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#### Interpretation and violation --- the affirmative should defend the desirability of topical government action

#### “United States Federal Government should” means the debate is solely about the outcome of a policy established by governmental means

**Ericson 3** (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.

#### Vote neg

#### 1) 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

**Steinberg and Freeley ‘13**

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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.

#### 2) Switch side debate is a necessary corrective to imperialism---their mode of ethical absolutism recreates “with us or against us” Bush-style binaries which makes dogmatism more likely

**Mitchell et al 7** - Gordon Mitchell, Professor of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh, et al (Eric English, Stephen Llano, Catherine E. Morrison, John Rief & Carly Woods, Graduate students in Communication at the University of Pittsburgh), June 2007, Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 223-225¶ Second, while the pedagogical benefits of switch-side debating for participants are compelling,10 some worry that the technique may perversely and unwittingly serve the ends of an aggressively militaristic foreign policy. In the context of the 1954 controversy, Ronald Walter Greene and Darrin Hicks suggest that the articulation of the debate community as a zone of dissent against McCarthyist tendencies developed into a larger and somewhat uncritical affirmation of switch-side debate as a ‘‘technology’’ of liberal participatory democracy. This technology is part and parcel of the post-McCarthy ethical citizen, prepared to discuss issues from multiple viewpoints. The problem for Greene and Hicks is that this notion of citizenship becomes tied to a normative conception of American democracy that justifies imperialism. They write, ‘‘The production and management of this field of governance allows liberalism to trade in cultural technologies in the global cosmopolitan marketplace at the same time as it creates a field of intervention to transform and change the world one subject (regime) at a time.’’11 Here, Greene and Hicks argue that this new conception of liberal governance, which epitomizes the ethical citizen as an individual trained in the switch-side technique, serves as a normative tool for judging other polities and justifying forcible regime change. One need look only to the Bush administration’s framing of war as an instrument of democracy promotion to grasp how the switch-side technique can be appropriated as a justification for violence.¶ It is our position, however, that rather than acting as a cultural technology expanding American exceptionalism, switch-side debating originates from a civic attitude that serves as a bulwark against fundamentalism of *all* stripes. Several prominent voices reshaping the national dialogue on homeland security have come from the academic debate community and draw on its animating spirit of critical inquiry. For example, Georgetown University law professor Neal Katyal served as lead plaintiff’s counsel in Hamdan, which challenged post-9/11 enemy combat definitions. 12 The foundation for Katyal’s winning argument in Hamdan was laid some four years before, when he collaborated with former intercollegiate debate champion Laurence Tribe on an influential Yale Law Journal addressing a similar topic.13 Tribe won the National Debate Tournament in 1961 while competing as an undergraduate debater for Harvard University. Thirty years later, Katyal represented Dartmouth College at the same tournament and finished third. The imprint of this debate training is evident in Tribe and Katyal’s contemporary public interventions, which are characterized by meticulous research, sound argumentation, and a staunch commitment to democratic principles. Katyal’s reflection on his early days of debating at Loyola High School in Chicago’s North Shore provides a vivid illustration. ‘‘I came in as a shy freshman with dreams of going to medical school. Then Loyola’s debate team opened my eyes to a different world: one of argumentation and policy.’’ As Katyal recounts, ‘‘the most important preparation for my career came from my experiences as a member of Loyola’s debate team.’’14¶ The success of former debaters like Katyal, Tribe, and others in challenging the dominant dialogue on homeland security points to the efficacy of academic debate as a training ground for future advocates of progressive change. Moreover, a robust understanding of the switch-side technique and the classical liberalism which underpins it would help prevent misappropriation of the technique to bolster suspect homeland security policies. ¶ For buried within an inner-city debater’s files is a secret threat to absolutism: the refusal to be classified as ‘‘with us or against us,’’ the embracing of intellectual experimentation in an age of orthodoxy, and reflexivity in the face of fundamentalism. But by now, the irony of our story should be apparent\*the more effectively academic debating practice can be focused toward these ends, the greater the proclivity of McCarthy’s ideological heirs to brand the activity as a ‘‘weapon of mass destruction.’’ ¶ immediately tyrannical, far more immediately damaging to either liberal or participatory democracy, than the ritualized requirements that students occasionally take the opposite side of what they believe. Third, as I have suggested and will continue to suggest, while a debate project requiring participants to understand and often "speak for" opposing points of view may carry a great deal of liberal baggage, it is at its core a project more ethically deliberative than institutionally liberal. Where Hicks and Greene see debate producing "the liberal citizen-subject," I see debate at least having the potential to produce "the deliberative human being." The fact that some academic debaters are recruited by the CSIS and the CIA does not undermine this thesis. Absent healthy debate programs, these think-tanks and government agencies would still recruit what they saw as the best and brightest students. And absent a debate community that rewards anti-institutional political rhetoric as much as liberal rhetoric, those students would have little-to-no chance of being exposed to truly oppositional ideas. Moreover, if we allow ourselves to believe that it is "culturally imperialist" to help other peoples build institutions of debate and deliberation, we not only ignore living political struggles that occur in every culture, but we fall victim to a dangerous ethnocentrism in holding that "they do not value deliberation like we do." If the argument is that our participation in fostering debate communities abroad greases the wheels of globalization, the correct response, in debate terminology, is that such globalization is non-unique, inevitable, and there is only a risk that collaborating across cultures in public debate and deliberation will foster resistance to domination—just as debate accomplishes wherever it goes. Indeed, Andy Wallace, in a recent article, suggests that Islamic fundamentalism is a byproduct of the colonization of the lifeworld of the Middle East; if this is true, then one solution would be to foster cross-cultural deliberation among people on both sides of the cultural divide willing to question their own preconceptions of the social good. Hicks and Greene might be correct insofar as elites in various cultures can either forbid or reappropriate deliberation, but for those outside of that institutional power, democratic discussion would have a positively subversive effect.

#### 3) Pragmatic policy discussion – ignoring pragmatic policy details leaves the Left completely unequipped to prevent domination

**McClean 1** (David E., Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy, http://www.american-philosophy.org/archives/past\_conference\_programs/pc2001/discussion%20papers/david\_mcclean.htm)

I would like to suggest that it is time for American social critics who are enamored with this group, those who actually want to be relevant, to recognize that they have a disease, and a disease regarding which I myself must remember to stay faithful to my own twelve step program of recovery. The disease is the need for elaborate theoretical "remedies" wrapped in neological and multi-syllabic jargon. These elaborate theoretical remedies are more "interesting, " to be sure, than the pragmatically settled questions about what shape democracy should take in various contexts, or whether private property should be protected by the state, or regarding our basic human nature (described, if not defined (heaven forbid!), in such statements as "We don't like to starve" and "We like to speak our minds without fear of death" and "We like to keep our children safe from poverty"). As Rorty puts it, "When one of today's academic leftists says that some topic has been 'inadequately theorized,' you can be pretty certain that he or she is going to drag in either philosophy of language, or Lacanian psychoanalysis, or some neo-Marxist version of economic determinism. . . . These futile attempts to philosophize one's way into political relevance are a symptom of what happens when a Left retreats from activism and adopts a spectatorial approach to the problems of its country. Disengagement from practice produces theoretical hallucinations"(italics mine).(1) Or as John Dewey put it in his The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy, "I believe that philosophy in America will be lost between chewing a historical cud long since reduced to woody fiber, or an apologetics for lost causes, . . . . or a scholastic, schematic formalism, unless it can somehow bring to consciousness America's own needs and its own implicit principle of successful action." Those who suffer or have suffered from this disease Rorty refers to as the Cultural Left, which left is juxtaposed to the Political Left that Rorty prefers and prefers for good reason. Another attribute of the Cultural Left is that its members fancy themselves pure culture critics who view the successes of America and the West, rather than some of the barbarous methods for achieving those successes, as mostly evil, and who view anything like national pride as equally evil even when that pride is tempered with the knowledge and admission of the nation's shortcomings. In other words, the Cultural Left, in this country, too often dismiss American society as beyond reform and redemption. And Rorty correctly argues that this is a disastrous conclusion, i.e. disastrous for the Cultural Left. I think it may also be disastrous for our social hopes, as I will explain. Leftist American culture critics might put their considerable talents to better use if they bury some of their cynicism about America's social and political prospects and help forge public and political possibilities in a spirit of determination to, indeed, achieve our country - the country of Jefferson and King; the country of John Dewey and Malcom X; the country of Franklin Roosevelt and Bayard Rustin, and of the later George Wallace and the later Barry Goldwater. To invoke the words of King, and with reference to the American society, the time is always ripe to seize the opportunity to help create the "beloved community," one woven with the thread of agape into a conceptually single yet diverse tapestry that shoots for nothing less than a true intra-American cosmopolitan ethos, one wherein both same sex unions and faith-based initiatives will be able to be part of the same social reality, one wherein business interests and the university are not seen as belonging to two separate galaxies but as part of the same answer to the threat of social and ethical nihilism. We who fancy ourselves philosophers would do well to create from within ourselves and from within our ranks a new kind of public intellectual who has both a hungry theoretical mind and who is yet capable of seeing the need to move past high theory to other important questions that are less bedazzling and "interesting" but more important to the prospect of our flourishing - questions such as "How is it possible to develop a citizenry that cherishes a certain hexis, one which prizes the character of the Samaritan on the road to Jericho almost more than any other?" or "How can we square the political dogma that undergirds the fantasy of a missile defense system with the need to treat America as but one member in a community of nations under a "law of peoples?" The new public philosopher might seek to understand labor law and military and trade theory and doctrine as much as theories of surplus value; the logic of international markets and trade agreements as much as critiques of commodification, and the politics of complexity as much as the politics of power (all of which can still be done from our arm chairs.) This means going down deep into the guts of our quotidian social institutions, into the grimy pragmatic details where intellectuals are loathe to dwell but where the officers and bureaucrats of those institutions take difficult and often unpleasant, imperfect decisions that affect other peoples' lives, and it means making honest attempts to truly understand how those institutions actually function in the actual world before howling for their overthrow commences. This might help keep us from being slapped down in debates by true policy pros who actually know what they are talking about but who lack awareness of the dogmatic assumptions from which they proceed.

#### Decision-making is the most portable and flexible skill—key to all facets of life and advocacy – means we turn case

**Steinberg and Freeley ‘13**

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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.

#### **This is independently a voting issue for fairness – the only thing we are ready to debate is affs that instrumentally defend the topic – they justify an infinite number of other ways to “affirm the topic” that we can’t predict or negate – this makes debate impossible which undermines participation and fun**

#### Our model of debate is process, not product – decision-making is learned in a safe space of competing thought experiments

**Hanghoj 08** Thorkild Hanghøj, Copenhagen, 2008 Since this PhD project began in 2004, the present author has been affiliated with DREAM (Danish Research Centre on Education and Advanced Media Materials), which is located at the Institute of Literature, Media and Cultural Studies at the University of Southern Denmark. Research visits have taken place at the Centre for Learning, Knowledge, and Interactive Technologies (L-KIT), the Institute of Education at the University of Bristol and the institute formerly known as Learning Lab Denmark at the School of Education, University of Aarhus, where I currently work as an assistant professor. http://static.sdu.dk/mediafiles/Files/Information\_til/Studerende\_ved\_SDU/Din\_uddannelse/phd\_hum/afhandlinger/2009/ThorkilHanghoej.pdf

Joas’ re-interpretation of Dewey’s pragmatism as a “theory of situated creativity” raises a critique of humans as purely rational agents that navigate instrumentally through meansends- schemes (Joas, 1996: 133f). This critique is particularly important when trying to understand how games are enacted and validated within the realm of educational institutions that by definition are inscribed in the great modernistic narrative of “progress” where nation states, teachers and parents expect students to acquire specific skills and competencies (Popkewitz, 1998; cf. chapter 3). However, as Dewey argues, the actual doings of educational gaming cannot be reduced to rational means-ends schemes. Instead, the situated interaction between teachers, students, and learning resources are played out as contingent re-distributions of means, ends and ends in view, which often make classroom contexts seem “messy” from an outsider’s perspective (Barab & Squire, 2004). 4.2.3. Dramatic rehearsal The two preceding sections discussed how Dewey views play as an imaginative activity of educational value, and how his assumptions on creativity and playful actions represent a critique of rational means-end schemes. For now, I will turn to Dewey’s concept of dramatic rehearsal, which assumes that social actors deliberate by projecting and choosing between various scenarios for future action. Dewey uses the concept dramatic rehearsal several times in his work but presents the most extensive elaboration in Human Nature and Conduct: Deliberation is a dramatic rehearsal (in imagination) of various competing possible lines of action… [It] is an experiment in finding out what the various lines of possible action are really like (...) Thought runs ahead and foresees outcomes, and thereby avoids having to await the instruction of actual failure and disaster. An act overtly tried out is irrevocable, its consequences cannot be blotted out. An act tried out in imagination is not final or fatal. It is retrievable (Dewey, 1922: 132-3). This excerpt illustrates how Dewey views the process of decision making (deliberation) through the lens of an imaginative drama metaphor. Thus, decisions are made through the imaginative projection of outcomes, where the “possible competing lines of action” are resolved through a thought experiment. Moreover, Dewey’s compelling use of the drama metaphor also implies that decisions cannot be reduced to utilitarian, rational or mechanical exercises, but that they have emotional, creative and personal qualities as well. Interestingly, there are relatively few discussions within the vast research literature on Dewey of his concept of dramatic rehearsal. A notable exception is the phenomenologist Alfred Schütz, who praises Dewey’s concept as a “fortunate image” for understanding everyday rationality (Schütz, 1943: 140). Other attempts are primarily related to overall discussions on moral or ethical deliberation (Caspary, 1991, 2000, 2006; Fesmire, 1995, 2003; Rönssön, 2003; McVea, 2006). As Fesmire points out, dramatic rehearsal is intended to describe an important phase of deliberation that does not characterise the whole process of making moral decisions, which includes “duties and contractual obligations, short and long-term consequences, traits of character to be affected, and rights” (Fesmire, 2003: 70). Instead, dramatic rehearsal should be seen as the process of “crystallizing possibilities and transforming them into directive hypotheses” (Fesmire, 2003: 70). Thus, deliberation can in no way guarantee that the response of a “thought experiment” will be successful. But what it can do is make the process of choosing more intelligent than would be the case with “blind” trial-and-error (Biesta, 2006: 8). The notion of dramatic rehearsal provides a valuable perspective for understanding educational gaming as a simultaneously real and imagined inquiry into domain-specific scenarios. Dewey defines dramatic rehearsal as the capacity to stage and evaluate “acts”, which implies an “irrevocable” difference between acts that are “tried out in imagination” and acts that are “overtly tried out” with real-life consequences (Dewey, 1922: 132-3). This description shares obvious similarities with games as they require participants to inquire into and resolve scenario-specific problems (cf. chapter 2). On the other hand, there is also a striking difference between moral deliberation and educational game activities in terms of the actual consequences that follow particular actions. Thus, when it comes to educational games, acts are both imagined and tried out, but without all the real-life consequences of the practices, knowledge forms and outcomes that are being simulated in the game world. Simply put, there is a difference in realism between the dramatic rehearsals of everyday life and in games, which only “play at” or simulate the stakes and risks that characterise the “serious” nature of moral deliberation, i.e. a real-life politician trying to win a parliamentary election experiences more personal and emotional risk than students trying to win the election scenario of The Power Game. At the same time, the lack of real-life consequences in educational games makes it possible to design a relatively safe learning environment, where teachers can stage particular game scenarios to be enacted and validated for educational purposes. In this sense, educational games are able to provide a safe but meaningful way of letting teachers and students make mistakes (e.g. by giving a poor political presentation) and dramatically rehearse particular “competing possible lines of action” that are relevant to particular educational goals (Dewey, 1922: 132). Seen from this pragmatist perspective, the educational value of games is not so much a question of learning facts or giving the “right” answers, but more a question of exploring the contingent outcomes and domain-specific processes of problem-based scenarios.

### 1nc

#### The criticism of the limit of rationalism, universalism and objectivity encourages epistemological pluralism – this is seized on by conservatives to justify and project their radical ideologies.

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We all know the Enlightenment story, but this article recounts -- and criticizes -- the rather surprising ending that is currently in vogue. Once upon a time, reason replaced faith as the guiding epistemology. In response, religion became largely rational itself, questioning the sharp distinction between faith and reason. [n6](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n6) Despite occasional upsurges, religiosity of the traditional, pre-Enlightenment, antirational kind gradually diminished in the Western world. Originally pure and acontextual, reason eventually came to encompass pragmatism or practical reason. [n7](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n7) For good or ill, the reason and empiricism of the Enlightenment -- modified and expanded by later thinkers -- reigned supreme. Occasional critics were discounted as primitive, naive, or uneducated, and rarely gained a foothold in universities. [n8](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n8)The first ripple in this once uncontroversial ending came from French postmodernists, whose ideas were quickly adopted in the 1980s by legal academics on the left. Critical legal scholars, radical feminists, critical race theorists, and gay and lesbian theorists [n9](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n9) began to attribute the Enlightenment epistemology to powerful straight white men, to suggest that others might have different and equally valid epistemologies, and to argue for a sort of epistemological pluralism. This approach has more recently been adopted by conservative scholars arguing that we ought to afford religion a more central place in our politics and culture. Enlightenment reason, they suggest, is just one of a number of alternative epistemologies, and there is no justification for privileging it over religious ways of knowing such as faith and revelation.Nor is this all merely abstract philosophical speculation: both the radicals and  [\*455]  the religionists use their critique of the Enlightenment to advocate very real legal change. Questions of epistemology are thus made central to issues of public policy, and the question becomes what sort of epistemology we should use in governance. After first describing the surprising congruence between the left and the right, I will suggest in this article that our history, the basic structure of our government, and serious practical considerations all point to Enlightenment epistemology as the one best suited for public governance.

#### Enlightenment reason is necessary to prevent a new wave of domestic conflicts. Epistemological pluralism leads to power as the only legitimate means for resolving disputes. The affirmative cedes the political sphere to those in power.

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Some, however, have suggested that the historical era of the Enlightenment was unique, and that epistemological pluralism would, in the modern world, create little danger of internecine warfare. [n139](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n139) This optimism overlooks one of the fundamental differences between rational and antirational epistemologies:  [\*479]  because the latter rest on faith rather than reason, they are likely to be impervious to persuasion and resistant to compromise. [n140](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n140) Moreover, without the skeptical cast of mind fostered by Enlightenment epistemology, antirational epistemologies -- especially religion, with its extrahuman source of authority -- are likely to be conducive to particularly deep conviction. Deep conviction, in turn, is a breeding ground for exactly the religious wars of previous centuries:In Abrams v. United States, Justice Holmes argued that a logical result of deep conviction is intolerance. As Dean Bollinger has added, failing to attempt to silence what one believes to be false might be seen as a sign of weak conviction. . . . To the zealous adherent, intolerance and persecution become, in a sense, the measure of her commitment to her religious beliefs. [n141](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n141)Even in the United States, where religion has largely been domesticated (as Michael Perry puts it), [n142](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n142) we have not been spared all of the violence associated with pre-Enlightenment religious wars. Although, as Perry points out, "we are not the former Yugoslavia or India," [n143](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n143) the Branch Davidians, the World Trade Center bombers, the abortion clinic killings, and the growth of various organizations -- on the left and the right, not all of them religious -- that use irrational arguments to reject and resist the authority of government, by violence if necessary, should give us pause before abandoning the fruits of the Enlightenment. [n144](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n144) Indeed, as one historian has pointed out: If we have now entered an era in which those on the right have been joined by some on the left in assailing reason as faulty because it does not correspond to the essential and incontestable truths they have come to know emotionally, or by virtue of their membership in particular groups, the prospects for deliberative democracy are bleak indeed. . . . If truth resides in difference and emotion, then war rather than persuasion is the only possible consequence of speaking such a truth to power. [n145](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n145) Even where violence is unlikely, the practical implications of epistemological pluralism are not likely to please the pluralists. For example, Gertrude Himmelfarb points out that different perspectives on history will inevitably conflict: "If the feminist historian can and should write history from her perspective . . . why should the black historian not do the same -- even if such a history might 'marginalize' women? And why not the working-class historian, who might marginalize both women and blacks?" [n146](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n146) Currently popular antirationalisms  [\*480]  seem indeed to have little in common except their rejection of the Enlightenment. Try to imagine a public school curriculum designed jointly by Bob and Alice Mozert (the religious parents who objected to a standard public school curriculum as secular humanism) [n147](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n147) and Stanley Fish, Duncan Kennedy, or William Eskridge. Find a single point of agreement -- other than that the Enlightenment was a failure -- between Michael McConnell and Catharine MacKinnon. Even allies within the multiculturalist wing of epistemological pluralism are on the brink of war: women are complaining about sexism within the NAACP, [n148](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n148) federal laws requiring equality for women in college athletics are viewed as hurting black male athletes, [n149](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n149) and feminists are themselves divided over whether to accord respect to non-Western cultures that practice female circumcision, a mutilation of female genitalia. [n150](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n150)The more radical of the social constructivists accept -- and even embrace -- the inevitable consequence of their theory that there is no knowledge, just power. [n151](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n151) Their project is to expose and alter the hidden power relations. A few even remain epistemologically faithful by refusing to use reason in their scholarship at all, relying instead on "narratives" to communicate what are necessarily private and personal truths. Just as religious conversion cannot be prompted by reason (pace Pascal), this use of narratives is a nonrational attempt to transform beliefs. [n152](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n152) But whether or not all epistemological pluralists explicitly recognize that their position leaves power as the only means of resolving disputes, it is an inevitable consequence of granting alternative epistemologies equal status.None of the epistemological pluralists seem willing to confront the practical  [\*481]  implications of this reduction of knowledge to power. [n153](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n153) Stephen Carter, for example, notes that the problem with creationism is not its epistemological pedigree but that, like the proposition that the earth is flat, it is "factually in error." [n154](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n154) According to both religious and radical social constructivists, however, one cannot make the claim that any proposition is "factually in error" except from within a particular epistemological system. Thus, an epistemological pluralist like Carter should not be making such a statement at all, since he maintains that the rationalism and empiricism on which such "factual" claims are based are no more valid than an epistemology of faith and revelation that might lead to opposite conclusions. Similarly, many of the religious epistemological pluralists castigate Justice Scalia's opinion in Employment Division, Department of Human Resources v. Smith. [n155](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n155) But Scalia's position instantiates the notion that only power can mediate between different epistemological systems: he is comfortable in "leaving accommodation to the political process" even though that will "place at a relative disadvantage those religious practices that are not widely engaged in." [n156](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n156) The radical cris de coeur pleading for progressive changes in the law are similarly unpersuasive in the face of the current stolid conservatism of the American people: unless moved emotionally by the academic appeals -- an unlikely scenario -- there is no reason for either citizens or politicians to change their views. "For if ideas are mere reflections of the exercise of power, it becomes difficult to find a basis for criticizing social arrangements." [n157](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n157) And if reason is not a universal epistemology that can mediate between the different beliefs, but only the belief system favored by the powerful, then whoever is in power will reify his own epistemology. That is the nature of the social constructivist critique.One rather prosaic example may illustrate, close to home, the dangers of abandoning epistemological objectivity in favor of structures of power. Most academic journals use a blind reviewing system, in order to minimize institutional authority and maximize intellectual authority. They rely, in other words, as much as possible on objective standards rather than on hierarchies of power within academia. [n158](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n158) Law reviews are an exception; those who select articles are fully aware of the identity, past scholarly achievements, and institutional affiliation  [\*482]  of the authors who submit manuscripts. Because law reviews are therefore able to rely more heavily on these indicia of institutional authority, they provide us with a concrete example of the results when epistemological objectivity gives way to power. Those results are not encouraging, especially to those who would challenge the status quo. Unsurprisingly, prestigious law reviews disproportionately publish well-known authors, authors at well-known institutions, and authors at their own institutions. [n159](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n159) If epistemological pluralists expect that abandoning reason and empiricism will favor their political agendas over those currently in favor, they are likely to be sorely disappointed.

#### We should use rationality and empiricism when assessing public policy

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In order to make even such a limited defense, however, I must first confront  [\*473]  the broad epistemological challenge: that truth -- or intellectual authority -- does not exist apart from the social and political hierarchies that create and sustain it. If the most radical social constructivists are right, and there is no such thing as truth or objectivity, defending the Enlightenment is like trying to collect water in a sieve. Fortunately, it is not necessary to resolve this philosophical dispute in order to proceed. First, the question I am addressing is not whether the Enlightenment reliance on reason and empiricism is in fact the only epistemology, but whether we ought to proceed as if it were, at least in the public arena. Even if there are multiple and contradictory truths, some may be better suited for public adoption than others. There is a difference between objective truth and justified beliefs, and suggesting that only beliefs informed by reason are justified does not take any stand on the existence or accessibility of objective truth. [n110](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n110) Further, neither reason nor truth need be transcendent or objective to inform debate. As many scholars have recognized, postmodernism has not prevented us from acting as if truth exists. [n111](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n111) Indeed, we can probably do no less: to act on the postmodern insights would be "like saying that, since philosophers are still debating Descartes' epistemology, one need not take notice of traffic signals in the meantime (since they might not really exist)." [n112](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n112) Moreover, although it may be less relevant in "soft" disciplines like law, some truth does exist: "If there were no facts, surgeons couldn't operate, buildings would collapse, and airplanes wouldn't get off the ground." [n113](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n113) Finally, as William Marshall has pointed out, the search for truth remains an important human enterprise even if objective truth does not exist, because "the human imagination is compelled not only by truth but also by the idea of truth." [n114](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n114) Similarly, even if there is no epistemology unconnected to power relationships, we tend to -- and perhaps we must -- behave as if there were. It remains only to give that epistemology content.

### case

#### The aff is an observation with no pragmatic strategy --- only advocating tangible solutions can avoid intellectual abstractions that re-enforce the squo --- without engaging in the hard task of reconstruction, pure critique is just fuel for the narcissism of academics

**Bryant 12** (Levi, Critique of the Academic Left, http://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2012/11/11/underpants-gnomes-a-critique-of-the-academic-left/)

I must be in a mood today– half irritated, half amused –because I find myself ranting. Of course, that’s not entirely unusual. So this afternoon I came across a post by a friend quoting something discussing the environmental movement that pushed all the right button. As the post read,¶ For mainstream environmentalism– conservationism, green consumerism, and resource management –humans are conceptually separated out of nature and mythically placed in privileged positions of authority and control over ecological communities and their nonhuman constituents. What emerges is the fiction of a marketplace of ‘raw materials’ and ‘resources’ through which human-centered wants, constructed as needs, might be satisfied. The mainstream narratives are replete with such metaphors [carbon trading!]. Natural complexity,, mutuality, and diversity are rendered virtually meaningless given discursive parameters that reduce nature to discrete units of exchange measuring extractive capacities. Jeff Shantz, “Green Syndicalism”¶ While finding elements this description perplexing– I can’t say that I see many environmentalists treating nature and culture as distinct or suggesting that we’re sovereigns of nature –I do agree that we conceive much of our relationship to the natural world in economic terms (not a surprise that capitalism is today a universal). This, however, is not what bothers me about this passage.¶ What I wonder is just what we’re supposed to do even if all of this is true? What, given existing conditions, are we to do if all of this is right? At least green consumerism, conservation, resource management, and things like carbon trading are engaging in activities that are making real differences. From this passage– and maybe the entire text would disabuse me of this conclusion –it sounds like we are to reject all of these interventions because they remain tied to a capitalist model of production that the author (and myself) find abhorrent. The idea seems to be that if we endorse these things we are tainting our hands and would therefore do well to reject them altogether.¶ The problem as I see it is that this is the worst sort of abstraction (in the Marxist sense) and wishful thinking. Within a Marxo-Hegelian context, a thought is abstract when it ignores all of the mediations in which a thing is embedded. For example, I understand a robust tree abstractly when I attribute its robustness, say, to its genetics alone, ignoring the complex relations to its soil, the air, sunshine, rainfall, etc., that also allowed it to grow robustly in this way. This is the sort of critique we’re always leveling against the neoliberals. They are abstract thinkers. In their doxa that individuals are entirely responsible for themselves and that they completely make themselves by pulling themselves up by their bootstraps, neoliberals ignore all the mediations belonging to the social and material context in which human beings develop that play a role in determining the vectors of their life. They ignore, for example, that George W. Bush grew up in a family that was highly connected to the world of business and government and that this gave him opportunities that someone living in a remote region of Alaska in a very different material infrastructure and set of family relations does not have. To think concretely is to engage in a cartography of these mediations, a mapping of these networks, from circumstance to circumstance (what I call an “onto-cartography”). It is to map assemblages, networks, or ecologies in the constitution of entities.¶ Unfortunately, the academic left falls prey to its own form of abstraction. It’s good at carrying out critiques that denounce various social formations, yet very poor at proposing any sort of realistic constructions of alternatives. This because it thinks abstractly in its own way, ignoring how networks, assemblages, structures, or regimes of attraction would have to be remade to create a workable alternative. Here I’m reminded by the “underpants gnomes” depicted in South Park:¶ The underpants gnomes have a plan for achieving profit that goes like this:¶ Phase 1: Collect Underpants¶ Phase 2: ?¶ Phase 3: Profit!¶ They even have a catchy song to go with their work:¶ Well this is sadly how it often is with the academic left. Our plan seems to be as follows:¶ Phase 1: Ultra-Radical Critique¶ Phase 2: ?¶ Phase 3: Revolution and complete social transformation!¶ Our problem is that we seem perpetually stuck at phase 1 without ever explaining what is to be done at phase 2. Often the critiques articulated at phase 1 are right, but there are nonetheless all sorts of problems with those critiques nonetheless. In order to reach phase 3, we have to produce new collectives. In order for new collectives to be produced, people need to be able to hear and understand the critiques developed at phase 1. Yet this is where everything begins to fall apart. Even though these critiques are often right, we express them in ways that only an academic with a PhD in critical theory and post-structural theory can understand. How exactly is Adorno to produce an effect in the world if only PhD’s in the humanities can understand him? Who are these things for? We seem to always ignore these things and then look down our noses with disdain at the Naomi Kleins and David Graebers of the world. To make matters worse, we publish our work in expensive academic journals that only universities can afford, with presses that don’t have a wide distribution, and give our talks at expensive hotels at academic conferences attended only by other academics. Again, who are these things for? Is it an accident that so many activists look away from these things with contempt, thinking their more about an academic industry and tenure, than producing change in the world? If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, it doesn’t make a sound! § Marked 13:55 § Seriously dudes and dudettes, what are you doing?¶ But finally, and worst of all, us Marxists and anarchists all too often act like assholes. We denounce others, we condemn them, we berate them for not engaging with the questions we want to engage with, and we vilify them when they don’t embrace every bit of the doxa that we endorse. We are every bit as off-putting and unpleasant as the fundamentalist minister or the priest of the inquisition (have people yet understood that Deleuze and Guattari’s Anti-Oedipus was a critique of the French communist party system and the Stalinist party system, and the horrific passions that arise out of parties and identifications in general?). This type of “revolutionary” is the greatest friend of the reactionary and capitalist because they do more to drive people into the embrace of reigning ideology than to undermine reigning ideology. These are the people that keep Rush Limbaugh in business. Well done!¶ But this isn’t where our most serious shortcomings lie. Our most serious shortcomings are to be found at phase 2. We almost never make concrete proposals for how things ought to be restructured, for what new material infrastructures and semiotic fields need to be produced, and when we do, our critique-intoxicated cynics and skeptics immediately jump in with an analysis of all the ways in which these things contain dirty secrets, ugly motives, and are doomed to fail. How, I wonder, are we to do anything at all when we have no concrete proposals? We live on a planet of 6 billion people. These 6 billion people are dependent on a certain network of production and distribution to meet the needs of their consumption. That network of production and distribution does involve the extraction of resources, the production of food, the maintenance of paths of transit and communication, the disposal of waste, the building of shelters, the distribution of medicines, etc., etc., etc.¶ What are your proposals? How will you meet these problems? How will you navigate the existing mediations or semiotic and material features of infrastructure? Marx and Lenin had proposals. Do you? Have you even explored the cartography of the problem? Today we are so intellectually bankrupt on these points that we even have theorists speaking of events and acts and talking about a return to the old socialist party systems, ignoring the horror they generated, their failures, and not even proposing ways of avoiding the repetition of these horrors in a new system of organization. Who among our critical theorists is thinking seriously about how to build a distribution and production system that is responsive to the needs of global consumption, avoiding the problems of planned economy, ie., who is doing this in a way that gets notice in our circles? Who is addressing the problems of micro-fascism that arise with party systems (there’s a reason that it was the Negri & Hardt contingent, not the Badiou contingent that has been the heart of the occupy movement). At least the ecologists are thinking about these things in these terms because, well, they think ecologically. Sadly we need something more, a melding of the ecologists, the Marxists, and the anarchists. We’re not getting it yet though, as far as I can tell. Indeed, folks seem attracted to yet another critical paradigm, Laruelle.¶ I would love, just for a moment, to hear a radical environmentalist talk about his ideal high school that would be academically sound. How would he provide for the energy needs of that school? How would he meet building codes in an environmentally sound way? How would she provide food for the students? What would be her plan for waste disposal? And most importantly, how would she navigate the school board, the state legislature, the federal government, and all the families of these students? What is your plan? What is your alternative? I think there are alternatives. I saw one that approached an alternative in Rotterdam. If you want to make a truly revolutionary contribution, this is where you should start. Why should anyone even bother listening to you if you aren’t proposing real plans? But we haven’t even gotten to that point. Instead we’re like underpants gnomes, saying “revolution is the answer!” without addressing any of the infrastructural questions of just how revolution is to be produced, what alternatives it would offer, and how we would concretely go about building those alternatives. Masturbation.¶ “Underpants gnome” deserves to be a category in critical theory; a sort of synonym for self-congratulatory masturbation. We need less critique not because critique isn’t important or necessary– it is –but because we know the critiques, we know the problems. We’re intoxicated with critique because it’s easy and safe. We best every opponent with critique. We occupy a position of moral superiority with critique. But do we really do anything with critique? What we need today, more than ever, is composition or carpentry. Everyone knows something is wrong. Everyone knows this system is destructive and stacked against them. Even the Tea Party knows something is wrong with the economic system, despite having the wrong economic theory. None of us, however, are proposing alternatives. Instead we prefer to shout and denounce. Good luck with that.

#### The affirmatives attempt at epistemologically rupturing coloniality is doomed to failure- The 1AC speech act is another attempt to colonialize and overtake indigenous languages

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Among the many possible alternatives, I would like to highlight the broad perspective of critical and decolonial thinking, n48 a perspective that has the historical praxis of irrational domination and oppression as its starting point, in which negativities are the place for the world's most dramatic semi-peripheral and peripheral material (and formal) injustice until today. To provide a short outline of this perspective, I will mention some theoretical presuppositions by Walter Mignolo, in his intellectual, political project that he describes as a "de-colonial shift" or "de-colonial thinking." n49 This thought is produced by considering various parallel and complementary semiotic forms of social movements that move in the margins of the political, economic structure, in rupture with the image of wholeness to which they remain attached. The premise is that this detachment - this rupture from within the wholeness - that decolonial thought promotes, helps promote confidence that other worlds are possible, and are already under construction. n50 In this sense the shift of a decolonial hermeneutic critique promotes understanding of the linguisticality in which and for which we are - language as a condition of the possibility of being, and the condition of what we know and for what we know - language as a condition of the possibility of knowledge, and also the condition of what we can do and for what we can do - language as a condition of possibility of power.¶ There are two aspects to consider here. First, regarding linguisticality, Mignolo argues that we are unable to imagine and think beyond the categories of Greek and Latin language, adapted by the six imperial languages of modernity and coloniality (Italian, Spanish and Portuguese during the Renaissance, and English, French and German since the Enlightenment, including the United States after World War II). n51 These categories are historically situated linguistically, semantically defined by the cultural ethos, and ideologically demarcated as colonial, imperial languages. Linguisticality imposes on and overtakes indigenous languages - the original linguisticality of these peoples. Hence, another linguisticality (the linguisticality of the other) is dominated, silenced, invalidated, and finally denied. This is the dimension of negativity, which is real. Mignolo illustrates this point by saying that any attempt to think through categories originating within linguistic traditions such as the Bengali, Aymara, Arabic, Russian, or Bambara, among others, is doomed to failure. n52

#### No solvency – a single round produces virtually no change

**Atchison and Panetta 5** (Jarrod, PhD Candidate – U Georgia, and Ed, Professor of Communication – U Georgia, “Activism in Debate: Parody, Promise, and Problems”, NCA Paper)

The first problem is the difficulty of any individual debate to generate community change. Although any debate has the potential to create problems for the community (videotapes of objectionable behavior, etc…), rarely does any one debate have the power to create community wide change. We attribute this ineffectiveness to the structural problems inherent in individual debates and the collective forgetfulness of the debate community. The structural problems are clear. Debaters engage in preliminary debates in rooms that are rarely populated by anyone other than the judge or a few scouts. Judges are instructed to vote for the team that does the best debating, but the ballot is rarely seen by anyone outside the tabulation room. Given the limited number of debates in which a judge actually writes meaningful comments, there is little documentation available for use in many cases. During the period when judges interact with the debaters there are often external pressures (filing evidence, preparing for the next debate, etc…) that restrict the ability for anyone outside the debate to pay attention to why a judge voting a particular way. Elimination debates do not provide for a much better audience because debates still occur simultaneously and travel schedules dictate that most of the tournament has left by the later elimination rounds. We find it difficult for anyone to substantiate the claim that asking a judge to vote to solve a community problem in an individual debate with so few participants is the best strategy for addressing important problems. In addition to the structural problems, the collective forgetfulness of the debate community reduces the impact that individual debates have on the community. The debate community has a high turnover rate. Despite the fact that some debaters make their best effort to debate for more than four years, the debate community is largely made up of participants who debate and then move on. The coaches and directors that make up the backbone of the community are the people with the longest cultural memory, but they are also a small minority of the community when considering the number of debaters involved in the activity. We do not mean to suggest that the activity is reinvented every year—certainly there are conventions that are passed down from coaches to debaters and from debaters to debaters. However, given the fact that there are virtually no transcriptions available for everyone to read, it is difficult to assume that the debate community would remember any individual debate. Additionally, given the focus on competition and individual skill, the community is more likely to remember the accomplishments and talents of debaters rather than what argument they won a particular round on. The debate community does not have the necessary components in place for a strong collective memory of individual debates. We believe that the combination of the structures of debate and the collective forgetfulness means that any strategy for creating community change that is premised on winning individual debates is less effective than seeking a larger community dialogue that is recorded and/or transcribed. The second major problem with attempting to create community change in individual debates is that the debate community is made up of more individuals than the four debaters and one judge that are a part of every debate. The coaches and directors that make up the backbone of the community have very little space for engaging in a discussion about community issues. We suspect that this helps explain why so few debaters get involved in the edebates over activist strategies. Coaches and directors dominant this forum because there is so little public dialogue over the issues that directly affect the community that they have dedicated so much of their professional and personal lives. This is especially true for coaches and directors that are not preferred judges and therefore do not even have a voice at the end of a debate. Coaches and directors should have a public forum to engage in a community conversation with debaters instead of attempting to take on their opponents through the wins and losses of their own debaters.

# 2nc

#### “Resolved” is legislative

Jeff **Parcher 1**, former debate coach at Georgetown, Feb 2001 http://www.ndtceda.com/archives/200102/0790.html

Pardon me if I turn to a source besides Bill. American Heritage Dictionary: Resolve: 1. To make a firm decision about. 2. To decide or express by formal vote. 3. To separate something into constiutent parts See Syns at \*analyze\* (emphasis in orginal) 4. Find a solution to. See Syns at \*Solve\* (emphasis in original) 5. To dispel: resolve a doubt. - n 1. Firmness of purpose; resolution. 2. A determination or decision. (2) The very nature of the word "resolution" makes it a question. American Heritage: A course of action determined or decided on. A formal statement of a decision, as by a legislature. (3) The resolution is obviously a question. Any other conclusion is utterly inconceivable. Why? Context. The debate community empowers a topic committee to write a topic for ALTERNATE side debating. The committee is not a random group of people coming together to "reserve" themselves about some issue. There is context - they are empowered by a community to do something. In their deliberations, the topic community attempts to craft a resolution which can be ANSWERED in either direction. They focus on issues like ground and fairness because they know the resolution will serve as the basis for debate which will be resolved by determining the policy desirablility of that resolution. That's not only what they do, but it's what we REQUIRE them to do. We don't just send the topic committee somewhere to adopt their own group resolution. It's not the end point of a resolution adopted by a body - it's the preliminary wording of a resolution sent to others to be answered or decided upon. (4) Further context: the word resolved is used to emphasis the fact that it's policy debate. Resolved comes from the adoption of resolutions by legislative bodies. A resolution is either adopted or it is not. It's a question before a legislative body. Should this statement be adopted or not. (5) The very terms 'affirmative' and 'negative' support my view. One affirms a resolution. Affirmative and negative are the equivalents of 'yes' or 'no' - which, of course, are answers to a question.

#### Economic engagement is an exchange of government contacts

**Resnik, 1** – Assistant Professor of Political Science at Yeshiva University (Evan, Journal of International Affairs, “Defining Engagement” v54, n2, political science complete)

A REFINED DEFINITION OF ENGAGEMENT¶ In order to establish a more effective framework for dealing with unsavory regimes, I propose that we define engagement as the attempt to influence the political behavior of a target state through the comprehensive establishment and enhancement of contacts with that state across multiple issue-areas (i.e. diplomatic, military, economic, cultural). The following is a brief list of the specific forms that such contacts might include:¶ DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS¶ Extension of diplomatic recognition; normalization of diplomatic relations¶ Promotion of target-state membership in international institutions and regimes¶ Summit meetings and other visits by the head of state and other senior government officials of sender state to target state and vice-versa¶ MILITARY CONTACTS¶ Visits of senior military officials of the sender state to the target state and vice-versa¶ Arms transfers¶ Military aid and cooperation¶ Military exchange and training programs¶ Confidence and security-building measures¶ Intelligence sharing¶ ECONOMIC CONTACTS¶ Trade agreements and promotion¶ Foreign economic and humanitarian aid in the form of loans and/or grants¶ CULTURAL CONTACTS¶ Cultural treaties¶ Inauguration of travel and tourism links¶ Sport, artistic and academic exchanges(n25)¶ Engagement is an iterated process in which the sender and target state develop a relationship of increasing interdependence, culminating in the endpoint of "normalized relations" characterized by a high level of interactions across multiple domains. Engagement is a quintessential exchange relationship: the target state wants the prestige and material resources that would accrue to it from increased contacts with the sender state, while the sender state seeks to modify the domestic and/or foreign policy behavior of the target state. This deductive logic could adopt a number of different forms or strategies when deployed in practice.(n26) For instance, individual contacts can be established by the sender state at either a low or a high level of conditionality.(n27) Additionally, the sender state can achieve its objectives using engagement through any one of the following causal processes: by directly modifying the behavior of the target regime; by manipulating or reinforcing the target states' domestic balance of political power between competing factions that advocate divergent policies; or by shifting preferences at the grassroots level in the hope that this will precipitate political change from below within the target state.¶ This definition implies that three necessary conditions must hold for engagement to constitute an effective foreign policy instrument. First, the overall magnitude of contacts between the sender and target states must initially be low. If two states are already bound by dense contacts in multiple domains (i.e., are already in a highly interdependent relationship), engagement loses its impact as an effective policy tool. Hence, one could not reasonably invoke the possibility of the US engaging Canada or Japan in order to effect a change in either country's political behavior. Second, the material or prestige needs of the target state must be significant, as engagement derives its power from the promise that it can fulfill those needs. The greater the needs of the target state, the more amenable to engagement it is likely to be. For example, North Korea's receptivity to engagement by the US dramatically increased in the wake of the demise of its chief patron, the Soviet Union, and the near-total collapse of its national economy.(n28)¶ Third, the target state must perceive the engager and the international order it represents as a potential source of the material or prestige resources it desires. This means that autarkic, revolutionary and unlimited regimes which eschew the norms and institutions of the prevailing order, such as Stalin's Soviet Union or Hitler's Germany, will not be seduced by the potential benefits of engagement.¶ This reformulated conceptualization avoids the pitfalls of prevailing scholarly conceptions of engagement. It considers the policy as a set of means rather than ends, does not delimit the types of states that can either engage or be engaged, explicitly encompasses contacts in multiple issue-areas, allows for the existence of multiple objectives in any given instance of engagement and, as will be shown below, permits the elucidation of multiple types of positive sanctions.¶

#### Government policy discussion is vital to force engagement with and resolution of competing perspectives to improve social outcomes, however those outcomes may be defined---and, it breaks out of traditional pedagogical frameworks by positing students as agents of decision-making

**Esberg & Sagan 12** \*Jane Esberg is special assistant to the director at New York University's Center on. International Cooperation. She was the winner of 2009 Firestone Medal, AND \*\*Scott Sagan is a professor of political science and director of Stanford's Center for International Security and Cooperation “NEGOTIATING NONPROLIFERATION: Scholarship, Pedagogy, and Nuclear Weapons Policy,” 2/17 The Nonproliferation Review, 19:1, 95-108

These government or quasi-government think tank simulations often provide very similar lessons for high-level players as are learned by students in educational simulations. Government participants learn about the importance of understanding foreign perspectives, the need to practice internal coordination, and the necessity to compromise and coordinate with other governments in negotiations and crises. During the Cold War, political scientist Robert Mandel noted how crisis exercises and war games forced government officials to overcome ‘‘bureaucratic myopia,’’ moving beyond their normal organizational roles and thinking more creatively about how others might react in a crisis or conflict.6 The skills of imagination and the subsequent ability to predict foreign interests and reactions remain critical for real-world foreign policy makers. For example, simulations of the Iranian nuclear crisis\*held in 2009 and 2010 at the Brookings Institution’s Saban Center and at Harvard University’s Belfer Center, and involving former US senior officials and regional experts\*highlighted the dangers of misunderstanding foreign governments’ preferences and misinterpreting their subsequent behavior. In both simulations, the primary criticism of the US negotiating team lay in a failure to predict accurately how other states, both allies and adversaries, would behave in response to US policy initiatives.7¶ By university age, students often have a pre-defined view of international affairs, and the literature on simulations in education has long emphasized how such exercises force students to challenge their assumptions about how other governments behave and how their own government works.8 Since simulations became more common as a teaching tool in the late 1950s, educational literature has expounded on their benefits, from encouraging engagement by breaking from the typical lecture format, to improving communication skills, to promoting teamwork.9 More broadly, simulations can deepen understanding by asking students to link fact and theory, providing a context for facts while bringing theory into the realm of practice.10 These exercises are particularly valuable in teaching international affairs for many of the same reasons they are useful for policy makers: they force participants to ‘‘grapple with the issues arising from a world in flux.’’11 Simulations have been used successfully to teach students about such disparate topics as European politics, the Kashmir crisis, and US response to the mass killings in Darfur.12 Role-playing exercises certainly encourage students to learn political and technical facts\* but they learn them in a more active style. Rather than sitting in a classroom and merely receiving knowledge, students actively research ‘‘their’’ government’s positions and actively argue, brief, and negotiate with others.13 Facts can change quickly; simulations teach students how to contextualize and act on information.14

#### Our argument is not a rule --- it’s an expression that what the aff said was not fair to the negative --- we have been excluded from active participation in this debate --- you’re voting against the aff for being a type of politics that doesn’t care about their opponents, which is crucial to the success of ideas. We should understand fairness as a form of agnostic politics.

**Hatab 2**, Prof of Philosophy @ Old Dominion University, (Lawrence J., The Journal of Nietzsche Studies 24 (2002) 132-147)

Moreover, the structure of an agon conceived as a contest can readily underwrite political principles of fairness. Not only do I need an Other to prompt my own achievement, but the significance of any "victory" I might achieve demands an able opponent. As in athletics, defeating an incapable or incapacitated competitor winds up being meaningless. So I should not only will the presence of others in an agon, I should also want that they be able adversaries, that they have opportunities and capacities to succeed in the contest. And I should be able to honor the winner of a fair contest. Such is the logic of competition that contains a host of normative features, which might even include active provisions for helping people in political contests become more able participants**.** [25](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_nietzsche_studies/v024/24.1hatab.html#FOOT25) In addition, agonistic respect need not be associated with something like positive regard or equal worth, a dissociation that can go further in facing up to actual political conditions and problematic connotations that can attach to liberal dispositions. Again allow me to quote my previous work. Democratic respect forbids exclusion, it demands inclusion; but respect for the Other as other can avoid a vapid sense of "tolerance," a sloppy "relativism," or a misplaced spirit of "neutrality." Agonistic respect allows us to simultaneously affirm our beliefs and affirm our opponents as worthy competitors [End Page 142] in public discourse. Here we can speak of respect without ignoring the fact that politics involves perpetual disagreement, and we have an adequate answer to the question "Why should I respect a view that I do not agree with?" In this way beliefs about what is best (aristos) can be coordinated with an openness to other beliefs and a willingness to accept the outcome of an open competition among the full citizenry (demos). Democratic respect, therefore, is a dialogical mixture of affirmation and negation, a political bearing that entails giving all beliefs a hearing, refusing any belief an ultimate warrant, and perceiving one's own viewpoint as agonistically implicated with opposing viewpoints. In sum, we can combine 1) the historical tendency of democratic movements to promote free expression, pluralism, and liberation from traditional constraints, and 2) a Nietzschean perspectivism and agonistic respect, to arrive at a postmodern model of democracy that provides both a nonfoundational openness and an atmosphere of civil political discourse. [26](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_nietzsche_studies/v024/24.1hatab.html#FOOT26) An agonistic politics construed as competitive fairness can sustain a robust conception of political rights**,** not as something "natural" possessed by an original self, but as an epiphenomenal, procedural notion conferred upon citizens in order to sustain viable political practice.

# 1nr

#### a) – racism, anti-Semitism, and torture are all discussions that become by the affs methodology

**Sherry, 96** – Professor of Civil Rights protected and Civil Liberties Law and the University of Minnesota

(Suzanna, Georgetown Law Journal, “The Sleep of Reason,” February 1996, 84 Geo. L.J. 453)

The Enlightenment was indeed aptly named. From the darkness that hid anti-Semitism and other forms of religious persecution, the denial of human freedom for the sake of protecting orthodoxy, the inadvertent cruelty of a nature that man could neither comprehend nor tame, and the deliberate unspeakable tortures committed by one religious regime after another, the Enlightenment burst forth and pointed us toward freedom and equality. We have not yet attained either, but we should be cautious before jettisoning the worldview that has brought us this far. The dangers that the epistemology of the Enlightenment gradually defeated remain very real, ready to reappear as soon as reason sleeps. Lest we fall prey to Goya's monsters, let us affirm that the Enlightenment project is not, in either sense of the word, finished -- neither completed nor defeated.

#### b) Epistemological pluralism allows Holocaust denial theories and other absurd views to flourish. Our form of public policy debate is essential to the movements that fought slavery, they would uniquely be complicit with discrimination occurring.

**Sherry 96** – Professor of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Law and the University of Minnesota (Suzanna, Georgetown Law Journal, “The Sleep of Reason,” February 1996, 84 Geo. L.J. 453

The consequences of accepting epistemological pluralism go much deeper than making some epistemological pluralists look inconsistent or undermining attacks on the status quo, and are much more troubling than simply failing to fulfill the expectations of its proponents. If we cannot confidently assert that the earth is round or that evolution occurred, because those with a different epistemology present a counterargument that is valid in their world even if not in ours, then the same must be true of other scientific or historical statements. It is only the tools of the Enlightenment tradition that allow us to refute such unsupported claims as that virtually all of what we now consider the accomplishments of Western civilization was stolen from black Africans, [n160](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n160) or that the tragic bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building was the work of agents of the United States government. It is only the acceptance of reason and empiricism as the epistemological standard that allows us to reject such pseudoscientific theories, currently fashionable in some quarters, as that melanin is "one of the strongest electromagnetic field forces in the universe" with the power to make its possessors intellectually superior, [n161](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n161) or that Jewish doctors are injecting black babies with the AIDS virus. [n162](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n162) Nor is it a defense that the modern alternative epistemologies advocated by radical and religious scholars do not always lead to such absurdity. [n163](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n163) The point is that antirational epistemologies, unlike the principles of the Enlightenment, offer no weapons against a variety of intellectual and political atrocities. As Marvin Frankel points out, "for most of Judaism's 5700-plus years, . . . the great Western religions neither caused democracy to happen nor exhibited discomfort about its absence." [n164](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n164)  [\*483]  Even today, the religious epistemologies that mandate discrimination against gays and lesbians are indistinguishable from those in the not too distant past that mandated discrimination against blacks. [n165](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n165)And if the melanin or AIDS myths are not sufficiently silly or frightening, there is a more horrific example of the beliefs that become acceptable when reason and empiricism are demoted as socially constructed epistemologies. Deborah Lipstadt notes that postmodern doctrines have allowed Holocaust denial theories to flourish and to be treated as "the other side," another "point of view," or a "different perspective": [n166](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n166) [The postmodern doctrines of Fish and Rorty] fostered an atmosphere in which it became harder to say that an idea was beyond the pale of rational thought. At its most radical it contended that there was no bedrock thing such as experience. . . . Because deconstructionism argued that experience was relative and nothing was fixed, it created an atmosphere of permissiveness toward questioning the meaning of historical events and made it hard for its proponents to assert that there was anything "off limits" for this skeptical approach. [n167](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n167)Thus, those who deny that the Holocaust occurred are, in an epistemologically plural world, as entitled to demand public recognition of their beliefs as are the creationists, the Afrocentrists, and all the others who reject the epistemology of the Enlightenment. They can demand -- and many defenders of epistemological pluralism, if not current case law, would support such demands from other groups -- that textbooks should reflect the existence and potential soundness of denial theories; that if the public schools teach the Holocaust as a historical event, they must also teach that it may not have happened; that if parents object to their children being taught what they consider a historical fabrication, the  [\*484]  children should be excused from history class; that if a state university funds student speech on historical topics generally it must also fund a group dedicated to denying the Holocaust. Lipstadt sees Holocaust denial as "a threat to all those who believe in the ultimate power of reason," [n168](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n168) but the converse is also true: the denial of the ultimate power of reason is a threat to those who would keep the memory of the Holocaust alive.

#### Political engagement is the only hope to keep democracy alive – liberal politics are the foundation of opposing things like capitalism’s abuses and arbitrary use of power. Their kritik freezes the radical potential of institutions

**Bronner 2004** [Stephen Eric, Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University, Reclaiming the Enlightenment: Toward a Politics of Radical Engagement, p. 9-10

Again: the political spirit of the Enlightenment crystallized around the principles connected with fostering the accountability of institutions, reci­procity under the law, and a commitment to experiment with social reform. Not in imperialism, or racism, or the manipulation of liberty, but in these ideals lies the basis of Enlightenment universalism. Democracy remains an empty word without it. Enlightenment universalism protects rather than threatens the exercise of subjectivity. It presumes to render institutions ac­countable, a fundamental principle of democracy, and thereby create the preconditions for expanding individual freedom. Such a view would inform liberal movements concerned with civil liberties as well as socialist move­ments seeking to constrain the power of capital. Reciprocity can be under­stood in the same way: it, too, underpins the liberal idea of the citizen with its inherently democratic imperative—against all prejudice—to include “the other” as well as the socialist refusal to identify the working person as a mere “cost of production.” The Enlightenment notion of political engagement, indeed, alone keeps democracy fresh and alive. Ideals such as these provide an enduring foundation for opposing con­temporary infringements on individual rights and dignity by new global forms of capitalism, the imperatives of the culture industry, and parochial bi­ases of every sort. They constitute the radical quality of the Enlightenment, and its “positive” moment beyond the prejudices of its particular representa­tives. Too many on the fringes have been forgotten like the proto-socialist Mably or the proto-communist Morelly and, until the appearance of Radical Enlightenment (2001) by Jonathan Israel, even major intellectuals like Spinoza have not received the political recognition that they were due. But this vol­ume is concerned with something other than uncovering the past. Its intent is instead to reinvigorate the present, salvage the enlightenment legacy, and contest those who would institutionally freeze its radicalism and strip away its protest character. Such an undertaking is important, moreover, since their efforts have been remarkably successful. Enlightenment thinking is seen by many as the inherently western ideology of the bourgeois gentleman, the Ver­nunftrepublikaner of the Weimar Republic, or characters like the “windbag” Settembrini who endured the sarcasm of totalitarians and the boredom of philistines in The Magic Mountain (1924) by Thomas Mann.

#### Political structures are inevitable, the only way to make critical theory efficacious is to combine theory with practice for material change – their methodology is antithetical to progressive change

**Bronner 2004** [Stephen Eric, Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University, Reclaiming the Enlightenment: Toward a Politics of Radical Engagement, p. 97-98

In the shadow of Auschwitz and Hiroshima, critical theory insisted that the cost of progress was too high. Utopian visions of harmony between the indi­vidual and society had only increased reification. Best then to emphasize the “non-identity” between subject and object and an explicitly “negative” un­derstanding of dialectics intent upon preserving the individual from the in­cursions of a reified world. This new perspective in critical theory turned the tradition of Hegel and Marx upside down. It subordinated history to anthropology, politics to metaphysics, and any institutional concern with securing liberty to an indeterminate freedom experienced by the individual. In high­lighting the unintentional transformation of the Enlightenment into totalitar­ianism, moreover, critical theory severed the connection between theory and practice. Modernity lost its specificity; its regimes lost their institutional de­terminations; and, with the communist betrayal of the revolutionary prole­tarian mission, organized politics ceased to serve as an avenue of change. Re­sistance instead would now require an aesthetic-philosophical assertion of subjectivity, an anti-political form of politics, directed against a world ever more akin to a huge “business office in which the employees have created cliques that attempt to dominate one another though the situation has the fla­vor of Kafka since it has become questionable whether an employer actually exists: it appears that the nasty, brutal, exploitative character of the system al­ready exists in the competing groups waiting in the wings.”9 Moving forward calls for bringing critical theory out of the metaphysical mist and the night in which all cows are black. It involves recognizing that the finest critics of reification might themselves have “reified” totalitarian­ism: extrapolating their historical experience into the future, ignoring movements and institutions, they would use totalitarianism to understand very different non-totalitarian circumstances. New forms of critical theory must begin asking whether the “individual” really is in danger of vanishing, and whether “instrumental reason” poses an inherent threat to subjectivity. They might start with seeking historical justifications rather than metaphys­ical assertions for claims that the Enlightenment “dialectically” turned into its totalitarian opposite. New forms of critical theory should also reflect on whether the connection between totalitarianism and modernity is simply misguided. There are reasons why fascism should have found its mass base not in modern classes like the bourgeoisie and the proletariat but in pre­capitalist classes like the aristocracy, the petty-bourgeoisie, and the peas­antry. In the same vein, it is crucial to consider whether the fascist assault on civilization may have been orchestrated less by individuals robbed of con­science and choice than men and women who consciously made the choice to join authoritarian movements with dogmatic ideologies indebted to the Counter-Enlightenment. Considering such a set of possibilities, however, means placing primacy on political history rather than metaphysics.

#### b) Focus on identity forecloses the use of reason

**Sherry 96** – Professor of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Law and the University of Minnesota (Suzanna, Georgetown Law Journal, “The Sleep of Reason,” February 1996, 84 Geo. L.J. 453)

Before turning to the attacks on Enlightenment reason, I should briefly explain what I mean by the term. First, I mean to include pragmatism, or practical reason, within the definition: pure ratiocination is not the only form that reasoning can take. Practical reason, originally derived from Aristotle and currently enjoying a resurgence in American legal thought, involves not algorithms but judgment. Pragmatists rely on a congeries of sources for their judgments, including experience, observation, logic, learned patterns, and tradition. Thus, although reason generally refers to a cognitive process whose persuasiveness depends on consistency with the ordinary canons of the scientific method, a conclusion need not be shatterproof to be warranted.I specifically do not mean to limit reason to a narrowly defined method of thought such as deductive logic or the scientific method. Thus, reason can incorporate what Anthony Kronman, following Alexander Bickel, calls "prudence." [n10](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n10) What distinguishes reason from alternative epistemologies is its general reliance on basic logic and the evidence of the senses (augmented by scientific discoveries). Certain types of questions are always in order in response to a reasoned argument: "Doesn't that contradict what you said earlier?"; "Is that consistent with the evidence?"; and "If that's true, wouldn't it follow that . . .?" Other responses are always out of order: "This must be true (or false) because the ultimate source of authority (God, the Bible, or some other source) says so"; and "I have faith that this is true regardless of its internal contradictions or its inconsistency with the evidence."In some ways, it is easier to describe what reason is by explaining what it is not. To be reasonable, an argument need not depend solely on deductive reasoning, but it cannot be illogical. It need not be entirely provable by scientific experiment, but it cannot be inconsistent with everything science and the social sciences know about reality -- until and unless that reality is experimentally proven wrong. [n11](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n11) Reasoned appeals need not be fully successful, but if they  [\*456]  convince no one except those who are already believers, they are probably flawed. Nor are common human emotions entirely excluded. [n12](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n12) But neither appeals to power nor "strategic arguments designed to persuade [primarily] by their emotional effect on the listener" are consistent with reasoned argument. [n13](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n13) Reason also stands on its own: neither the identity of the speaker nor her institutional role should be relevant to the persuasiveness of an argument.Moreover, reasoned argument invites response and must therefore depend on a commonly shared perception of reality. Appeals to a perception of reality shared only by the faithful -- those who have seen the light, as it were -- cannot count as reasonable. Thus, both the popular slogan that "it's a Black thing, you wouldn't understand," and the Calvinist tenet that if one has not received the grace of God one cannot know truth, are concessions that reasoned argument has been abandoned. Attempts at conversion can count as reasoned argument, but only if they do not depend primarily on emotional manipulation. Thus, for me to persuade an unrepentant male chauvinist that gender equality is a good thing, I cannot appeal solely to his love for his mother, wife, and daughter, but I can make arguments about fairness and about consequences. [n14](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n14) The former appeals may or may not be successful, but they do not count as reasoned arguments.The lasting accomplishment of the Enlightenment, then, was its development of an epistemological method. That method was a repudiation of "the millennium of superstition, other-worldliness, mysticism, and dogma known as the Middle, or Dark, Ages." [n15](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n15) Personal revelation and institutional power were no longer valid sources of authority. Instead, the human capacity to reason, in all its splendor, would control the future. As Justice Felix Frankfurter commented in a related context, "[w]hat mattered was excellence in your profession to which your father or your face was equally irrelevant." [n16](http://www.lexisnexis.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/lnacui2api/frame.do?reloadEntirePage=true&rand=1285602121837&returnToKey=20_T10208434889&parent=docview&target=results_DocumentContent&tokenKey=rsh-20.466563.51045007084" \l "n16) It is this vision of  [\*457]  reason -- independent of all other claims of authority, human or divine -- as superior to other epistemological forms that is currently under attack.

#### c) The epistemology of social location divides coalitions and is politically debilitating in the fight against oppression

**Kruks 95** [SONIA Hypata vol. 10, no. 2 Spring 1995 Identity Politics and Dialectical Reason: Beyond an Epistemology of Provenance ]

As a political critique of global-difference feminism, identity politics is indubitably valid. Since women are never women rout court, hut are always situated also as members of a class, a race, an ethnic grouping, a sexual orientation, an age grade, and so on, it is dangerous to assume that the inequities and power relations that pertain to those other dimensions of social situation will not play our also between women. However, in its attempts to refute falsely universalizing knowledge claims, identity politics sometimes tends to replicate those aspects of global-difference feminism which have stressed the radical incommunicability of women’s experience to men. Identity politics tends toward an excessive particularization and partitioning of knowledge, but now along the lines of race or ethnicity, for example, as well as gender. For such experience-based accounts of knowledge imply an epistemology of provenance: that is, the claim that knowledge arises from an experiential basis that is fundamentally group-specific and that others, who are outside the group and who lack its immediate experiences, cannot share that knowledge. As a corollary it is generally claimed that outsiders have no basis from which they can legitimately evaluate the group’s claims about its knowledge, or those political or moral positions that it takes on the basis of that knowledge. In short, only those who live a particular reality can know about it; and only they have the right to speak about it.Many groups that practice identity politics also advocate a politics of alliance or coalition with other groups, invoking the ideal of “bridging” differences once they are recognized and respected.5 Commitments to coalition-work, to alliance, to solidarity across groups are, I believe, vital for any effective progressive politics in this day and age. However, the implications of an epistemology of provenance, if consistently pursued, threaten to undercut coalition politics or other forms of solidarity among women. The unintended end-point of an epistemology of provenance can be an acute and politically debilitating subjectivism, which belies the possibility of communication and common action across differences. It is this apparent contradiction within identity politics (and other forms of multiple-difference feminism) that concerns me in this essay.