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#### The affirmative’s discussions of patriarchy shroud discussions of anthropocentrism in silence

**Bell and Russell 2k** (Anne and Constance, Canadian journal of education, http://www.csse-scee.ca/CJE/Articles/FullText/CJE25-3/CJE25-3-bell.pdf)

For this reason, the various movements against oppression need to be aware of and supportive of each other. In critical pedagogy, however, the exploration of questions of race, gender, class, and sexuality has proceeded so far with little acknowledgement of the systemic links between human oppressions and the domination of nature. The more-than-human world and human relationships to it have been ignored, as if the suffering and exploitation of other beings and the global ecological crisis were somehow irrelevant. Despite the call for attention to voices historically absent from traditional canons and narratives (Sadovnik, 1995, p. 316), nonhuman beings are shrouded in silence. This silence characterizes even the work of writers who call for a rethinking of all culturally positioned essentialisms. Like other educators influenced by poststructuralism, we agree that there is a need to scrutinize the language we use, the meanings we deploy, and the epistemological frameworks of past eras (Luke & Luke, 1995, p. 378). To treat social categories as stable and unchanging is to reproduce the prevailing relations of power (Britzman et al., 1991, p. 89). What would it mean, then, for critical pedagogy to extend this investigation and critique to include taken-for-granted understandings of “human,” “animal,” and “nature”? This question is difficult to raise precisely because these understandings are taken for granted. The anthropocentric bias in critical pedagogy manifests itself in silence and in the asides of texts. Since it is not a topic of discussion, it can be difficult to situate a critique of it. Following feminist analyses, we find that examples of anthropocentrism, like examples of gender symbolization, occur “in those places where speakers reveal the assumptions they think they do not need to defend, beliefs they expect to share with their audiences” (Harding, 1986, p. 112). Take, for example, Freire’s (1990) statements about the differences between “Man” and animals. To set up his discussion of praxis and the importance of “naming” the world, he outlines what he assumes to be shared, commonsensical beliefs about humans and other animals. He defines the boundaries of human membership according to a sharp, hierarchical dichotomy that establishes human superiority. Humans alone, he reminds us, are aware and self-conscious beings who can act to fulfill the objectives they set for themselves. Humans alone are able to **infuse the world with their creative presence**, to overcome situations that limit them, and thus to demonstrate a “decisive attitude towards the world” (p. 90). Freire (1990, pp. 87–91) represents other animals in terms of their lack of such traits. They are doomed to passively accept the given, their lives “totally determined” because their decisions belong not to themselves but to their species. Thus whereas humans inhabit a “world” which they create and transform and from which they can separate themselves, for animals there is only habitat, a mere physical space to which they are “organically bound.” To accept Freire’s assumptions is to believe that humans are animals only in a nominal sense. We are different not in degree but in kind, and though we might recognize that other animals have distinct qualities, we as humans are somehow more unique. We have the edge over other creatures because we are able to rise above monotonous, species-determined biological existence. Change in the service of human freedom is seen to be our primary agenda. Humans are thus cast as active agents whose very essence is to transform the world – as if somehow acceptance, appreciation, wonder, and reverence were beyond the pale. This discursive frame of reference is characteristic of critical pedagogy. The human/animal opposition upon which it rests is taken for granted, its cultural and historical specificity not acknowledged. And therein lies the problem. Like other social constructions, this one derives its persuasiveness from its “seeming facticity and from the deep investments individuals and communities have in setting themselves off from others” (Britzman et al., 1991, p. 91). This becomes the normal way of seeing the world, and like other discourses of normalcy, it limits possibilities of taking up and confronting inequities (see Britzman, 1995). The primacy of the human enterprise is simply not questioned. Precisely how an anthropocentric pedagogy might exacerbate the environmental crisis has not received much consideration in the literature of critical pedagogy, especially in North America. Although there may be passing reference to planetary destruction, there is seldom mention of the relationship between education and the domination of nature, let alone any sustained exploration of the links between the domination of nature and other social injustices. Concerns about the nonhuman are relegated to environmental education. And since environmental education, in turn, remains peripheral to the core curriculum (A. Gough, 1997; Russell, Bell, & Fawcett, 2000), anthropocentrism passes unchallenged. ROOTS OF A CRITIQUE Bowers (1993a, 1993b) has identified a number of root metaphors or “analogs” in critical pedagogy that reinforce the problem of anthropocentric thinking. These include the notion of change as inherently progressive, faith in the power of rational thought, and an understanding of individuals as “potentially free, voluntaristic entities who will take responsibility for creating themselves when freed from societal forms of oppression” (1993a, pp. 25–26). Such assumptions, argues Bowers, are part of the Enlightenment legacy on which critical pedagogy, and indeed liberal education generally, is based. In other words, they are culturally specific and stem from a period in Western history when the modern industrial world view was beginning to take shape. To be fair, Bowers understates the extent to which these assumptions are being questioned within critical pedagogy (e.g., Giroux, 1995; Peters, 1995; Shapiro, 1994; Weiler & Mitchell, 1992, pp. 1, 5). Nevertheless, his main point is well taken: proponents of critical pedagogy have yet to confront the ecological consequences of an educational process that reinforces beliefs and practices formed when unlimited economic expansion and social progress seemed promised (Bowers, 1993b, p. 3). What happens when the expansion of human possibilities is equated with the possibilities of consumption? How is educating for freedom predicated on the exploitation of the nonhuman? Such queries push against taken-for-granted understandings of human, nature, self, and community, and thus bring into focus the underlying tension between “freedom” as it is constituted within critical pedagogy and the limits that emerge through consideration of humans’ interdependence with the more-than-human world. This tension is symptomatic of anthropocentrism. Humans are assumed to be free agents separate from and pitted against the rest of nature, our fulfillment predicated on overcoming material constraints. This assumption of human difference and superiority, central to Western thought since Aristotle (Abram, 1996, p. 77), has long been used to justify the exploitation of nature by and for humankind (Evernden, 1992, p. 96). It has also been used to justify the exploitation of human groups (e.g., women, Blacks, queers, indigenous peoples) deemed to be closer to nature – that is, animalistic, irrational, savage, or uncivilized (Gaard, 1997; Haraway, 1989, p. 30; Selby, 1995, pp. 17–20; Spiegel, 1988). This “organic apartheid” (Evernden, 1992, p. 119) is bolstered by the belief that language is an exclusively human property that elevates mere biological existence to meaningful, social existence. Understood in this way, language undermines our embodied sense of interdependence with a more-than-human world. Rather than being a point of entry into the webs of communication all around us, language becomes a medium through which we set ourselves apart and above. This view of language is deeply embedded in the conceptual framework of critical pedagogy, including poststructuralist approaches. So too is the human/nature dichotomy upon which it rests. When writers assume that “it is language that enables us to think, speak and give meaning to the world around us,” that “meaning and consciousness do not exist outside language” (Weedon, 1987, p. 32) and that “subjectivity is constructed by and in language” (Luke & Luke, 1995, p. 378), then their transformative projects are encoded so as to exclude any consideration of the nonhuman. Such assumptions effectively remove all subjects from nature. As Evernden (1992) puts it, “if subjectivity, willing, valuation, and meaning are securely lodged in the domain of humanity, the possibility of encountering anything more than material objects in nature is nil” (p. 108). What is forgotten? What is erased when the real is equated with a proliferating culture of commodified signs (see Luke & Luke, 1995, on Baudrillard)? To begin, we forget that we humans are surrounded by an astonishing diversity of life forms. We no longer perceive or give expression to a world in which everything has intelligence, personality, and voice. Polyphonous echoes are reduced to homophony, a term Kane (1994) uses to denote “the reduced sound of human language when it is used under the assumption that speech is something belonging only to human beings” (p. 192). We forget too what Abram (1996) describes as the gestural, somatic dimension of language, its sensory and physical resonance that we share with all expressive bodies (p. 80).

#### Humanism is the original hierarchy – we need politics that can respect more than human life. Their politics dooms us to a future that endlessly repeats the oppression of the status quo.

**Best, 7** (Steven – Chair of Philosophy @ University of Texas – El Paso, Review of Charles Patterson’s “The Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust”, Journal for Critical Animal Studies, <http://www.drstevebest.org/EternalTriblenka.pdf>) //MD

While a welcome advance over the anthropocentric conceit that only humans shape human actions, the environmental determinism approach typically fails to emphasize the crucial role that animals play in human history, as well as how the human exploitation of animals is a key cause of hierarchy, social conflict, and environmental breakdown. A core thesis of what I call “animal standpoint theory” is that animals have been key driving and shaping forces of human thought, psychology, moral and social life, and history overall. More specifically, animal standpoint theory argues that the oppression of human over human has deep roots in the oppression of human over animal. In this context, Charles Patterson’s recent book, The Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust, articulates the animal standpoint in a powerful form with revolutionary implications. The main argument of Eternal Treblinka is that the human domination of animals, such as it emerged some ten thousand years ago with the rise of agricultural society, was the first hierarchical domination and laid the groundwork for patriarchy, slavery, warfare, genocide, and other systems of violence and power. A key implication of Patterson’s theory is that human liberation is implausible if disconnected from animal liberation, and thus humanism -- a speciesist philosophy that constructs a hierarchal relationship privileging superior humans over inferior animals and reduces animals to resources for human use -- collapses under the weight of its logical contradictions. Patterson lays out his complex holistic argument in three parts. In Part I, he demonstrates that animal exploitation and speciesism have direct and profound connections to slavery, colonialism, racism, and anti-Semitism. In Part II, he shows how these connections exist not only in the realm of ideology – as conceptual systems of justifying and underpinning domination and hierarchy – but also in systems of technology, such that the tools and techniques humans devised for the rationalized mass confinement and slaughter of animals were mobilized against human groups for the same ends. Finally, in the fascinating interviews and narratives of Part III, Patterson describes how personal experience with German Nazism prompted Jewish to take antithetical paths: whereas most retreated to an insular identity and dogmatic emphasis on the singularity of Nazi evil and its tragic experience, others recognized the profound similarities between how Nazis treated their human captives and how humanity as a whole treats other animals, an epiphany that led them to adopt vegetarianism, to become advocates for the animals, and develop a far broader and more inclusive ethic informed by universal compassion for all suffering and oppressed beings. The Origins of Hierarchy "As long as men massacre animals, they will kill each other" –Pythagoras It is little understood that the first form of oppression, domination, and hierarchy involves human domination over animals. Patterson’s thesis stands in bold contrast to the Marxist theory that the domination over nature is fundamental to the domination over other humans. It differs as well from the social ecology position of Murray Bookchin that domination over humans brings about alienation from the natural world, provokes hierarchical mindsets and institutions, and is the root of the long-standing western goal to “dominate” nature. In the case of Marxists, anarchists, and so many others, theorists typically don’t even mention human domination of animals, let alone assign it causal primacy or significance. In Patterson’s model, however, the human subjugation of animals is the first form of hierarchy and it paves the way for all other systems of domination such as include patriarchy, racism, colonialism, anti-Semitism, and the Holocaust. As he puts it, “the exploitation of animals was the model and inspiration for the atrocities people committed against each other, slavery and the Holocaust being but two of the more dramatic examples.” Hierarchy emerged with the rise of agricultural society some ten thousand years ago. In the shift from nomadic hunting and gathering bands to settled agricultural practices, humans began to establish their dominance over animals through “domestication.” In animal domestication (often a euphemism disguising coercion and cruelty), humans began to exploit animals for purposes such as obtaining food, milk, clothing, plowing, and transportation. As they gained increasing control over the lives and labor power of animals, humans bred them for desired traits and controlled them in various ways, such as castrating males to make them more docile. To conquer, enslave, and claim animals as their own property, humans developed numerous technologies, such as pens, cages, collars, ropes, chains, and branding irons. The domination of animals paved the way for the domination of humans. The sexual subjugation of women, Patterson suggests, was modeled after the domestication of animals, such that men began to control women’s reproductive capacity, to enforce repressive sexual norms, and to rape them as they forced breeding in their animals. Not coincidentally, Patterson argues, slavery emerged in the same region of the Middle East that spawned agriculture, and, in fact, developed as an extension of animal domestication practices. In areas like Sumer, slaves were managed like livestock, and males were castrated and forced to work along with females. In the fifteenth century, when Europeans began the colonization of Africa and Spain introduced the first international slave markets,the metaphors, models, and technologies used to exploit animal slaves were applied with equal cruelty and force to human slaves. Stealing Africans from their native environment and homeland, breaking up families who scream in anguish, wrapping chains around slaves’ bodies, shipping them in cramped quarters across continents for weeks or months with no regard for their needs or suffering, branding their skin with a hot iron to mark them as property, auctioning them as servants, breeding them for service and labor, exploiting them for profit, beating them in rages of hatred and anger, and killing them in vast numbers – all these horrors and countless others inflicted on black slaves were developed and perfected centuries earlier through animal exploitation. As the domestication of animals developed in agricultural society, humans lost the intimate connections they once had with animals. By the time of Aristotle, certainly, and with the bigoted assistance of medieval theologians such as St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, western humanity had developed an explicitly hierarchical worldview – that came to be known as the “Great Chain of Being” – used to position humans as the end to which all other beings were mere means. Patterson underscores the crucial point that the domination of human over human and its exercise through slavery, warfare, and genocide typically begins with the denigration of victims. But the means and methods of dehumanization are derivative, for speciesism provided the conceptual paradigm that encouraged, sustained, and justified western brutality toward other peoples. “Throughout the history of our ascent to dominance as the master species,” Patterson writes, “our victimization of animals has served as the model and foundation for our victimization of each other. The study of human history reveals the pattern: first, humans exploit and slaughter animals; then, they treat other people like animals and do the same to them.” Whether the conquerors are European imperialists, American colonialists, or German Nazis, western aggressors engaged in wordplay before swordplay, vilifying their victims – Africans, Native Americans, Filipinos, Japanese, Vietnamese, Iraqis, and other unfortunates – with opprobrious terms such as “rats,” “pigs,” “swine,” “monkeys,” “beasts,” and “filthy animals.” Once perceived as brute beasts or sub-humans occupying a lower evolutionary rung than white westerners, subjugated peoples were treated accordingly; once characterized as animals, they could be hunted down like animals. The first exiles from the moral community, animals provided a convenient discard bin for oppressors to dispose the oppressed. The connections are clear: “For a civilization built on the exploitation and slaughter of animals, the `lower’ and more degraded the human victims are, the easier it is to kill them.” Thus, colonialism, as Patterson describes, was a “natural extension of human supremacy over the animal kingdom.” For just as humans had subdued animals with their superior intelligence and technologies, so many Europeans believed that the white race had proven its superiority by bringing the “lower races” under its command. There are important parallels between speciesism and sexism and racism in the elevation of white male rationality to the touchstone of moral worth. The arguments European colonialists used to legitimate exploiting Africans – that they were less than human and inferior to white Europeans in ability to reason – are the very same justifications humans use to trap, hunt, confine, and kill animals. Once western norms of rationality were defined as the essence of humanity and social normality, by first using non-human animals as the measure of alterity, it was a short step to begin viewing odd, different, exotic, and eccentric peoples and types as non- or sub-human. Thus, the same criterion created to exclude animals from humans was also used to ostracize blacks, women, and numerous other groups from “humanity.” The oppression of blacks, women, and animals alike was grounded in an argument that biological inferiority predestined them for servitude. In the major strain of western thought, alleged rational beings (i.e., elite, white, western males) pronounce that the Other (i.e., women, people of color, animals) is deficient in rationality in ways crucial to their nature and status, and therefore are deemed and treated as inferior, subhuman, or nonhuman. Whereas the racist mindset creates a hierarchy of superior/inferior on the basis of skin color, and the sexist mentality splits men and women into greater and lower classes of beings, the speciesist outlook demeans and objectifies animals by dichotomizing the biological continuum into the antipodes of humans and animals. As racism stems from a hateful white supremacism, and sexism is the product of a bigoted male supremacism, so speciesism stems from and informs a violent human supremacism -- namely, the arrogant belief that humans have a natural or God-given right to use animals for any purpose they devise or, more generously, within the moral boundaries of welfarism and stewardship, which however was Judaic moral baggage official Christianity left behind.

#### Vote negative to endorse the standpoint of animals in challenging oppression – the divide between human and non-human is the root cause of all violence

**Best 9** - UT El Paso philosophy professor (Steven, “The Rise of Critical Animal Studies: Putting Theory into Action and Animal Liberation into Higher Education “, Journal for Critical Animal Studies, Volume VII, Issue 1, 2009, http://www.criticalanimalstudies.org/JCAS/Journal\_Articles\_download/issue\_9/JCAS%20VII%20Issue%201%20MAY%20ISSUE%20The%20Rise%20of%20Critical%20Animal%20Studies%20pgs%209-52.pdf,)

Postmodern critiques have been hugely influential in many theoretical strains of animal studies, but theorists could not employ the insights of postmodernism without overcoming their limitations. This is crucial for two reasons. First, deconstructionists and social constructionists are typically speciesists and dogmatic humanists (even those who deconstruct “humanism”!) who rarely challenge the human/animal dichotomy and analyze how it is used to advance false views of all animal, human and nonhuman. Second, they fail to see that the human/animal opposition underpins oppositions between reason/emotions, thought/body, men/women, white/black, and Western/non-Western. Yet as noted by theorists (e.g., Keith Thomas, Jim Mason, and Charles Patterson) 9 with broader optics and more inclusive theories than humanism, speciesism and animal domestication provided the conceptual template and social practice whereby humans begin to clearly distinguish between “human rationality” and “animal irrationality.” 10 Animals – defined as “brute beasts” lacking “rationality” – thereby provided the moral basement into which one could eject women, people of color, and other humans deemed to be subhuman or deficient in (Western male) “humanity.” Whereas nearly all histories, even so-called “radical” narratives, have been written from the human standpoint, a growing number of theorists have broken free of the speciesist straightjacket to examine history and society from the standpoint of (nonhuman) animals. This approach, as I define it, considers the interaction between human and nonhuman animals – past, present, and future -- and the need for profound changes in the way humans define themselves and relate to other sentient species and to the natural world as a whole. What I call the “animal standpoint” examines the origins and development of societies through the dynamic, symbiotic interrelationship between human and nonhuman animals. It therefore interprets history not from an evolutionary position that reifies human agency as the autonomous actions of a Promethean species, but rather from a co-evolutionary perspective that sees nonhuman animals as inseparably embedded in human history and as dynamic agents in their own right. 11 The animal standpoint seeks to illuminate the origins and development of dominator cultures, to preserve the wisdom and heritage of egalitarian values and social relations, and to discern what moral and social progress means in a far deeper sense than what is discernible through humanist historiography, anthropology, social theory, and philosophy. However “critical,” “subversive,” “groundbreaking,” or “radical” their probing of historical and social dynamics, very few theorists have managed to see beyond the humanist bias in order to adopt a proper analytical and moral relation to other animals; they have failed, in other words, to grasp the importance of nonhuman animals in human life, the profound ways in which the domination of humans over other animals creates conflict and disequilibrium in human relations to one another and to the Earth as a whole. Thus, the animal standpoint seeks generally to illuminate human biological and social evolution in important new ways, such as reveal the origins, dynamics, and development of dominator cultures, social hierarchies, economic and political inequalities, and asymmetrical systems of power that are violent and destructive to everything they touch. Providing perspectives and insights unattainable through other historical approaches, the animal standpoint analyzes how the domination of humans over nonhuman animals is intimately linked to the domination of humans over one another, as it also brings to light the environmental impact of large-scale animal slaughter and exploitation. A key thesis of animal standpoint theory is that nonhuman animals have been key driving and shaping forces of human thought, psychology, moral and social life**,** and history overall, and that in fundamental ways, the oppression of human over human is rooted in the oppression of human over nonhuman animal. Animal standpoint theory thus leads us ineluctably to understanding the commonalities of oppression, and hence to alliance politics and the systemic revolutionary viewpoint of total liberation.12 It demonstrates – would that dogmatic Left, eco-humanists, and so-called “environmentalists” take note! -- the profound importance of veganism and the animal rights/liberation movement for human liberation, peace and justice, and ecological healing and balance.

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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**

David Director of Debate at U Miami, Former President of CEDA, officer, American Forensic Association and National Communication Association. Lecturer in Communication studies and rhetoric. Advisor to Miami Urban Debate League, Masters in Communication, and Austin, JD, Suffolk University, attorney who focuses on criminal, personal injury and civil rights law, Argumentation and Debate Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making, Thirteen Edition

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) 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.

#### Specifically limited deliberative forums like debate which discuss Latin American policies prevent elite domination, develops agency, and promotes epistemological equality

**Baxter 10** (Jorge, Education Specialist, Department of Education and Culture in the Organization of American States, Former Coordinator of the Inter-American Program on Education for Democratic Values and Practices at the OAS, PHD in International Comparative Education and Policy from University of Maryland College Park, “Towards a Deliberative and Democratic Model of International Cooperation in Education in Latin America”, Inter-American Journal of Education for Democracy, 3(2), 224-254, <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/ried/article/viewFile/1016/1307>, Accessed: 7/30/13)

In the context of international¶ education cooperation and international¶ development in Latin America, where¶ there are great asymmetries in power and¶ resources, it seems that this critique could¶ have some validity. However, rather than¶ concluding that deliberation and participation¶ should be reduced, one could conclude (as¶ is argued in this paper) that they should¶ be enhanced and expanded. Those that¶ advocate for a “thicker” democratization in¶ the region would likely advocate for a more¶ substantive approach to deliberation in policy¶ which establishes certain parameters such¶ as “education is an intrinsic human right,”¶ and which would place an emphasis on¶ achieving quality education outcomes¶ for all as the goal. This does not mean that¶ they would not advocate for deliberation but¶ rather would set parameters for deliberation¶ in order to ensure that the outcomes do not¶ lead to “unjust” policy (e.g., a policy that¶ might promote more inequity in education).¶ Those that advocate for a “thinner” approach¶ to democratization would tend to advocate¶ for a procedural approach to deliberation in¶ education policy and would most likely place¶ emphasis on equal opportunity of access¶ to quality education.¶ Instability critique: Education in Latin¶ America suffers from too much instability and¶ is too politicized. Increasing participation and¶ deliberation would only further politicize the¶ situation and polarize those who advocate for¶ educational reform and those who block it.¶ The average term of a minister of education¶ is one-and-a-half years; each time a new¶ minister comes to office, new policies are¶ passed which, according to deliberative¶ democratic theory, would need to be reasoned¶ and debated with citizens. Deliberation in this¶ context would promote even more instability¶ and would lead to further politicization of¶ education reform.¶ Response: Political instability and¶ lack of continuity in policy reform are serious¶ limitations that to some degree are inherent¶ in democratic institutions and processes. The¶ reality is that if any education reform is to¶ succeed in the long term, it needs more than¶ the efforts of governments or international¶ organizations. It needs the sustained support¶ of stakeholders across sectors (public,¶ private, and civil society) and over time. It¶ has been argued that the main problem in¶ basic education in Latin America is the lack¶ of a broad social consensus, recognizing¶ that there is a problem of equity and quality¶ in the provision of education (Schiefelbein,¶ 1997). This lack of broad social consensus¶ is especially challenging where there is, as¶ noted in the critique, a lack of continuity¶ in education reform. Reform in education¶ takes time, sometimes decades. Ensuring¶ continuity in education reform policies is¶ therefore crucial, and this requires public¶ consensus. Deliberative forums convening¶ government, private sector, and civil society¶ groups can contribute to developing this public¶ consensus and to providing more continuity¶ in policy. Deliberative forums combined¶ with collaborative projects can help promote¶ learning, distribute institutional memory,¶ support capacity-building efforts, and bring¶ more resources to bear on the education¶ reform process. Creating a space for citizens¶ to deliberate on the role of education is¶ fundamental for promoting broad social¶ consensus around education reforms. In Latin¶ America, the most innovative and successful¶ reforms have all created multiple and¶ continuous opportunities for diverse groups¶ across the education sector and society to¶ provide input and to have opportunities for¶ meaningful collaborative action. International¶ organizations, leveraging their regional and¶ international position, can contribute by¶ promoting policy dialogue and collaborative¶ actions among ministries and also with key¶ stakeholders across sectors. The challenge¶ is to develop a better understanding of how¶ deliberation can be used to promote more¶ collaborative as opposed to more adversarial¶ and partisan forms of politics. This is perhaps¶ one area which deliberative theorists need to¶ explore more.¶ 5. Power critique: The final critique relates¶ the possibility that increasing deliberation¶ and participation can lead to increased¶ inequality. Fung and Wright (2003) note¶ that deliberation can turn into domination¶ in a context where “participants in these¶ processes usually face each other from¶ unequal positions of power.” Every reform¶ in education creates winners and losers, and¶ very few create “win-win” situations. Those¶ in power would have to submit to the rules of¶ deliberation and relinquish “control” over the¶ various dimensions of democratic decisionmaking.¶ This is naïve and not politically¶ feasible.¶ Response: This is a valid critique¶ worth considering. Structural inequalities¶ and asymmetries of power in governments¶ and international institutions in Latin America¶ have facilitated domination by elites in terms¶ of authority, power, and control in politics.¶ Asymmetries of power in international¶ cooperation in education are also clear,¶ especially when powerful financial (World¶ Bank, IDB, IMF) or political (OAS, UNESCO)¶ organizations engage with local stakeholders¶ and condition policy options with funding¶ or political support. What this paper has¶ argued is relevant again here: that instead of¶ rejecting further democratization in the face¶ of these challenges, including the challenge¶ of elite “domination,” what is needed is more¶ and better democracy, defined in terms of its¶ breadth, depth, range, and control. Finally,¶ dealing with elite domination in international¶ deliberative forums will require conscious and¶ skilled facilitation on the part of international¶ organizations, which themselves are often¶ elitist and hegemonic.¶ Final Thoughts: So What?¶ Perhaps the most critical question¶ that emerges in the argument for increased¶ democratization and deliberation is simply:¶ So what? Does increased democratization and¶ deliberation actually lead to better outcomes¶ in education? More empirical research on this¶ critical question is needed. However, experiments¶ in deliberative democracy in education reform¶ in Brazil through the UNESCO and Ministry of¶ Education Coordinated Action Plan and Porto¶ Alegre‘s Citizen School, and also to some degree¶ at the international level with the OAS pilot¶ experiment in developing a more democratic¶ model of international cooperation from 2001-¶ 2005, have shown that deliberative processes¶ can enhance learning on the part of those¶ participating. Fung and Wright (2003) refer to¶ these experiments in deliberation as “schools¶ of democracy” because participants exercise¶ their capacities of argument, planning, and¶ evaluation. Deliberation promotes joint reflection¶ and consideration of others’ views. Citizens¶ who participate in deliberative forums develop¶ competencies that are important not only for¶ active citizenship (listening, communication,¶ problem-solving, conflict resolution, selfregulation skills) but also crucial for managing¶ change and school reform. Many of the same¶ skills that are developed through citizen¶ deliberation and participation are also essential¶ for transforming school cultures, promoting¶ “learning organizations” (Senge, 2000), fostering¶ communities of reflective practitioners (Schon,¶ 1991) and developing communities of practice¶ (Wenger, 2001). There is evidence from some¶ research that democratic interactions can create¶ knowledge that is more rigorous, precise, and¶ relevant than that produced in authoritarian¶ environments (Jaramillo, 2005). Another¶ important aspect of enhancing deliberative¶ democracy and democratization is that it moves¶ from a focus on individuals and their own¶ preferences towards more collective forms of¶ learning and collaboration.¶ Up to now, international organizations¶ have endorsed a “thin” version of democratization¶ that is content with formal and centralized¶ mechanisms of “representation” and “policy¶ dialogue.” If a new, more deliberative and¶ democratic model of cooperation in education in¶ the region were to emerge, what would it look¶ like?¶ First of all, a more deliberative and¶ democratic model of international cooperation in¶ education would involve more direct and deeper¶ forms of participation from everyday citizens,¶ including teachers, school directors, families,¶ school communities, students, and mesolevel¶ actors such as civil society organizations.¶ This participation would move beyond simple¶ consultation to more authentic forms of joint¶ decision-making and deliberation. The model¶ would involve more accountability on the¶ part of international organizations in terms¶ of transparency, and would require injecting¶ ethical reasoning into policies and programming.¶ In addition, a new more democratic model of¶ international cooperation would expand the¶ range of policy options available to countries¶ through devolution of authority, power, and¶ control, combined with oversight and horizontal¶ accountability mechanisms. A more democratic¶ model of international cooperation would stress¶ valuing, systematizing, and disseminating¶ local knowledge and innovation. Finally,¶ democratization and deliberation in international¶ cooperation in education would lead to enhanced¶ learning and agency on the part of participating¶ countries, groups, and individuals, and thus¶ contribute to better outcomes in terms of quality¶ and equity in education at national and local¶ levels.

#### 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**

### case

#### Resistance via the ballot can only instill an adaptive politics of being and effaces the institutional constraints that reproduce structural violence

Brown 95—prof at UC Berkeley (Wendy, States of Injury, 21-3)

For some, fueled by opprobrium toward regulatory norms or other mo- dalities of domination, the language of "resistance" has taken up the ground vacated by a more expansive practice of freedom. For others, it is the discourse of “empowerment” that carries the ghost of freedom's valence ¶ 22¶. Yet as many have noted, insofar as resistance is an effect of the regime it opposes on the one hand, and insofar as its practitioners often seek to void it of normativity to differentiate it from the (regulatory) nature of what it opposes on the other, it is at best politically rebellious; at worst, politically amorphous. Resistance stands against, not for; it is re-action to domination, rarely willing to admit to a desire for it, and it is neutral with regard to possible political direction. Resistance is in no way constrained to a radical or emancipatory aim. a fact that emerges clearly as soon as one analogizes Foucault's notion of resistance to its companion terms in Freud or Nietzsche. Yet in some ways this point is less a critique of Foucault, who especially in his later years made clear that his political commitments were not identical with his theoretical ones (and un- apologetically revised the latter), than a sign of his misappropriation. For Foucault, resistance marks the presence of power and expands our under- standing of its mechanics, but it is in this regard an analytical strategy rather than an expressly political one. "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet. or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority to power. . . . (T]he strictly relational character of power relationships . . . depends upon a multiplicity of points of resis- tance: these play the role of adversary, target, support, or handle in power relations.\*39 This appreciation of the extent to which resistance is by no means inherently subversive of power also reminds us that it is only by recourse to a very non-Foucaultian moral evaluation of power as bad or that which is to be overcome that it is possible to equate resistance with that which is good, progressive, or seeking an end to domination. ¶ If popular and academic notions of resistance attach, however weakly at times, to a tradition of protest, the other contemporary substitute for a discourse of freedom—“empowerment”—would seem to correspond more closely to a tradition of idealist reconciliation. The language of resistance implicitly acknowledges the extent to which protest always transpires inside the regime; “empowerment,” in contrast, registers the possibility of generating one’s capacities, one’s “self-esteem,” one’s life course, without capitulating to constraints by particular regimes of power. But in so doing, contemporary discourses of empowerment too often signal an oddly adaptive and harmonious relationship with domination insofar as they locate an individual’s sense of worth and capacity in the register of individual feelings, a register implicitly located on some- thing of an other worldly plane vis-a-vis social and political power. In this regard, despite its apparent locution of resistance to subjection, contem- porary discourses of empowerment partake strongly of liberal solipsism—the radical decontextualization of the subject characteristic of¶ 23¶ liberal discourse that is key to the fictional sovereign individualism of liberalism. Moreover, in its almost exclusive focus on subjects’ emotionalbearing and self-regard, empowerment is a formulation that converges with a regime’s own legitimacy needs in masking the power of the regime.¶ This is not to suggest that talk of empowerment is always only illusion or delusion. It is to argue, rather, that while the notion of empowerment articulates that feature of freedom concerned with action, with being more than the consumer subject figured in discourses of rights and eco- nomic democracy, contemporary deployments of that notion also draw so heavily on an undeconstructed subjectivity that they risk establishing a wide chasm between the (experience of) empowerment and an actual capacity to shape the terms of political, social, or economic life. Indeed, the possibility that one can “feel empowered” without being so forms an important element of legitimacy for the antidemocratic dimensions of liberalism.

#### The politics of identity is reactionary which ultimately creates an attachment to the status of oppression---the affirmative’s emphasis on anti-blackness and exclusion from Whiteness perversely recreate those as valorized ideals

Bhambra 10—U Warwick—AND—Victoria Margree—School of Humanities, U Brighton (Identity Politics and the Need for a ‘Tomorrow’, http://www.academia.edu/471824/Identity\_Politics\_and\_the\_Need\_for\_a\_Tomorrow\_)

2 The Reification of Identity We wish to turn now to a related problem within identity politicsthat can be best described as the problem of the reiﬁcation of politicised identities. Brown (1995) positions herself within thedebate about identity politics by seeking to elaborate on “the wounded character of politicised identity’s desire” (ibid: 55); thatis, the problem of “wounded attachments” whereby a claim to identity becomes over-invested in its own historical suffering and perpetuates its injury through its refusal to give up its identity claim. Brown’s argument is that where politicised identity is founded upon an experience of exclusion, for example, exclusion itself becomes perversely valorised in the continuance of that identity. In such cases, group activity operates to maintain and reproduce the identity created by injury (exclusion) rather than– and indeed, often in opposition to – resolving the injurious social relations that generated claims around that identity in the ﬁrst place. If things have to have a history in order to have af uture, then the problem becomes that of how history is con-structed in order to make the future. To the extent that, for Brown, identity is associated primarily with (historical) injury, the future for that identity is then already determined by the injury “as both bound to the history that produced it and as a reproach to the present which embodies that history” (ibid 1995: 73). Brown’s sug-gestion that as it is not possible to undo the past, the focus back- wards entraps the identity in reactionary practices, is, we believe,too stark and we will pursue this later in the article. Politicised identity, Brown maintains, “emerges and obtains its unifying coherence through the politicisation of exclusion from an ostensible universal, as a protest against exclusion” (ibid: 65). Its continuing existence requires both a belief in the legitimacy of the universal ideal (for example, ideals of opportunity, and re- ward in proportion to effort) and enduring exclusion from those ideals. Brown draws upon Nietzsche in arguing that such identi-ties, produced in reaction to conditions of disempowerment andinequality, then become invested in their own impotence through practices of, for example, reproach, complaint, and revenge. These are “reactions” in the Nietzschean sense since they are substitutes for actions or can be seen as negative forms of action. Rather than acting to remove the cause(s) of suffering, that suf-fering is instead ameliorated (to some extent) through “the estab-lishment of suffering as the measure of social virtue” (ibid 1995:70), and is compensated for by the vengeful pleasures of recrimnation. Such practices, she argues, stand in sharp distinction to –in fact, provide obstacles to – practices that would seek to dispel the conditions of exclusion. Brown casts the dilemma discussed above in terms of a choicebetween past and future, and adapting Nietzsche, exhorts theadoption of a (collective) will that would become the “redeemer of history” (ibid: 72) through its focus on the possibilities of creat-ing different futures. As Brown reads Nietzsche, the one thingthat the will cannot exert its power over is the past, the “it was”.Confronted with its impotence with respect to the events of thepast, the will is threatened with becoming simply an “angry spec-tator” mired in bitter recognition of its own helplessness. The onehope for the will is that it may, instead, achieve a kind of mastery over that past such that, although “what has happened” cannotbe altered, the past can be denied the power of continuing to de-termine the present and future. It is only this focus on the future, Brown continues, and the capacity to make a future in the face of human frailties and injustices that spares us from a rancorous decline into despair. Identity politics structured by ressentiment – that is, by suffering caused by past events – can only break outof the cycle of “slave morality” by remaking the present againstthe terms of the past, a remaking that requires a “forgetting” of that past. An act of liberation, of self-afﬁrmation, this “forgettingof the past” requires an “overcoming” of the past that offers iden-tity in relationship to suffering, in favour of a future in whichidentity is to be deﬁned differently. In arguing thus, Brown’s work becomes aligned with a posi-tion that sees the way forward for emancipatory politics as re-siding in a movement away from a “politics of memory” (Kilby 2002: 203) that is committed to articulating past injustices andsuffering. While we agree that investment in identities prem-ised upon suffering can function as an obstacle to alleviating the causes of that suffering, we believe that Brown’s argument as outlined is problematic. First, following Kilby (2002), we share a concern about any turn to the future that is ﬁgured as a complete abandonment of the past. This is because for those who have suffered oppression and exclusion, the injunction to give up articulating a pain that is still felt may seem cruel and impossible to meet. We would argue instead that the “turn to the future” that theorists such as Brown and Grosz callfor, to revitalise feminism and other emancipatory politics, need not be conceived of as a brute rejection of the past. Indeed, Brown herself recognises the problems involved here, stating that [since] erased histories and historical invisibility are themselves suchintegral elements of the pain inscribed in most subjugated identities[then] the counsel of forgetting, at least in its unreconstructedNietzschean form, seems inappropriate if not cruel (1995: 74). She implies, in fact, that the demand exerted by those in painmay be no more than the demand to exorcise that pain throughrecognition: “all that such pain may long for – more than revenge– is the chance to be heard into a certain release, recognised intoself-overcoming, incited into possibilities for triumphing over, and hence, losing itself” (1995: 74-75). Brown wishes to establish the political importance of remembering “painful” historical events but with a crucial caveat: that the purpose of remembering pain is to enable its release . The challenge then, according to her,is to create a political culture in which this project does not mutate into one of remembering pain for its own sake. Indeed, if Brown feels that this may be “a pass where we ought to part with Nietzsche” (1995: 74), then Freud may be a more suit-able companion. Since his early work with Breuer, Freud’s writ-ings have suggested the (only apparent) paradox that remember-ing is often a condition of forgetting. The hysterical patient, who is doomed to repeat in symptoms and compulsive actions a past she cannot adequately recall, is helped to remember that trau-matic past in order then to move beyond it: she must remember inorder to forget and to forget in order to be able to live in the present. 7 This model seems to us to be particularly helpful for thedilemma articulated by both Brown (1995) and Kilby (2002),insisting as it does that “forgetting” (at least, loosening the holdof the past, in order to enable the future) cannot be achieved without ﬁrst remembering the traumatic past. Indeed, this wouldseem to be similar to the message of Beloved , whose central motif of haunting (is the adult woman, “Beloved”, Sethe’s murderedchild returned in spectral form?) dramatises the tendency of theunanalysed traumatic past to keep on returning, constraining, asit does so, the present to be like the past, and thereby, disallow-ing the possibility of a future different from that past. As Sarah Ahmed argues in her response to Brown, “in order to break the seal of the past, in order to move away from attach-ments that are hurtful, we must ﬁrst bring them into the realm of political action” (2004: 33). We would add that the task of analys-ing the traumatic past, and thus opening up the possibility of political action, is unlikely to be achievable by individuals on their own, but that this, instead, requires a “community” of participants dedicated to the serious epistemic work of rememberingand interpreting the objective social conditions that made up thatpast and continue in the present. The “pain” of historical injury is not simply an individual psychological issue, but stems from objective social conditions which perpetuate, for the most part, forms of injustice and inequality into the present. In sum, Brown presents too stark a choice between past andfuture. In the example of Beloved with which we began thisarticle, Paul D’s acceptance of Sethe’s experiences of slavery asdistinct from his own, enable them both to arrive at new under-standings of their experience. Such understanding is a way of partially “undoing” the (effects of) the past and coming to terms with the locatedness of one’s being in the world (Mohanty 1995). As this example shows, opening up a future, and attending to theongoing effects of a traumatic past, are only incorrectly under-stood as alternatives. A second set of problems with Brown’s critique of identity poli-tics emerge from what we regard as her tendency to individualise social problems as problems that are the possession and theresponsibility of the “wounded” group. Brown suggests that the problems associated with identity politics can be overcome through a “shift in the character of political expression and politi-cal claims common to much politicised identity” (1995: 75). She deﬁnes this shift as one in which identity would be expressed in terms of desire rather than of ontology by supplanting the lan-guage of “I am” with the language of “I want this for us” (1995:75). Such a reconﬁguration, she argues, would create an opportu-nity to “rehabilitate the memory of desire within identiﬁcatory processes…prior to [their] wounding” (1995: 75). It would fur-ther refocus attention on the future possibilities present in theidentity as opposed to the identity being foreclosed through its attention to past-based grievances.

#### Transnational feminism caters to the Western, middle-class female subject and attempts to universalize her methodology for liberation – this ignores differences among women and perpetuates ethnocentrism

Mendoza, 2

Breny Mendoz, California State University; “Transnational feminisms in question,” 3/22/2002, www.glefas.org/glefas/files/biblio/transnacional\_feminisms\_in\_question\_breny\_mendoza.pdf //bghs-ms

What do transnational feminisms mean today? Perhaps a preliminary summary of transnational feminisms is that they represent a serious attempt to overcome the shortcomings of global sisterhood politics and that there are clear distinctions between them. **Transnational feminist theorizations depart from the differences between women** and largely appropriate contemporary analysis of transnational capitalism to formulate theory and practice and to understand themselves as generated by a novel transnational condition. This differentiates transnational feminisms from global feminism. However, this same form of theorization of transnational feminisms leaves unquestioned (and therefore unanswered) the ways in which the feminist political project will solve the tensions and divisions between women across the divides of class, race, ethnicity, sexuality and national borders. On what grounds will transnational solidarity be built under transnational capitalist conditions, if it is at all possible? Paradoxically, it also appears that some strands of transnational feminism, particularly in that blurry space between global feminism and transnational theory and practice, still tend to be attached to ideas that come close to a liberal multicultural stance or a sort of new-found cosmopolitanism with a subtextual parochialism, rather than being clear about the investments of transnational capital that lie behind the ideology of multiculturalism. On the other hand, because transnational feminism is a term that, as with global feminism before, is mainly circulated within western feminist academia and is associated with Third World theoretical production in western academia, it runs the risk of becoming a code word for Third World feminism. There are already some signs of this in the romanticization of Third World activism in the global arena and in the limitation of transnational solidarity to Third World women workers across the First/Third World divide. This means that transnational feminism could sooner or later stand in as the ‘other’ of western white feminism.¶ At another analytical level, we can contend that **transnational feminisms may have exacerbated inequalities between women at the local level**, as an analysis of the Latin American feminist transnational experience shows us. Also, at the transnational level itself, transnational feminist practices demonstrate their shortcomings, as the cultural and political debates surrounding the women’s rights as human rights movement make us aware. At the pragmatic, but also the theoretical, level, transnational feminisms have not been able to solve the contradictions and ambiguities that lie at the heart of global capitalism and the ‘specters of colonialism’. It seems that **the accusation of ethnocentrism that feminism in the West faced in the 1980s and earlier has not been totally excised from transnational feminist debates and practices.**

# 2nc

#### The role of your ballot is vote for the team producing the most liberating scholarship

**Best 7** [Steven Best, Chair of Philosophy at UT-EP, 2007 JCAS 5.2]

Commonalities of Oppression¶ “Compassion, in which all ethics must take root, can only attain its full breadth and depth¶ if it embraces all living creatures and does not limit itself to humankind.” Albert¶ Schweitzer¶ “The animals of the world exist for their own reasons. They were not made for humans¶ any more than black people were made for white, or women created for men.” Alice¶ Walker¶ The construction of industrial stockyards, the total objectification of nonhuman animals,¶ and the mechanized murder of innocent beings should have sounded a loud warning to¶ humanity that such a process might one day be applied to them, as it was in Nazi¶ Germany. If humans had not exploited animals, moreover, they might not have exploited¶ humans, or, at the very least, they would not have had handy conceptual models and¶ technologies for enforcing domination over others. “A better understanding of these¶ connections,” Patterson states, “should help make our planet a more humane and livable¶ place for all of us – people and animals alike, A new awareness is essential for the¶ survival of our endangered planet.”40 The most important objective of the book, indeed, is to promote a new ethics and¶ mode of perception. Eternal Treblinka affects a radical shift in the way we understand¶ oppression, domination, power, and hierarchy. It is both an effect of these changes, and,¶ hopefully, a catalyst to deepen political resistance to corporate domination and hierarchy¶ in all forms. Given its broad framing that highlights the crucial importance of human¶ domination over animals for slavery, racism, colonialism, and anti-Semitism, Eternal¶ Treblinka could and should revolutionize fields such as Holocaust studies, colonial and¶ postcolonial studies, and African American studies. But this can happen only if, to be¶ blunt, humanists, “radicals,” and “progressives” in academia and society in general¶ remove their speciesist blinders in order to grasp the enormity of animal suffering, its¶ monumental moral wrong in needless and unjustifiable exploitation of animals, and the¶ larger structural matrix in which human-over-human domination and human-over-animal¶ domination emerge from the same prejudiced, power-oriented, and pathological violent¶ mindset. Political resistance in western nations, above all, will advance a quantum leap¶ when enough people recognize that the movements for human liberation, animal¶ liberation, and earth liberation are so deeply interconnected that no one objective is¶ possible without the realization of the others.¶ A truly revolutionary social theory and movement seeks to emancipate members¶ of one species from oppression, but rather all species and the earth itself from the grip of¶ human domination and colonization. A future “revolutionary movement” worthy of the¶ name will grasp the ancient roots of hierarchy, such as took shape with the emergence of¶ agricultural societies, and incorporate a new ethics of nature that overcomes¶ instrumentalism and hierarchies of all forms.41 Humanism is a form of prejudice, bias,¶ bigotry, and destructive supremacism; it is a stale, antiquated, immature, and dysfunction¶ dogma; it is a form of fundamentalism, derived from the Church of “Reason” and, in¶ comparison with the vast living web of life still humming and interacting, however¶ tattered and damaged, it is, writ large, a tribal morality – in which killing a member of¶ your own “tribe” is wrong but any barbarity unleashed on another tribe is acceptable if¶ not laudable. Ultimately, humanism is pseudo-universalism, a Kantian quackery, a¶ hypocritical pretense to ethics, a dysfunctional human identity and cosmological map¶ helping to drive us ever-deeper into an evolutionary cul-de-sac.

#### Anthropocentrism outweighs – guarantees total destruction of the Earth

**Gottlieb 94 –** Professor of Humanities at Worcester Polytechnic Institute; holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy from Brandeis University (Roger, “Ethics and Trauma: Levinas, Feminism, and Deep Ecology,” *Crosscurrents: A Journal of Religion and Intellectual Life*, summer 1994, http://www.crosscurrents.org/feministecology.htm, Accessed 07-26-2011)

Here I will at least begin in agreement with Levinas. As he rejects an ethics proceeding on the basis of self-interest, so I believe the anthropocentric perspectives of conservation or liberal environmentalism cannot take us far enough. Our relations with nonhuman nature are poisoned and not just because we have set up feedback loops that already lead to mass starvations, skyrocketing environmental disease rates, and devastation of natural resources. The problem with ecocide is not just that it hurts human beings. Our uncaring violence also violates the very ground of our being, our natural body, our home. Such violence is done not simply to the other – as if the rainforest, the river, the atmosphere, the species made extinct are totally different from ourselves. Rather, we have crucified ourselves-in-relation-to-the-other, fracturing a mode of being in which self and other can no more be conceived as fully in isolation from each other than can a mother and a nursing child. We are that child, and nonhuman nature is that mother. If this image seems too maudlin, let us remember that other lactating women can feed an infant, but we have only one earth mother. What moral stance will be shaped by our personal sense that we are poisoning ourselves, our environment, and so many kindred spirits of the air, water, and forests? To begin, we may see this tragic situation as setting the limits to Levinas's perspective. The other which is nonhuman nature is not simply known by a "trace," nor is it something of which all knowledge is necessarily instrumental. This other is inside us as well as outside us. We prove it with every breath we take, every bit of food we eat, every glass of water we drink. We do not have to find shadowy traces on or in the faces of trees or lakes, topsoil or air: we are made from them. Levinas denies this sense of connection with nature. Our "natural" side represents for him a threat of simple consumption or use of the other, a spontaneous response which must be obliterated by the power of ethics in general (and, for him in particular, Jewish religious law(23) ). A "natural" response lacks discipline; without the capacity to heed the call of the other, unable to sublate the self's egoism. Worship of nature would ultimately result in an "everything-is-permitted" mentality, a close relative of Nazism itself. For Levinas, to think of people as "natural" beings is to assimilate them to a totality, a category or species which makes no room for the kind of individuality required by ethics.(24) He refers to the "elemental" or the "there is" as unmanaged, unaltered, "natural" conditions or forces that are essentially alien to the categories and conditions of moral life.(25) One can only lament that Levinas has read nature -- as to some extent (despite his intentions) he has read selfhood -- through the lens of masculine culture. It is precisely our sense of belonging to nature as system, as interaction, as interdependence, which can provide the basis for an ethics appropriate to the trauma of ecocide. As cultural feminism sought to expand our sense of personal identity to a sense of inter-identification with the human other, so this ecological ethics would expand our personal and species sense of identity into an inter-identification with the natural world. Such a realization can lead us to an ethics appropriate to our time, a dimension of which has come to be known as "deep ecology."(26) For this ethics, we do not begin from the uniqueness of our human selfhood, existing against a taken-for-granted background of earth and sky. Nor is our body somehow irrelevant to ethical relations, with knowledge of it reduced always to tactics of domination. Our knowledge does not assimilate the other to the same, but reveals and furthers the continuing dance of interdependence. And our ethical motivation is neither rationalist system nor individualistic self-interest, but a sense of connection to all of life. The deep ecology sense of self-realization goes beyond the modern Western sense of "self" as an isolated ego striving for hedonistic gratification. . . . . Self, in this sense, is experienced as integrated with the whole of nature.(27) Having gained distance and sophistication of perception [from the development of science and political freedoms] we can turn and recognize who we have been all along. . . . we are our world knowing itself. We can relinquish our separateness. We can come home again -- and participate in our world in a richer, more responsible and poignantly beautiful way.(28) Ecological ways of knowing nature are necessarily participatory. [This] knowledge is ecological and plural, reflecting both the diversity of natural ecosystems and the diversity in cultures that nature-based living gives rise to. The recovery of the feminine principle is based on inclusiveness. It is a recovery in nature, woman and man of creative forms of being and perceiving. In nature it implies seeing nature as a live organism. In woman it implies seeing women as productive and active. Finally, in men the recovery of the feminine principle implies a relocation of action and activity to create life-enhancing, not life-reducing and life-threatening societies.(29) In this context, the knowing ego is not set against a world it seeks to control, but one of which it is a part. To continue the feminist perspective, the mother knows or seeks to know the child's needs. Does it make sense to think of her answering the call of the child in abstraction from such knowledge? Is such knowledge necessarily domination? Or is it essential to a project of care, respect and love, precisely because the knower has an intimate, emotional connection with the known?(30) Our ecological vision locates us in such close relation with our natural home that knowledge of it is knowledge of ourselves. And this is not, contrary to Levinas's fear, reducing the other to the same, but a celebration of a larger, more inclusive, and still complex and articulated self.(31) The noble and terrible burden of Levinas's individuated responsibility for sheer existence gives way to a different dream, a different prayer: Being rock, being gas, being mist, being Mind, Being the mesons traveling among the galaxies with the speed of light, You have come here, my beloved one. . . . You have manifested yourself as trees, as grass, as butterflies, as single-celled beings, and as chrysanthemums; but the eyes with which you looked at me this morning tell me you have never died.(32) In this prayer, we are, quite simply, all in it together. And, although this new ecological Holocaust -- this creation of planet Auschwitz – is under way, it is not yet final. We have time to step back from the brink, to repair our world. But only if we see that world not as another across an irreducible gap of loneliness and unchosen obligation, but as a part of ourselves as we are part of it, to be redeemed not out of duty, but out of love; neither for ourselves nor for the other, but for us all.

#### Omission is a social script.

**Bell and Russell 2k** [Anne C. and Constance L., “Beyond Human, beyond Words: Anthropocentrism, Critical Pedagogy, and the Poststructuralist Turn”, Canadian Journal of Education, Vol. 25, No. 3 pp. 188-203, JSTOR]

Critical pedagogy with a background in environmental thought and education: the influence of the relationships among humans and the “more-than-human world” (Abram, 1996) and the way these relationships are described in a modern industrial world and the implications and consequences (such as the current environmental crisis – species extinction, ozone depletion, acid rain, deforestation, toxic contamination, topsoil depletion, climate change). This reflects predominant Western concepts of nature as mindless matter, a resource to be exploited for human gain. Therefore there is a need to critique prevailing discourses about nature and to consider alternative representations. ¶ This is fundamental not just to the environmentalists as there is a need to disrupt the social scripts that structure and legitimise the human domination of nonhuman nature. The exploitation of nature is not separate from the exploitation of human groups. So we must call into question the instrumental exploitive gaze through which humans distance ourselves from the rest of nature (Carlson, 1995).¶ So movements against oppression need to support each other. So far race, gender, sexuality, class has proceeded with little acknowledgement of the systematic links between human oppressions and the domination of nature. The more-than-human world and the human relationships to it have been ignored as if irrelevant. The voice of the nonhuman has been absent from histories and rethinking culturally positioned essentialisms is required.¶ There is a need to scrutinise the language used, the meanings deployed, and the episomological frameworks of past eras. To keep social categories the as unchanging and stable is to reproduce the prevailing relations of power (Britzman et al., 1991).¶ For example: Freire (1990) states that the difference between man and animal as defined by sharp hierarchical dichotomy that established human superiority. Humans (alone) are aware, self-conscious beings who are able to infuse the world with creative presence, to overcome situations that limit them and thus demonstrate a “decisive attitude towards the world”. Animals lack such traits – and therefore being doomed to passively accept the given that their lives are totally determined. Thus humans inhabit a world which they create and transform and from which they separate themselves – animals, however, only inhabit a mere physical space to which they are organically bound. This becomes the normal way of seeing the world (which like other discourses of normalcy) limiting the possibilities of taking up and confronting inequities. The primacy of human enterprise is simply not questioned.¶ Anthropocentrism passes unchallenged.¶ Roots of a critique¶ Root metaphors in critical pedagogy that reinforce the problem of anthropocentric thinking:¶  The notion of change as inherently progressive¶  Faith in the power of rational thought¶  An understanding of individuals as “potentially free, voluntaristic entities who will take responsibility for creating themselves when freed from societal forms of oppression”¶ These assumptions are part of the Enlightenment legacy on which critical pedagogy and liberal education is generally based.¶ Proponents of critical pedagogy have yet to confront the ecological consequences of an educational process that reinforces beliefs and practices formed when unlimited economic expansion and social progress seemed promised (Bowers, 1993b). Bringing into focus the underlying tension between “freedom” as it is constituted within critical pedagogy and the limits that emerge through consideration of humans’ interdependence with the more-than-human world.¶ Tension is symptomatic of anthropocentrism and is leads to the assumption that humans are different and in fact superior (in Western thought), thus justifying the exploitation of nature and “othered” human groups.¶ Language, when though of an exclusively human property, undermines our embodied sense of interdependence with the more-than-human world, rather than being an entry point of communication webs around us. It becomes the medium through which we set ourselves apart and above.¶ Language allows us to give meaning to the world around us. Subjectivity is constructed by and in language. So… “if subjectivity, willing, valuation, and meaning are securely lodged in the domain of humanity, the possibility of encountering anything more than material objects in nature is nil.” (Evernden, 1992).

#### 4. Pure alt framing is key

**Kochi and Ordan 08 –** (Dec. 2008, Tarik Kochi, PhD, Lecturer in Law & International Security, University of Sussex, Noam Ordan, linguist and translator, conducts research in Translation Studies at Bar Ilan University, research focus on human cultural history, “An argument for the global suicide of humanity,” Borderlands, <http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol7no3_2008/kochiordan_argument.pdf>) Both liberal and social revolutionary models thus seem to run into the same problems that surround the notion of progress; each play out a modern discourse of sacrifice in which some forms of life and modes of living are set aside in favour of the promise of a future good. Caught between social hopes and political myths, the challenge of responding to environmental destruction confronts, starkly, the core of a discourse of modernity characterised by reflection, responsibility and action. Given the increasing pressures upon the human habitat, this modern discourse will either deliver or it will fail. There is little room for an existence in between: either the Enlightenment fulfils its potentiality or it shows its hand as the bearer of impossibility. If the possibilities of the Enlightenment are to be fulfilled then this can only happen if the old idea of the progress of the human species, exemplified by Hawking’s cosmic colonisation, is fundamentally rethought and replaced by a new form of self-comprehension. This self-comprehension would need to negate and limit the old modern humanism by a radical anti-humanism. The aim, however, would be to not just accept one side or the other, but to re-think the basis of moral action along the lines of a dialectical, utopian anti-humanism. Importantly, though, getting past inadequate conceptions of action, historical time and the futural promise of progress may be dependent upon radically re-comprehending the relationship between humanity and nature in such a way that the human is no longer viewed as the sole core of the subject, or the being of highest value. The human would thus need to no longer be thought of as a master that stands over the non-human. Rather, the human and the non-human need to be grasped together, with the former bearing dignity only so long as it understands itself as a part of the latter.

#### This is fundamentally a question of identity --- how do we use it as a guidepost for activism? --- simply because we have not experienced the same oppression as they have does not mean that our opinions aren’t valuable --- we’re not appropriating their cause --- you should view debate as an epistemological community where we can find the best method to create change.

**Bhambra and Margree** **10**– Gurminder K, U Warwick, and Victoria, School of Humanities, U Brighton (Identity Politics and the Need for a ‘Tomorrow’, Economic & Political

Weekly, April 10, 2010 vol xlv no 15, http://www.academia.edu/471824/Identity\_Politics\_and\_the\_Need\_for\_a\_Tomorrow\_)

We suggest that alternative models of identity and community are required from those put forward by essentialist theories, andthat these are offered by the work of two theorists, SatyaMohanty and Lynn Hankinson Nelson. Mohanty’s ([1993] 2000)post-positivist, realist theorisation of identity suggests a way through the impasses of essentialism, while avoiding the excessesof the postmodernism that Bramen, among others, derides as aproposed alternative to identity politics. For Mohanty ([1993]2000), identities must be understood as theoretical constructions that enable subjects to read the world in particular ways; as such, substantial claims about identity are, in fact, implicit explana-tions of the social world and its constitutive relations of power. Experience – that from which identity is usually thought to derive– is not something that simply occurs, or announces its meaningand signiﬁcance in a self-evident fashion: rather, experience is always a work of interpretation that is collectively produced (Scott 1991). Mohanty’s work resonates with that of Nelson (1993), whosimilarly insists upon the communal nature of meaning ork nowledge-making. Rejecting both foundationalist views of knowledge and the postmodern alternative which announces the“death of the subject” and the impossibility of epistemology,Nelson argues instead that, it is not individuals who are theagents of epistemology, but communities. Since it is not possiblefor an individual to know something that another individualcould not also (possibly) know, it must be that the ability to makesense of the world proceeds from shared conceptual frameworksand practices. Thus, it is the community that is the generator andrepository of knowledge. Bringing Mohanty’s work on identity astheoretical construction together with Nelson’s work on episte-mological communities therefore suggests that, “identity” is one of the knowledges that is produced and enabled for and by individu-als in the context of the communities within which they exist. The post-positivist reformulation of “experience” is necessary here as it privileges understandings that emerge through the processing of experience in the context of negotiated premises about the world, over experience itself producing self-evident knowledge (self-evident, however, only to the one who has “had” the experience). This distinction is crucial for, if it is not the expe-rience of, for example, sexual discrimination that “makes” one afeminist, but rather, the paradigm through which one attempts tounderstand acts of sexual discrimination, then it is not necessary to have actually had the experience oneself in order to make theidentiﬁcation “feminist”. If being a “feminist” is not a given factof a particular social (and/or biological) location – that is, beingdesignated “female” – but is, in Mohanty’s terms, an “achieve-ment” – that is, something worked towards through a process of analysis and interpretation – then two implications follow. First,that not all women are feminists. Second, that feminism is some-thing that is “achievable” by men. 3 While it is accepted that experiences are not merely theoretical or conceptual constructs which can be transferred from one person to another with transparency, we think that there is some-thing politically self-defeating about insisting that one can only understand an experience (or then comment upon it) if one has actually had the experience oneself. As Rege (1998) argues, to privilege knowledge claims on the basis of direct experience, orthen on claims of authenticity, can lead to a narrow identity poli-tics that limits the emancipatory potential of the movements or organisations making such claims. Further, if it is not possible to understand an experience one has not had, then what point is there in listening to each other? Following Said, such a view seems to authorise privileged groups to ignore the discourses of disadvantaged ones, or, we would add, to place exclusive responsibility for addressing injustice with the oppressed themselves. Indeed, as Rege suggests, reluctance to speak about the experi-ence of others has led to an assumption on the part of some whitefeminists that “confronting racism is the sole responsibility of black feminists”, just as today “issues of caste become the soleresponsibility of the dalit women’s organisations” (Rege 1998).Her argument for a dalit feminist standpoint, then, is not made in terms solely of the experiences of dalit women, but rather a call for others to “educate themselves about the histories, the preferred social relations and utopias and the struggles of the marginalised” (Rege 1998). This, she argues, allows “their cause” to become “our cause”, not as a form of appropriation of “their” struggle, but through the transformation of subjectivities that enables a recognition that “their” struggle is also “our” struggle. Following Rege, we suggest that social processes can facilitate the understanding of experiences, thus making those experi-ences the possible object of analysis and action for all, while recognising that they are not equally available or powerful forall subjects. 4 Understandings of identity as given and essential, then, we suggest, need to give way to understandings which accept them as socially constructed and contingent on the work of particular,overlapping, epistemological communities that agree that this orthat is a viable and recognised identity. Such an understanding avoids what Bramen identiﬁes as the postmodern excesses of “post-racial” theory, where in this “world without borders (“rac-ism is real, but race is not”) one can be anything one wants to be: a black kid in Harlem can be Croatian-American, if that is whathe chooses, and a white kid from Iowa can be Korean-American”(2002: 6). Unconstrained choice is not possible to the extent that,as Nelson (1993) argues, the concept of the epistemological com-munity requires any individual knowledge claim to sustain itself in relation to standards of evaluation that already exist and thatare social. Any claim to identity, then, would have to be recog-nised by particular communities as valid in order to be success-ful. This further shifts the discussion beyond the limitations of essentialist accounts of identity by recognising that the commu-nities that confer identity are constituted through their shared epistemological frameworks and not necessarily by shared characteristics of their members conceived of as irreducible. 5 Hence, the epistemological community that enables us to identify our-selves as feminists is one that is built up out of a broadly agreed upon paradigm for interpreting the world and the relations between the sexes: it is not one that is premised upon possessing the physical attribute of being a woman or upon sharing the same experiences. Since at least the 1970s, a key aspect of black and/orpostcolonial feminism has been to identify the problems associated with such assumptions (see, for discussion, Rege 1998, 2000). We believe that it is the identiﬁcation of injustice which calls forth action and thus allows for the construction of healthy solidarities. 6 While it is accepted that there may be important differ-ences between those who recognise the injustice of disadvantage while being, in some respects, its beneﬁciary (for example, men, white people, brahmins), and those who recognise the injustice from the position of being at its effect (women, ethnic minorities,dalits), we would privilege the importance of a shared political commitment to equality as the basis for negotiating such differences. Our argument here is that thinking through identity claims from the basis of understanding them as epistemological communities militates against exclusionary politics (and its asso-ciated problems) since the emphasis comes to be on participation in a shared epistemological and political project as opposed to notions of ﬁxed characteristics – the focus is on the activities indi- viduals participate in rather than the characteristics they aredeemed to possess. Identity is thus deﬁned further as a function of activity located in particular social locations (understood asthe complex of objective forces that inﬂuence the conditions in which one lives) rather than of nature or origin (Mohanty 1995:109-10). As such, the communities that enable identity should not be conceived of as “imagined” since they are produced by very real actions, practices and projects.

#### All forms of exclusion are patterned off the human/non-human divide- de-normalizing the anthropocentric order is critical to challenging the endless war on difference

**Kochi, 9** (Tarik, Sussex law school, Species war: Law, Violence and Animals, Law Culture and Humanities Oct 5.3)//RSW

This reflection need not be seen as carried out by every individual on a daily basis but rather as that which is drawn upon from time to time within public life as humans inter-subjectively coordinate their actions in accordance with particular enunciated ends and plan for the future. 21 In this respect, the violence and killing of species war is not simply a question of survival or bare life, instead, it is bound up with a consideration of the good. For most modern humans in the West the “good life” involves the daily killing of animals for dietary need and for pleasure. At the heart of the question of species war, and all war for that matter, resides a question about the legitimacy of violence linked to a philosophy of value. 22 The question of war-law sits within a wider history of decision making about the relative values of different forms of life. “Legitimate” violence is under-laid by cultural, religious, moral, political and philosophical conceptions about the relative values of forms of life. Playing out through history are distinctions and hierarchies of life-value that are extensions of the original human-animal distinction. Distinctions that can be thought to follow from the human-animal distinction are those, for example, drawn between: Hellenes and barbarians; Europeans and Orientals; whites and blacks; the “civilized” and the “uncivilized”; Nazis and Jews; Israeli’s and Arabs; colonizers and the colonized. Historically these practices and regimes of violence have been culturally, politically and legally normal-ized in a manner that replicates the normalization of the violence carried out against non-human animals. Unpacking, criticizing and challenging the forms of violence, which in different historical moments appear as “normal,” is one of the ongoing tasks of any critic who is concerned with the question of what war does to law and of what law does to war? The critic of war is thus a critic of war’s norm-alization.

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#### 3. Learning the right approach to problems is how we learn good decision-making skills

**Perkins**, senior professor of education – Harvard Graduate School of Education, ‘**9**

(David, Education and a Civil Society: Teaching Evidence-Based Decision Making, p. 16)

Good decision making can be seen as a double balancing act. The decision maker decides how to decide, adopting a more intuitive or analytic approach in a more narrative or quantitative or mixed style suited to stakes, knowledge, and personal resonance. • High-stakes decisions recommend a more analytic approach with both narrative and quantitative/tabular representations to crosscheck one another but with caution about diminishing returns for extended elaboration. • Extensive knowledge and experience enable more effective use of intuition and narrative modes of representation—but with awareness that the situation may require “thinking out of the box” in ways that challenge one’s knowledge and experience. • Personal resonance gives a special priority to personal intuitive reasons— not because they offer a more accurate read on an objective reality but because they represent personal affinities or aversions that are likely to continue to color one’s experience of the path taken. • Finally, even a relatively intuitive decision of the moment deserves due analytic consideration of commonly overlooked matters such as opportunity costs, cognitive illusions (e.g., loss aversion), and biasing influences (e.g., social pressure). Although such principles: and their refinements offer no calculus of normative correctness, they do show how the thoughtful decision maker might take stock and choose a smart approach. However, as the saying goes, advice is cheap. What does it take to put good decision-making practices into action in learners’ everyday lives?

#### voting negative forfeits an opportunity to engage in public deliberation on broader issues of concern to people who might be unlike ourselves --- that’s a benefit only a neg ballot can realize.

Fred **Clark 3-21**, ethicist, journalist, former managing editor of Prism Magazine, 3/21/13, “For Sen. Portman, Sen. Kirk and the rest of us: The next big step is the important one,” <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/slacktivist/2013/03/21/for-sen-portman-sen-kirk-and-the-rest-of-us-the-next-big-step-is-the-important-one/>

Earlier this year, Sen. Mark Kirk, R-Ill., returned to Washington after a long, arduous recovery from the stroke he suffered in early 2012. In an interview with Natasha Korecki of the Chicago Sun-Times, Kirk said he: [Plans] to take a closer look at funding of the Illinois Medicaid program for those with have no income who suffer a stroke, he said. In general, a person on Medicaid in Illinois would be allowed 11 rehab visits, he said. “Had I been limited to that, I would have had no chance to recover like I did,” Kirk said. “So unlike before suffering the stroke, I’m much more focused on Medicaid and what my fellow citizens face.” Kirk has the same federal health-care coverage available to other federal employees. He has incurred major out-of-pocket expenses, which have affected his savings and retirement, sources familiar with Kirk’s situation said. Harold Pollack commended Kirk for those “wise words, sadly earned,” writing: “Such a profound physical ordeal – and one’s accompanying sense of profound privilege in securing more help than so many other people routinely receive — this changes a person.” Steve Benen was also impressed with Kirk’s hard-won change of heart, but noted: I do wish, however, that we might see similarly changed perspectives without the need for direct personal relevance. Many policymakers are skeptical about federal disaster relief until it’s their community that sees devastation. They have no interest in gay rights until they learn someone close to them is gay. And they’re unsure of the value of Medicaid until they see its worth up close. Which brings us to this week, and the news that conservative Republican Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio now supports marriage equality for same-sex couples. The Cleveland Plain-Dealer’s headline for Sabrina Eaton’s report tells the story, “Sen. Rob Portman comes out in favor of gay marriage after son comes out as gay“: Republican U.S. Sen. Rob Portman on Thursday announced he has reversed his longtime opposition to same-sex marriage after reconsidering the issue because his 21-year-old son, Will, is gay. Portman said his son, a junior at Yale University, told him and his wife, Jane, that he’s gay and “it was not a choice, it was who he is and that he had been that way since he could remember.” “It allowed me to think of this issue from a new perspective, and that’s of a Dad who loves his son a lot and wants him to have the same opportunities that his brother and sister would have — to have a relationship like Jane and I have had for over 26 years,” Portman told reporters in an interview at his office. The conversation the Portmans had with their son two years ago led to him to evolve on the issue after he consulted clergy members, friends — including former Vice President Dick Cheney, whose daughter is gay — and the Bible. This is a big deal. Portman is the first Republican senator to endorse marriage equality. And he wasn’t previously someone who seemed on the fence — he was adamantly, religiously opposed before. So the first thing I want to say is congratulations, kudos, and thank you to Portman. I heartily second the commendations and praise he’s receiving from groups like the Human Rights Campaign, Freedom to Marry Ohio, and PFLAG. For Portman, as for Kirk, an unbidden circumstance expanded his perspective of the world. That new, larger appreciation in turn expanded his understanding of what justice requires — of what justice requires for people who aren’t necessarily just like him. This is one way we all learn — one way we all become bigger, better people. It is, for almost all of us, a necessary first step toward a more expansive empathy and a more inclusive understanding of justice. Even if it is only a first step, it is an unavoidable one, and we should celebrate the epiphany that challenging circumstance has allowed these senators. What Steve Benen said about Kirk is still true for Portman. It is good to see his perspective change due to “direct personal relevance,” but it would be better if he could learn to expand his perspective even without it. That’s the next necessary step, the next epiphany awaiting these senators. Kirk’s long recovery provided his “Aha!” moment when it comes to other people who are also recovering from a stroke. And Portman’s coming to grips with his son’s identity provided him with an “Aha!” moment when it comes to other LGBT people and their families. But it’s not yet clear that either senator has yet taken the next logical step — the next “Aha!” moment. The next step is the big one. It’s the realization that because I didn’t understand others’ situation or others’ perspective until I myself faced the same thing, I should then strive to listen and to learn and to see the world through others’ eyes so that I can better understand the world without having to experience every situation, every injustice, every ordeal personally. This next step is necessary for justice, which can only come “When those who are not injured feel as indignant as those who are.” That next step may seem obvious, but epiphanies always seem obvious in retrospect. Until that next step occurs, though, the slightly expanded empathy of people like Kirk and Portman seems self-serving, like the “cowardice and hypocrisy” of the privileged, as Morf Morford describes it. They still seem to cling to a cramped, self-centered understanding of justice — one that can only grow when their own, personal interests require it to do so. It still lacks the ability to be “indignant” except when one is personally among the “injured.” “Moral and political positions aren’t supposed to be something you only take when they’ll benefit you,” Mark Evanier wrote. Empathy becomes suspect when it coincides so closely with personal benefit. It begins to look like what Mark Schmitt calls “Miss America compassion“: Their compassion seems so narrowly and literally focused on the specific misfortune that their family encountered. Having a child who suffers from mental illness would indeed make one particularly passionate about funding for mental health, sure. But shouldn’t it also lead to a deeper understanding that there are a lot of families, in all kinds of situations beyond their control, who need help from government? Shouldn’t having a son whose illness leads to suicide open your eyes to something more than a belief that we need more money for suicide help-lines? Shouldn’t it call into question the entire winners-win/losers-lose ideology of the current Republican Party? If we take the first step without ever taking the next step — changing our perspective only when “direct personal relevance” demands it and not otherwise — we can fall into what Matthew Yglesias describes as “The Politics of Narcissism“: Remember when Sarah Palin was running for vice president on a platform of tax cuts and reduced spending? But there was one form of domestic social spending she liked to champion? Spending on disabled children? Because she had a disabled child personally? Yet somehow her personal experience with disability didn’t lead her to any conclusions about the millions of mothers simply struggling to raise children in conditions of general poorness. Rob Portman doesn’t have a son with a pre-existing medical condition who’s locked out of the health insurance market. Rob Portman doesn’t have a son engaged in peasant agriculture whose livelihood is likely to be wiped out by climate change. Rob Portman doesn’t have a son who’ll be malnourished if SNAP benefits are cut. So Rob Portman doesn’t care. … But if Portman can turn around on one issue once he realizes how it touches his family personally, shouldn’t he take some time to think about how he might feel about other issues that don’t happen to touch him personally? Obviously the answers to complicated public policy questions don’t just directly fall out of the emotion of compassion. But what Portman is telling us here is that on this one issue, his previous position was driven by a lack of compassion and empathy. Once he looked at the issue through his son’s eyes, he realized he was wrong. Shouldn’t that lead to some broader soul-searching? Is it just a coincidence that his son is gay, and also gay rights is the one issue on which a lack of empathy was leading him astray? That, it seems to me, would be a pretty remarkable coincidence. The great challenge for a senator isn’t to go to Washington and represent the problems of his own family. It’s to try to obtain the intellectual and moral perspective necessary to represent the problems of the people who don’t have direct access to the corridors of power. Senators basically never have poor kids. That’s something members of Congress should think about. Will Femia notes that this widely shared observation prompted an insightful — and darkly funny — meme about “hypothetical Republican empathy.” “If empathy only extends to your flesh and blood, we gotta start shoving people into those families,” Rachel Maddow said. “Now all we need is 59 more gay Republican kids,” Dave Lartigue wrote. “Perhaps if we could get the Republican caucus to adopt gay, black Hispanic illegal-immigrant children, who will grow up to be denied insurance due to pre-existing conditions, we’d make some more social progress,” mistermix wrote. “Eventually one of these Republican congressmen is going to find out his daughter is a woman, and then we’re all set,” Anil Dash tweeted. And Andy Borowitz chimed in with “Portman Inspires Other Republicans to Stop Speaking to Their Children.” Endless variations of that joke circulated this week because that joke offers limitless possibilities — as limitless as the stunted “hypothetical empathy” of “Miss America compassion” is limited. That joke and Yglesias’ argument are correct. An empathy that never moves beyond that first step and that first epiphany is morally indistinct from selfishness. To take that first step without the next one is only to move from “me first” to “me and mine first.” (David Badash and Jonathan Chait also have insightful posts making this argument.) But no one can take that next big step until they take the first one. So I’m less interested in criticizing Portman or Kirk or anyone else in their position than I am in figuring out how we can urge and encourage them to take that next big step. How can we facilitate the next epiphany? That’s the bigger issue, the more important challenge. Ari Kohen tackles this challenge in a bookish post building on Richard Rorty’s thoughts. Kohen is interested most of all in how “to accomplish this progress of sentiments, this expanding of our sense of solidarity”: The best way to convince the powerful that their way of thinking about others needs to evolve is to show them the ways in which individuals they consider to be “Other” are, in fact, much more closely akin to them than they ever realized. It is, in short, to create a greater solidarity between the powerful and the weak based on personal identification. Rob Portman’s change of heart is a good example of the way in which we ultimately achieve a progress of sentiments that leads to the equal treatment of more and more people. Viewed in this way, it’s really not something people on the Left ought to be criticizing; it’s something we should be working to encourage for those without the sort of immediate personal connection that Portman fortunately had. (Note that we are, yet again, confronted with the idea of ethics as a trajectory.) The vital question, then, is how? How can we encourage “a progress of sentiments” along a trajectory “that leads to the equal treatment of more and more people”? Part of the answer, I think, is to remember how we ourselves were encouraged along — how we ourselves each came to take that next step, how we ourselves came to have that second epiphany. That’s the approach that Grace at Are Women Human? takes in a firm-but-generous post titled “Changes of heart and our better selves.” Grace highlights Portman’s case as an example of “the tensions between celebrating progress and recognizing that there’s still work to be done.” She draws on her own story and history for humility and perspective, and as a guide to helping others see and take the next steps in their journey: How easy it is to say Portman … should have done better and forget that I wasn’t so different, not so long ago. The honest truth: it was getting to know and love queer people that, more than anything else, led me away from the bigotry I’d been taught as faith. … It’s important for me not to forget this, or that it took the thought that my not-yet-born child might be transgender for me to realize that I needed to educate myself about gender identity. It would be dangerous to indulge the fiction that I’ve always held the moral “high ground.” … That history — her own and that of others who have come to a more inclusive, expansive understanding of justice — informs the advice, and the warning, that follows: Portman isn’t an exception in having, and indulging, the luxury of ignoring the consequences of politics that don’t affect him personally. This is a feature, not a bug, of our culture and political system. Power is concentrated in the hands of people who routinely make policy on matters they have little experience or real stakes in. You don’t need any conscious malice in this setup to produce policy that has devastating effects on the communities these issues touch most directly (though there’s plenty of malice, too). All you need is a system run by people who can afford not to care that much about policies that mostly impact other people’s lives. Which, I suppose, is why civil rights activism often depends on cultivating these very moments of identification with the “other,” on spontaneous and planned appeals to emotion and basic decency. Systemic lack of incentive to care has to be confronted with stories that get politicians or the public to care. Emmitt Till’s open casket. Rosa Parks’ carefully planned protest of bus segregation – as a more “respectable” face of black resistance than Claudette Colvin. Hydeia Broadbent and Ryan White as the faces of children with HIV. DREAMers taking over public spaces, stories about families torn apart by racist, classist, unjust immigration policies. … Rob Portman is not an exception. He’s the rule. I don’t say this to suggest that we cut him slack for finally arriving at a basic (and still incomplete) recognition of the humanity of queer people. Nor am I arguing that we shouldn’t critique the circumstances around his change of heart. What I hope is that we don’t forget ourselves in these calls to do better. That we don’t fall into the deceptive confidence that because we know or do better, we’ve arrived…or forget how many of us had to change and grow to get to where we are now. We’re all capable of fooling ourselves into thinking our standpoints are clearly “rational” or “moral” when it comes to issues that don’t affect us.

#### This debate doesn’t change anything about the practices they kritik --- skill development through debate is a prerequisite to transformative politics [inside AND outside of the community]

**Anderson 6**—prof of English at Johns Hopkins (Amanda, The Way We Argue Now, 33-6)

In some ways, this is understandable as utopian writing, with recognizable antecedents throughout the history of leftist thought. But what is distinctive in Butler’s writing is the way temporal rhetoric emerges precisely at the site of uneasy normative commitment. In the case of performative subversion, a futural rhetoric displaces the problems surrounding agency, symbolic constraint, and poststructuralist ethics. Since symbolic constraint is constitutive of who we can become and what we can enact,¶ 34¶ there is clearly no way to truly envision a reworked symbolic. And since embracing an alternative symbolic would necessarily involve the imposition of newly exclusionary and normalizing norms, to do more than gesture would mean lapsing into the very practices that need to be superseded. Indeed, despite Butler’s insistence in Feminist Contentions that we must always risk new foundations, she evinces a fastidious reluctance to do so herself.¶ The forward-looking articulation of performative politics increasingly gives way, in Bodies That Matter, to a more reflective, and now strangely belated, antiexclusionary politics. Less sanguine about the efficacy of outright subversion, Butler more soberly attends to ways we might respond to the politically and ontologically necessary error of identity categories. We cannot choose not to put such categories into play, but once they are in play, we can begin to interrogate them for the exclusions they harbor and generate. Butler here is closely following Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s position on essentialism, a position Butler earlier sought to sublate through the more exclusive emphasis on the unremitting subversion of identity.18 If performative subversion aimed to denaturalize identity and thus derail its pernicious effects, here, by contrast, one realizes the processes of identity formation will perforce proceed, and one simply attempts to register and redress those processes in a necessarily incomplete way. The production of exclusion, or a constitutive outside, is “the necessary and founding violence of any truth-regime,” but we should not simply accept that fact passively:¶ The task is to refigure this necessary “outside” as a future horizon, one in which the violence of exclusion is perpetually in the process of being overcome. But of equal importance is the preservation of the outside, the site where discourse meets its limits, where the opacity of what is not included in a given regime of truth acts as a disruptive site of linguistic impropriety and unrepresentability, illuminating the violent and contingent boundaries of that normative regime precisely through the inability of that regime to represent that which might pose a fundamental threat to its continuity. . . . If there is a violence necessary to the language of politics, then the risk of that violation might well be followed by another in which we begin, without ending, without mastering, to own—and yet never fully to own—the exclusions by which we proceed. (BTM, 53)¶ Because the exclusionary process is productive of who and what we are, even in our oppositional politics, our attempts to acknowledge and redress it are always post hoc. Here the future horizon is ever-receding¶ 35¶ precisely because our own belated making of amends will never, and should never, tame the contingency that also begets violence. But the question arises: does Butler ever propose that we might use the evaluative criteria governing that belated critical recognition to guard against such processes of exclusion in the first place? Well, in rare moments she does project the possibility of cultivating practices that would actually disarm exclusion (and I will be discussing one such moment presently). But she invariably returns to the bleak insistence on the impossibility of ever achieving this. This retreat is necessitated, fundamentally, by Butler’s failure to distinguish evaluative criteria from the power-laden mechanisms of normalization. Yet the distinction does reappear, unacknowledged, in the rhetoric of belatedness, which, like performative thresholdism, serves to underwrite her political purism. As belated, the incomplete acts of “owning” one’s exclusions are more seemingly reactive and can appear not to be themselves normatively implicated.¶ We can see a similar maneuver in Butler’s discussion of universalist traditions in Feminist Contentions. Here she insists that Benhabib’s universalism is perniciously grounded in a transcendental account of language (communicative reason), and is hence not able to examine its own exclusionary effects or situated quality (FC, 128–32). This is, to begin with, a mischaracterization. Benhabib’s account of communicative reason is historically situated (if somewhat loosely within the horizon of modernity) and aims to justify an ongoing and self-critical process of interactive universalism—not merely through the philosophical project of articulating a theory of universal pragmatics but more significantly through the identification and cultivation of practices that enable democratic will formation.19 Butler then introduces, in contrast to Benhabib, an exemplary practice of what she calls “misappropriating” universals (Paul Gilroy’s The Black Atlantic is cited here). Now, it is hard not to see this as a species of dogmatism. Bad people reinscribe or reinforce universals, good people “misappropriate” them. Benhabib calls for the reconstruction of Enlightenment universals, but presumably even reconstruction is tainted. The key point, however, is that misappropriation is a specifically protected derivative process, one whose own belatedness and honorific disobedience are guaranteed to displace the violence of its predecessor discourse.¶ Let me pursue here for a moment why I find this approach unsatisfactory. Simply because the activity of acknowledging exclusion or misappropriating universals is belated or derivative does not mean that such¶ 36¶ an activity is not itself as powerfully normative as the “normative political philosophy” to which Butler refers with such disdain. There is a sleight of hand occurring here: Butler attempts to imply that because such activities exist at a temporal and critical remove from “founding regimes of truth,” they more successfully avoid the insidious ruse of critical theory. But who’s rusing who here? Because Butler finds it impossible to conceive of normativity outside of normalization, she evades the challenging task of directly confronting her own normative assumptions. Yet Butler in fact advocates ethical practices that are animated by the same evaluative principles as communicative ethics: the rigorous scrutiny of all oppositional discourse for its own newly generated exclusions, and the reconfiguration of debilitating identity terms such as “women” as sites “of permanent openness and resignifiability” (FC, 50). Both these central practices rely fundamentally on democratic principles of inclusion and open contestation. Communicative ethics does no more than to clarify where among our primary social practices we might locate the preconditions for such activities of critique and transformation. By justifying its own evaluative assumptions and resources it aims not to posit a realm free of power but rather to clarify our own ongoing critiques of power. This does not mean that such critiques will not themselves require rigorous scrutiny for harboring blindnesses and further exclusions, but neither does it mean that such critiques will necessarily be driven by exclusionary logic. And communicative ethics is by no means a “merely theoretical” or “philosophical” project inasmuch as it can identify particular social and institutional practices that foster democratic ends. By casting all attempts to characterize such practices as pernicious normalizing, Butler effectively disables her own project and leaves herself no recourse but to issue dogmatic condemnations and approvals.

#### 2. Their critique of fairness devolves into radical anti-semetism---this is an independent reason to reject Delgado and vote negative

Daniel A. **Farber 95**, Earl R. Larson Professor of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Law, University of Minnesota, **AND** Suzanna **Sherry**, Henry J. Fletcher Professor of Law and Associate Dean of Faculty, University of Minnesota. “Is the Radical Critique of Merit Anti-Semitic?” California Law Review May, 1995 83 Calif. L. Rev. 853, lexis

Several years ago, the Duke Law Journal published a remarkable exchange over the validity of societal standards of merit. Duncan Kennedy, one of the founders of Critical Legal Studies, opened the debate. In support of affirmative action in law school faculty hiring, Kennedy attacked existing standards of merit as socially constructed and impossible to apply in a colorblind fashion. n2 In response, Judge Richard Posner, a leading pragmatist and pioneer in Law and Economics, criticized Kennedy's affirmative action proposal and implicitly defended merit standards. n3 Posner, in turn, was labeled a racist by Jerome Culp, a prominent advocate of Critical Race Theory. Culp accused Posner of exercising the "majority voice, attempting to silence black voices." n4 Posner's fatal flaw was his failure to acknowledge that "facially objective and disinterested standards in fact serve the interests of the white majority**,**" n5 and therefore are not truly objective at all. As we will see, a similar position on merit is taken by other leading critical theorists such as Catharine MacKinnon. n6 This essay will suggest the existence of deeply troubling links between the logic of this position and historic forms of racial and religious discrimination.¶ More than the evaluation of the merit of legal scholarship is at stake in this debate. Although the debate about merit was sparked by a disagreement over the narrower question of law school hiring, the critique of merit is tied to fundamental philosophical issues. As critical scholar Gary Peller has pointed out, the critique of merit stems from philosophical attacks on the concepts of objectivity and knowledge currently employed in our society. n7 For example, Catharine MacKinnon disavows "standard scientific [\*855] norms" because the radical feminist critique of "the objective standpoint as male" is necessarily "a critique of science as a specifically male approach to knowledge." n8¶ Similar attacks have been mounted on traditional moral concepts such as fairness and justice. According to Richard Delgado, a leading critical race theorist, "normative orderings always reflect the views of the powerful" and therefore serve to stifle social change. n9 Consequently, the "game" of normative discussion is "rigged against" the oppressed, for "one cannot use categories like justice, equality, etc., to overturn the very system" that created those values. n10 Normative talk, Delgado suggests, merely masks the operation of the "Home Office," which "does not speak normativese at all, but a sharper, brusquer, unfamiliar language full of consonants and commands." n11 Thus, like "merit," existing concepts of truth and morality are seen as part and parcel of systems of oppression.¶ We will refer to this stance as "radical constructivism," since it views these fundamental concepts as socially constructed aspects of systems of power. This viewpoint should be contrasted with more moderate forms of social constructivism, such as the view that categories defining social groups (such as homosexuals) are socially constructed. These moderate views do not challenge our entire structure of thought and are not the subject of this discussion. n12 The position taken by Delgado, MacKinnon, and Culp (and to some extent by Kennedy) cuts considerably deeper to the bone of existing conceptual schemes. These broad philosophical implications [\*856] prompt us to write about a topic that, considered narrowly, might seem to involve only an intramural dispute over academic standards.¶ The views of radical constructivists have not gone unopposed. Pragmatists such as Posner argue that current conceptions of objectivity, knowledge, and merit may be flawed but are necessary starting points in analysis. As he puts it, "those who believe that "reality' is constructed rather than found are prone to forget that not every social construction is arbitrary." n13 Although anti-dogmatic and refusing to accept even the most entrenched beliefs as final truths, n14 pragmatism also has a common sense vein that keeps it from veering into radical constructivism and utopianism. n15 While open to uses of metaphor, rhetoric, and even imaginative but false ideas in advancing inquiry, pragmatists do not abandon conventional values of truth and merit:¶ But to acknowledge that mistakes, emotive utterances, and literal falsehoods (which may be imaginative or emotional "truths") can have social utility is not to deny that truth and falsity can and ordinarily must be distinguished. It is not to endorse sloppy or tendentious scholarship, an "anything goes" attitude toward claims and assertions, or, what is closely related, the belief that, like everything else, science and mathematics are "just rhetoric." n16¶ The pragmatist, then, "recognizes the importance of logic and clear thinking," and does not embrace "epistemological or moral skepticism, or scientific or moral relativism." n17¶ We join this debate in support of Posner's position, but we do so only indirectly, by arguing that the logical implications of radical constructivism are disturbingly anti-Semitic. n18 In a sense, our argument might itself be considered an exercise in Critical Race Theory, since it assesses a viewpoint (radical constructivism) from the perspective of a historically oppressed group.¶ In a nutshell, our argument is as follows. Radical constructivists contend that standards of merit are socially constructed to maintain the power of dominant groups**.** n19 In other words, "merit" has no meaning, except as a way for those in power to perpetuate the existing hierarchy. In explaining [\*857] why some minorities have been less successful than whites, these writers repudiate genuine merit as even a partial explanation of the current distribution of social goods. They are then left in a quandary, unable to explain the success of other minority groupsthat have actually surpassed the dominant majority. If the accomplishments of these "model minorities" - Jews, Japanese Americans, and Chinese Americans - cannot be justified as reflecting the merit of their endeavors, then some other explanation must be sought. Unfortunately, once merit is put aside, no explanation for competitive success can be anything but negative. These groups have obtained disproportionate shares of important social goods; if they have not earned their shares fairly on the merits, then they must have done so unjustly. Thus, the radical constructivist view of merit logically carries negative implications regarding groups that have surpassed the dominant majority - in particular, Jews, the group that is our primary focus.¶ Although radical constructivists are surely as appalled by anti-Semitism as by racism, we contend that negative stereotypes about Jews and some Asian Americans are a logical concomitant of the rejection of the concept of merit. Anti-Semitic propositions are a nearly inescapable implication of the radical constructivist critique of merit. Rejecting merit could inadvertently leave these writers closer to the rhetoric and politics of Louis Farrakhan than to those of Martin Luther King, Jr.**¶** Before expanding on our argument, we present a few important caveats. First and most emphatically, we do not suggest that the scholars we discuss harbor anti-Semitic feelings, even unconsciously. n20 We seek to alert them to logical implications they will surely find unacceptable, in order to prompt them to rethink their current attachment to radical constructivism. In short, we accuse the theory, not the theorists, of anti-Semitism. n21