorously revisionist force. As for the sheer "evil" that is our military-industrial complex, again, let's examine what the world looked like before that establishment reared its ugly head. The last great period of global structural change was the first half of the 20th century, a period that saw a death toll of about 100 million across **two world wars**. That comes to an average of 2 million deaths a year in a world of approximately 2 billion souls. Today, with far more comprehensive worldwide reporting, researchers report an average of less than 100,000 battle deaths annually in a world fast approaching 7 billion people. Though admittedly crude, these calculations suggest a 90 percent absolute drop and a **99 percent** relative drop in deaths due to war. We are clearly headed for a world order characterized by multipolarity, something the American-birthed system was designed to both encourage and accommodate. But given how things turned out the last time we collectively faced such a fluid structure, we would do well to keep U.S. power, in all of its forms, deeply embedded in the geometry to come.

#### The ballot should prefer the team that avoids the fastest internal link to extinction—their framework is politically disempowering and makes the worst types of impacts more likely

Bostrom 2 (Nick Bostrom, PhD and Professor at Oxford University, March, 2002 [Journal of Evolution and Technology, vol 9] <http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html>)

Previous sections have argued that the combined probability of the existential risks is very substantial. Although there is still a fairly broad range of differing estimates that responsible thinkers could make, it is nonetheless arguable that because the negative utility of an existential disaster is so enormous, the objective of reducing existential risks should be a dominant consideration when acting out of concern for humankind as a whole. It may be useful to adopt the following rule of thumb for moral action; we can call it Maxipok: Maximize the probability of an okay outcome, where an “okay outcome” is any outcome that avoids existential disaster. At best, this is a rule of thumb, a prima facie suggestion, rather than a principle of absolute validity, since there clearly are other moral objectives than preventing terminal global disaster. Its usefulness consists in helping us to get our priorities straight. Moral action is always at risk to diffuse its efficacy on feel-good projects[[24]](http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html" \l "_ftn24#_ftn24" \o ") rather on serious work that has the best chance of fixing the worst ills. The cleft between the feel-good projects and what really has the greatest potential for good is likely to be especially great in regard to existential risk. Since the goal is somewhat abstract and since existential risks don’t currently cause suffering in any living creature[[25]](http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html" \l "_ftn25#_ftn25" \o "), there is less of a feel-good dividend to be derived from efforts that seek to reduce them. This suggests an offshoot moral project, namely to reshape the popular moral perception so as to give more credit and social approbation to those who devote their time and resources to benefiting humankind via global safety compared to other philanthropies. Maxipok, a kind of satisficing rule, is different from Maximin (“Choose the action that has the best worst-case outcome.”)[[26]](http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html" \l "_ftn26#_ftn26" \o "). Since we cannot completely eliminate existential risks (at any moment we could be sent into the dustbin of cosmic history by the advancing front of a vacuum phase transition triggered in a remote galaxy a billion years ago) using maximin in the present context has the consequence that we should choose the act that has the greatest benefits under the assumption of impending extinction. In other words, maximin implies that we should all start partying as if there were no tomorrow. While that option is indisputably attractive, it seems best to acknowledge that there just might be a tomorrow, especially if we play our cards right.

#### Try or die for our framework- util is inevitable

**Green 02** (Assistant Professor Department of Psychology Harvard University, Joshua, November 2002 "The Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Truth About Morality And What To Do About It", 314)

Some people who talk of balancing rights may think there is an algorithm for deciding which rights take priority over which. If that’s what we mean by 302 “balancing rights,” then we are wise to shun this sort of talk. Attempting to solve moral problems using a complex deontological algorithm is dogmatism at its most esoteric, but dogmatism all the same. However, it’s likely that when some people talk about “balancing competing rights and obligations” they are already thinking like consequentialists in spite of their use of deontological language. Once again, what deontological language does best is express the thoughts of people struck by strong, emotional moral intuitions: “It doesn’t matter that you can save five people by pushing him to his death. To do this would be a violation of his rights!”19 That is why angry protesters say things like, “Animals Have Rights, Too!” rather than, “Animal Testing: The Harms Outweigh the Benefits!” Once again, rights talk captures the apparent clarity of the issue and absoluteness of the answer. But sometimes rights talk persists long after the sense of clarity and absoluteness has faded. One thinks, for example, of the thousands of children whose lives are saved by drugs that were tested on animals and the “rights” of those children. One finds oneself balancing the “rights” on both sides by asking how many rabbit lives one is willing to sacrifice in order to save one human life, and so on, and at the end of the day one’s underlying thought is as thoroughly consequentialist as can be, despite the deontological gloss. And what’s wrong with that? Nothing, except for the fact that the deontological gloss adds nothing and furthers the myth that there really are “rights,” etc. Best to drop it. When deontological talk gets sophisticated, the thought it represents is either dogmatic in an esoteric sort of way or covertly consequentialist.

#### Biopower doesn’t culminate in genocide

Ojakangas 2005 (Mika, Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, Finland, FOUCAULT STUDIES, May, v2, p.26-27)

For Foucault, the coexistence in political structures of large destructive mechanisms and institutions oriented toward the care of individual life was something puzzling: "It is one of the central antinomies of our political reason." However, it was an antinomy precisely because in principle the sovereign power and bio-power are mutually exclusive. How is it possible that the care of individual life paves the way for mass slaughters? Although Foucault could never give a satisfactory answer to this question, he was convinced that mass slaughters are not the effect or the logical conclusion of bio-political rationality. 1 am also convinced about that. To be sure, it can be argued that sovereign power and bio-power are reconciled within the modern state, which legitimates killing by biopolitical arguments. Especially, it can be argued that these powers are reconciled in the Third Reich in which they seemed to "coincide exactly". To my mind, however, neither the modern state nor the Third Reich - in which the monstrosity of the modem state is crystallized - are the syntheses of the sovereign power and biopower. but, rather the institutional loci of their irreconcilable tension. This is, I believe, what Foucault meant when he wrote about their "demonic combination". In fact, the history of modern Western societies would be quite incomprehensible without taking into account that there exists a form of power which refrains from killing but which nevertheless is capable of directing people’s lives. The effectiveness of biopower can be seen lying precisely in that it refrains and withdraws before every demand of killing, even though these demands would derive from the demand of justice. In biopolitical societies, according to Foucault, capital punishment could not be maintained except by invoking less the enormity of the crime itself than the monstrosity of the criminal: "One had the right to kill those who represented a kind of biological danger to others." However, given that the "right to kill" is precisely a sovereign right, it can be argued that the biopolitical societies analyzed by Foucault were not entirely biopolitical. Perhaps, there neither has been nor can be a society that is entirely biopolitical. Nevertheless, the fact is that present-dav European societies have abolished capital punishment. In them, there are no longer exceptions. It is the very “right to kill" that has been called into question. However, it is not called into question because of enlightened moral sentiments, but rather because of the deplovment of bio-political thinking and practice.