#### Class is the driver of all social and existential conditions – even desire is determined by our material class conditions. Only emancipation from the status quo modes of production can enact any form of human freedom

Ebert and Zavarzadeh in 2008(Teresa L., English, State University of New York, Albany, Mas’ud, prolific writer and expert on class ideology, “Class in Culture”, p.ix-xii)

**Class** is everywhere and nowhere. It **is the most decisive condition of social life: it shapes the economic and**, consequently, **the social and cultural resources of people**. It determines their birth, healthcare, clothing, schooling, eating, love, labor, sleep, aging, and death. Yet **it remains invisible in the every day and in practical consciousness because,** for the most part, **it is dispersed through popular culture, absorbed in cultural difference, obscured by formal equality before the law or explained away by philosophical arguments**. Class in Culture attempts to trace class in different cultural situations and practices to make its routes and effects visible. However, the strategies obscuring class are cunning, complex, and subtle, and are at work in unexpected sites of culture. Consequently, this is not a linear book: it surprises class in the segments, folds, vicinities, points, and divides of culture. It moves, for example, from Abu Ghraib to the post-deconstructive proclamations of Antonio Negri, from stem cell research to labor history, from theoretical debates on binaries to diets. It is also written in a variety of registers and lengths: in the vocabularies of theory, the idioms of description and explanation, as well as in the language of polemics, and in long, short, and shorter chapters. Regardless of the language, the plane of argument, the length of the text, and the immediate subject of our critiques, our purpose has been to tease out from these incongruous moments the critical elements of a basic grammar of class-one that might be useful in reading class in other social sites. Our text on eating, for example, unpacks two diets that, we argue, reproduce class binaries in the zone of desire. The point here is not only when one eats, one eats class, but also class works in the most unexpected comers of culture, Eating as a sensuous, even sensual corporeality, is seen as the arena of desire which is represented in the cultural imaginary as autonomous from social relations. **Desire is thought to be exemplary of the singularity of the individual and her freedom from material conditions. One desires what one desires. Desire is the absolute lack: it is the unrepresentable.** We argue, however, that **one desires what one can desire; one's desire is always and ultimately determined before one desires it, and it is determined by one's material (class) conditions.** Our point is not that **individuality and singularity** are myths but that they **are myths in class societies**. **Individuality and singularity become reality**-not stories that culture tells to divert people from their anonymity in a culture of commodities-**only when one is free from necessity beyond which "begins that development of human energy which is an end in itself'** (Marx, Capita/III, 958-59). **Class is the negation of human freedom**. **A theory of class** (such as the one we articulate) **argues that class is the material logic of social life and** therefore it **determines how people live and think**. But this is too austere for many contemporary critics. ("Determinism" is a dirty totalizing word in contemporary social critique.) Most writers who still use the concept of class prefer to talk about it in the more subtle and shaded **languages of overdetermination, lifestyle, taste, prestige, and preferences**, **or** in the **stratification** terms of income, occupation, and even status. These **are all significant** aspects of social life, **but they are effects of class and not class**. This brings us to the "simple" question: What is class? We skip the usual review of theories of class because they never lead to an answer to this question. The genre of review requires, in the name of fairness, "on the one hand, on the other hand" arguments that balance each perspective with its opposite. The purpose of Class in Culture is not review but critique not a pluralism that covers up an uncommitted wandering in texts but an argument in relation to which the reader can take a position leading to change and not simply be more informed. This is not a book of information; it is a book of critique. To answer the question (what is class?), we argue-and here lies the austerity of our theory-**class is essentially a relation of property, of owning**. Class, in short, is **a relation to labor because property is the congealed alienated labor of the other**. By owning we obviously do not mean owning just anything. Owning a home or a car or fine clothes does not by itself put a person in one or another class. What does, is **owning the labor power of others in exchange for wages.** Unlike a home or a car, labor (or to be more precise "**labor power**") **is a commodity that produces value when it is consumed**. Structures like homes or machines like cars or products such as clothes do not produce value. Labor does. **Under capitalism, the producers of value do not own what they produce**. The capitalist who has purchased the labor power of the direct producers owns what they produce. Class is this relation of labor-owning. This means wages are symptoms of estranged labor, of the unfreedom of humans, namely the exploitation of humans by humans-which is another way to begin explaining class. **To know class, one has to learn about the labor relations that construct class differences**, that enable the subjugation of the many by the few. **Under capitalism labor is unfree**, it is forced wage-labor that produces "surplus value"-an objectification of a person's labor as commodities that are appropriated by the capitalist for profit. **The labor of the worker,** therefore, **becomes "an object" that "exits outside him**, independently, as **something alien to him, and it becomes a power on its own confronting him" which**, among other things, **"means that the life which he has conferred on the object confronts him as something hostile and alien**" (Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,272). The direct producers' own labor, in other words, negates their freedom because it is used, in part, to produce commodities not for need but for exchange. **One**, therefore, **is made "to exist, first, as a worker; and, second as a physical subject**. The height of this servitude is that it is only as a worker that he can maintain himself as a physical subject, and that it is only as a physical subject that he is a worker" (273). Under wage labor, **workers**, consequently, **relate to their own activities as "an alien activity not belonging to [**them]" (275). **The estranged relation** of people to the object of their labor **is not a local matter but includes all spheres of social life**. ln other words, it is "at the same time the relation to the sensuous external world, to the objects of nature, as an alien world inimically opposed to [them]" (275). **The scope of estrangement in a class society**, of human unfreedom caused by wage labor, is not limited to the alienation of the worker from her products. It includes the productive activity itself because what is produced is a "summary of the activity, of production," and therefore it is "manifested not only in the result but in the act of production, within the producing activity itself' (274). **The worker, in the act of production, alienates herself from herself because production activity is "active alienation, the alienation of activity, the activity of alienation**" (274)-an activity which does not belong to her. This is another way of saying that the activity of labor-life activity-is turned against the worker and "here we have self-estrangement" (275). In his theory of alienated labor, Marx distinguishes between the "natural life" of eating, drinking, and procreating which humans share with other animals and the "species life" which separates humans from animal. This distinction has significant implications for an emancipatory theory of classless society. "Species life" is the life marked by consciousness, developed senses, and a human understanding himself in history as a historical being because "his own life is an object for him" (276}--humans, as "species beings," are self-reflexive. To be more clear, "conscious life activity distinguishes man immediately from animal life activity" (276). The object of man's labor is the actualization, the "objectification of man's species-life" (277). Alienated labor, however, "in tearing away from man the object of his production, therefore, ... tears from him his species-life" (277). Consequently, "it changes for him the life of the species into a means of individual life ... it makes individual life in its abstract form the purpose of life of the species, likewise in the abstract and estranged form" (276). This is another way of saying that **the larger questions that enable humans to build their world consciously are marginalized, and sheer biological living** ("individual life in the abstract") **becomes the goal of life in class society structured by wage labor. "Life itself appears only as a means to life"** (276). **Class turns "species life" into "natural life."** Since society is an extension of the sensuous activities of humans in nature (labor), **the alienation of humans from the products of their labor, from the very process of labor, which is their life activity, and from their species-being, leads to the estrangement of humans from humans (**277)-**the alienation in class societies that is experienced on the individual level as loneliness**. In confronting oneself, one confronts others; which is another way of saying that one's **alienation from the product of one's labor**, from productive activity, and from "species life" **is** at the same time **alienation from other people, their labor, and the objects of their labor**. In class societies, **work**, therefore, **becomes the negation of the worker:** he "only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself" (274). **Ending class structures is a re-obtaining of human freedom.** Freedom here is not simply the freedom of individuals as symbolized, for instance, in bourgeois "freedom of speech" but is a world-historical **"freedom from necessity**" (Marx, Critique of the Gotha Programme). **Class struggle is the struggle for human emancipation by putting an end to alienated labor** (as class relations). Alienated labor is the bondage of humans to production: it is an effect of wage labor (which turns labor into a means of living) and private property (which is congealed labor). **Emancipation from alienated labor is, therefore, the emancipation of humans from this bondage because "all relations of servitude," such as class relations, "are but modifications and consequences" of the relation of labor to production** (Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,280). **Class**, in short, **is the effect of property relations that are themselves manifestations of the alienation of labor as wage labor. Wage labor alienates one from one's own product, from oneself, from other humans, and, as Marx put it, "estranges the species from man**" (276).

[Insert Specific Link]

#### **The naturalizing process of capitalism masks its role in ensuring subjugation on a global scale. Our primary ethico-political responsibility is to challenge the organizing principles which found this system**

Zizek and Daly in 4

(Slavoj and Glyn, *Conversations with Zizek* pg. 14-16)

For Zizek **it is imperative that** we cut through this Gord­ian knot of postmodern protocol and recognize that **our ethico-political responsibility is to confront the constitutive violence of today's global capitalism and its obscene naturalization/ anonymization of the millions who are subju­gated by it throughout the world**. Against the standardized positions of postmodern culture – with all its pieties con­cerning 'multiculturalist' etiquette – Zizek is arguing for **a politics** that might be called 'radically incorrect' in the sense **that** it **breaks with** these types of positions' **and focuses** instead **on the very organizing principles of today's social reality: the principles of global liberal capitalism**. This requires some care and subtlety. For far too long, **Marxism has been bedevilled by an almost fetishistic economism** that has tended towards political mor­bidity. With the likes of Hilferding and Gramsci, and more recently Laclau and Mouffe, crucial theoretical advances have been made that enable the transcendence of all forms of economism. In this new context, however, Zizek argues that the problem that now presents itself is almost that of the opposite fetish. That is to say, **the prohibitive anxieties surrounding the taboo of economism can function as a way of not engaging with economic reality and as a way of im­plicitly accepting the latter as a basic horizon of existence.** In an ironic Freudian-Lacanian twist, the fear of economism can end up reinforcing a de facto economic necessity in respect of contemporary capitalism (i.e. the initial prohibi­tion conjures up the very thing it fears). This is not to endorse any kind of retrograde return to economism. Zizek's point is rather that **in rejecting eco­nomism we should not lose sight of the systemic power of capital in shaping the lives and destinies of humanity and our very sense of the possible**. In particular **we should not overlook** Marx's central insight **that in order to create a uni­versal global system the forces of capitalism seek to conceal the politico-discursive violence of its construction through a kind of gentrification of that system**. What is persistently denied by neo-liberals such as Rorty (1989) and Fukuyama (1992) is **that the gentrification of global liberal capitalism is one whose 'universalism' fundamentally reproduces and depends upon a disavowed violence that excludes vast sectors of the world's population.** In this way, **neo-liberal ide­ology attempts to naturalize capitalism by presenting its out­comes of winning and losing as if they were simply a matter of chance and sound judgement in a neutral marketplace.** Capitalism does indeed create a space for a certain diver­sity, at least for the central capitalist regions, but it is neither neutral nor ideal and its price in terms of social exclusion is exorbitant. That is to say, **the human cost in terms of inherent global poverty and degraded 'life-chances' cannot be calculated within the existing economic rationale and, in consequence, social exclusion remains mystified and name­less** (viz. the patronizing reference to the 'developing world'). And Zizek's point is that **this mystification is mag­nified through capitalism's profound capacity to ingest its own excesses and negativity: to redirect** (or misdirect) **social antagonisms and to absorb them within a culture of differ­ential affirmation**. Instead of Bolshevism, the tendency today is towards a kind of political boutiquism that is readily sus­tained by postmodern forms of consumerism and lifestyle. **Against this Zizek argues for a new universalism whose primary ethical directive is to confront the fact that our forms of social existence are founded on exclusion on a global scale. While it is perfectly true that universalism can never become Universal** (it will always require a hegemonic-par­ticular embodiment in order to have any meaning), **what is novel** **about Zizek's universalism is that it would not attempt to conceal this fact or to reduce the status of the abject Other to that of a 'glitch' in an otherwise sound matrix.**

#### Focus on cultural criticism fails to solve the K – focusing on the problems of the aff will trade off with the economic focus needed to disrupt capitalism

**Ebert in 95**, (Teresa L., English, State University of New York, Albany, Rethinking Marxism  
Association for Economic and Social Analysis, vol 8 no 2, The Knowable Good--Post-al Ethics,  
the Question of Justice and Red Feminism, index found here, <http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/acd/gr/gsce/d/rm.htm#95>, article here, <http://www.geocities.com/redtheory/AO/AOVol5-1RedFeminism.html> )

**What is of primary concern in** anarchic-**ludic politics is not so much "human emancipation" from economic exploitation but that**, as Aronowitz says, **"human emancipation,** if that term may be employed at all in the post-communist era, **may be antagonistic to highly centralized authority and power**" (1994, 44). In other words, in post-al politics, the issue of human emancipation is largely displaced and put in question--becoming more a matter of skepticism. **If it is addressed at all, it is largely reduced to a problem of individual "freedom," an "antagonism" to "centralized authority and power**" (1994, 44), without even asking how that centralized authority is related to the ownership of the means of production. **This in turn becomes one of the main alibis for dismissing socialism because of its "authoritarian political legacy**." **But this simplistic ludic opposition of emancipation and authority completely rejects the revolutionary necessity of appropriating the power and authority of the state** (the executive committee of the owners of the means of production) **for social transformation. It so focuses on the (bourgeois) priority of individual freedom from any constraints on desires and differences, that it denies the revolutionary necessity of appropriating power to end the ways in which the individual desires and differences of the few are used to exploit the many**. Let us not forget the revolutionary uses of state authority, for example, in the People's Republic of China, to (until recently) successfully eliminate the most severe socio-economic exploitation of women--including female infanticide, indenture, sexual slavery and prostitution--and provide women with extensive health care, education and economic opportunities. However, the recent counter-revolution in China and (re)turn to market economy has meant less state authority exercised on these issues in order to promote the emergence of privatization and "free" enterprise. This is creating a severe deterioration in the condition of women in all areas: much higher unemployment for women; a debilitating decline in health care for women, and the revival of female infanticide, indenture, sexual harassment and abuse on the job. Ludic feminism and **the post-al left entirely occlude the historical necessity of the class struggle over power**--that is**, the revolutionary struggle to wrest power away from the owners of the means of production and end the exploitative divisions of labor** around gender, sexuality, race, nationality. In the anarchic-**ludic logic such struggle is a non-issue, since power, is seen as nondeterminate and immanently generating its own local sites of resistance. Liberation is seen as freedom from authority,** from **regulation**, from **any constraints on the free play of the possibilities of** (sexual) **differences**. **It is reduced to a cultural politics confined to superstructural practices and severed from the material relations of production. Such a post-al freedom** (post-authority, post-state, post-class, post-production) **is disturbingly close to the demands** (desires) **of the "new" aggressive entrepreneurial anarchism of late capitalism that is so evident in the backlash against health care reform and affirmative action in the U.S. and the increasing strength of right-wing politics and racism both in the U.S. and in Europe**. **This** entrepreneurial anarchism **is** passionately, even **violently, committed to a completely unfettered freedom for the individual to pursue profit unconstrained by the state and any obligation to the social good**. Ludic feminists, obviously, do not necessarily sanction such entrepreneurial objectivities. Cornell's "ethical feminism," for instance, seeks to theorize an ethical "Good," but she understands this "Good," as "the equitable honoring of faces," by which she means a reciprocal recognition of the other. In other words, Cornell's understanding of the "Good," of justice, as I have already demonstrated, is a matter of (non)representation isolated from the relations of production. Cornell's ethics, like the **post-al politics** of other ludic feminists, **is quite unable to challenge the effects of entrepreneurial anarchism. Instead, the effects of ludic claims for the unrestricted play of** (sexual) **differences, for the unrestricted freedom of individual desires, reinforce this aggressive individualism. There is very little difference--in their effects--between ethical feminists and free market entrepreneurs in late capitalism.** For all its complicity with entrepreneurial anarchism, **ludic theory is haunted by Marx and historical materialism**--a "haunting obsession" that, as Derrida points out in his text Specters of Marx, is "the dominant influence on discourse today" (1994, 37). **Ludic theory**, including much feminist theory, **has expended enormous energy and effort to displace,** discredit **and dismiss Marx and Marxism**.4 **But we see the undeniable necessity of Marxism precisely in the ludic efforts to deny** it. This contradiction is especially evident in Butler's text, "Poststructuralism and Postmarxism," which is yet another effort to suppress historical materialism and with it a revolutionary understanding of emancipation. Written as a review of Drucilla Cornell's The Philosophy of the Limit and of an essay by Ernesto Laclau, called "Beyond Emancipation," Butler's text is an argument in favor of an un-principled, pragmatic, post-al politics of "politically practicable possibilities" following what she finds to be the "impossibility" of Marxism and the "unrealizability of the Good and/or Emancipation" (1993b, 10-11). While Butler marks a difference between her own more Nietzschean-Foucauldian approach and the more "Derridean approach" of Cornell and Laclau, her discussion of these texts is largely approbatory and quite exemplary of the ludic logic and its post-al politics. As Butler sums up these related positions: For Cornell, the unrealizability of the Good, as she calls it, is the very condition of the possibility for the ethical relation; for Laclau, the unrealizability of `emancipation' is the condition of the possibility for a political field mobilized and expanded through antagonism; and for me, the loss of the subject as center and ground of meaning has been, still is, the condition of the possibility of a discursive modality of agency. (1993b, 8) This "valorization" of "unrealizability" derives in large part from the Lyotardian "incredulity" toward narratives or metanarratives--especially what Butler refers to as "the apparent failure of Marxist teleologies" (1993b, 3). According to Butler, "Marxist versions of history" have lost "credibility" not because "this version of history has played itself out, has taken place, and is now over" but rather because "belief in the possibility of such a history ever taking place, regardless of its temporal placement in past, present, or future, is now in permanent crisis" (1993b, 3). What is this "Marxist version of history" Butler considers implausible? It is the historical materialist understanding of the forces of history as "the history of class struggles" (Marx 1988, 55). It is important to remind ourselves that this is an understanding of history not as narrative, not as contingencies, not as the desires of individuals, but rather, as Marx writes, **history is the process in which "the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production,"** which have turned "from forms of development of the productive forces... into their fetters" (1970, 21) **This then**, according to Marx, "**begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure." For, it is in the "ideological forms" of the superstructure that "men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out**" (1970, 21). **The historical materialist explanation of history**, **in short, is a theory of social struggle and change**--what Cornell dismisses as "messianic" history and Laclau as "eschatological" history (Butler, 1993b, 3). **But historical materialism is not messianic, nor idealist, utopian belief, rather it is a concrete praxis: it is a critique of the existing relations of production and exploitation in order not just to interpret the world** (**the goal of ludic theorists), as Marx says in his famous "Thesis XI," but to "change it**" (1976, 5). Laclau's attack on Marxism as "eschatological" is an alibi for positing history as aleatory: as the effect of haphazard forces of the market. If "eschatology" is the real question here, then it is "radical democracy" that is the outcome of an eschatological historiography.

#### Capitalism ensures eco-catastrophe that ends life on earth.

Revolutionary Worker, 2k1

(#1109, “Capitalism's Eco-Mess and the Revolutionary Alternative”, july 1, online)

**The capitalist system treats this planet**, living creatures, plants, and minerals as coldly as it treats human beings--**as nothing more than a means to accumulate wealth**. Daily, **hourly and on a mass scale, important parts of the natural world are being recklessly wasted, poisoned and destroyed. After the rapid intensification of capitalism's operations over this last century, the accumulated damage to the environment now threatens fundamental ecological systems.** It is no exaggeration to say that **the blind and relentless operations of capitalist production are threatening to upset crucial chemical and biological balances upon which life itself**--both human and other species--**depends. This must stop, and we don't have a minute to spare**.

#### The alternative is to reject the affirmative in favor of a historical materialist approach.

#### Historical materialism is the best methodological approach to fighting capitalism-it provides the ideological backdrop necessary to turn theory into praxis and end capitalist exploitation

Lukacs in 67 (George, Hungarian Marxist philosopher and literary critic. He is a founder of the tradition of Western Marxism. He contributed the ideas of reification and class consciousness to Marxist philosophy and theory, and his literary criticism was influential in thinking about realism and about the novel as a literary genre. He served briefly as Hungary's Minister of Culture as part of the government of the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic, **History and Class Consciousness**)

**Historical materialism has**, therefore, **a much greater value** for the proletariat **than** that of a method of **historical research**. **It is one of the most important of all its weapons**. For **the class struggle** of the proletariat **signifies** at the same time **the awakening of** its **class consciousness**. **And this awakening followed everywhere from an understanding of the true situation**, of the actually existing historical connections. And **it is this that gives the class struggle** of the proletariat **its special place** among other class struggles, **namely that it obtains its sharpest weapon from** the hand of true science, from its **clear insight into reality**. **Whereas in the class struggles of the past the most varied ideologies**, religious, moral and other forms of 'false consciousness' **were decisive, in the case of the class struggle of the proletariat, the war for the liberation of the last oppressed class, the revelation of the unvarnished truth became both a war-cry and the most potent weapon**. **By laying bare** the springs of **the historical process historical materialism became**, in consequence of the class situation of the proletariat, **an instrument of war**. **The most important function of historical materialism is to deliver a precise judgement on the capitalist social system, to unmask capitalist society**. Throughout the class struggle of the proletariat, therefore, **historical materialism** has constantly been used at every point, where, by means of all sorts of ideological frills, the bourgeoisie had concealed the true situation, the state of the class struggle; it **has been used to focus the cold rays of science upon these veils and to show how false and misleading they were and how far they were in conflict with the truth. For this reason the chief function of historical materialism did not lie in the elucidation of pure scientific knowledge, but in the field of action**. **Historical materialism did not exist for its own sake, it existed so that the proletariat could understand a situation and so that, armed with this knowledge, it could act accordingly.** <224-225>

### First off is negation theory.

**A.**    **Interpretation- they must defend some form of state action***or***a personal advocacy that increases economic engagement with Cuba, Mexico or Venezuela.**

**B.**    **Standards-**

**1.**    **Identity theft- shifting our orientation towards the topic so we are forced to *negate*them is a bad thing**

**2.**    **Color blindness- their framing leads to cultural erasure of actual identity politics**

**3.**    **We provide enough ground for their specific advocacy while enough for a miniscule link story for the neg- leading to equitable ground for both sides**

**C.  Reject the team for reasons aforementioned above.**

### Next off

**Next is our counter-advocacy:**

**We recognize that traits such as race, gender, social class, and sexual orientation form an intersection of discrimination.  The role of the ballot is to reject the affirmative’s discourse that constructs a binary in sexism, which perpetuates the discrimination that they try to resolve.  An endorsement of intersectionality liberates individuals oppressed beyond the binary of gender.**

### Case

Their construction of gender binaries between women and men don’t assume a world with transient genders. They only see people as male and female while ignoring queer bodies who may not fit inside their binary and in turn otherizes them. Their discourse in round perpetuates otherizing queer bodies and recreates the type of oppression they try to solve. This is a D-rule

### FW

#### *Interpretation—the role of the ballot is that the judge is a policy maker and the affirmative should defend a mandated increase of economic engagement toward Cuba, Mexico or Venezuela.*

#### *They are non-topical because they don’t defend the enactment of a policy to be enacted by the United States federal government—reading a plan-text with the words “USFG” SHOULD NOT MEET the necessary threshold for a policy proposal*

#### *Topicality is an a-priori voting issue – as judge you are only allowed to affirm those policies within your jurisdiction dictated by the resolution.*

#### *That means conditionality is justified—a “run and gun” 1NC strategy is the only way to get back to competitive equity, otherwise the aff would have an unfair advantage.*

#### *Here’s evidence that the resolution is the key stasis point—their interpretation is arbitrary O’Donnell 2004*

PhD, director of debate at Mary Washington (Tim, WFU Debaters Research Guide, “Blue helmet blues”, ed. Bauschard & Lacy, <http://groups.wfu.edu/debate/MiscSites/DRGArticles/DRGArtiarticlesIndex.htm>)

The answer, I believe, resides deep in the rhetorical tradition in the often overlooked notion of stasis.[[i]](file:///F:\\First%20off%20is%20negation%20theory.htm" \l "_edn1" \o ") Although the concept can be traced to Aristotle’s Rhetoric, it was later expanded by Hermagoras whose thinking has come down to us through the Roman rhetoricians Cicero and Quintillian. **Stasis** is a Greek word **meaning to “stand still**.” It **has** generally **been considered by argumentation scholars to be the point of clash**where two opposing sides meet in argument. Stasis recognizes the fact that **interlocutors engaged in** a conversation, discussion, or **debate need to have** some level of **expectation regarding what the focus of their encounter ought to be**. To reach stasis, participants need to arrive at a decision about what the issue is prior to the start of their conversation. Put another way, they need to mutually acknowledge the point about which they disagree. What happens when participants fail to reach agreement about what it is that they are arguing about? They talk past each other with little or no awareness of what the other is saying. The oft used **cliché of two ships passing in the night**, where both are in the dark about what the other is doing and neither stands still long enough to call out to the other, is the image most commonly **used to describe what happens when** **participants** in an argument **fail to achieve stasis**. In such situations, **genuine engagement is not possible because participants have not reached agreement about what is in dispute.** For example, when one advocate says that the United States should increase international involvement in the reconstruction of Iraq and their opponent replies that the United States should abandon its policy of preemptive military engagement, they are talking past each other. When such a situation prevails, it is hard to see how a productive conversation can ensue. **I do not** mean to **suggest that dialogic engagement always unfolds along an ideal plain** where participants always can or even ought to agree on a mutual starting point. The reality is that many do not. In fact, refusing to acknowledge an adversary’s starting point is itself a powerful strategic move. **However**, it must be acknowledged that **when** such situations arise, and **participants cannot agree on the issue** about which they disagree**, the chances that their exchange will result in a productive outcome are diminished** significantly. **In** an enterprise like academic **debate**, where the goals of the encounter are cast along both educational and competitive lines, **the need to reach**accommodation on **the starting point is urgent**. This is especially the case when time is limited and there is no possibility of extending the clock. The sooner such agreement is achieved, the better. Stasis helps us understand that we stand to lose a great deal when we refuse a genuine starting point.[[ii]](file:///F:\\First%20off%20is%20negation%20theory.htm" \l "_edn2" \o ") How can stasis inform the issue before us regarding contemporary debate practice? Whether we recognize it or not, it already has. The idea that the affirmative begins the debate by using the resolution as a starting point for their opening speech act is nearly universally accepted by all members of the debate community. This is born out by the fact that affirmative teams that have ignored the resolution altogether have not gotten very far. Even teams that use the resolution as a metaphorical condensation or that “affirm the resolution as such” use the resolution as their starting point. The significance of this insight warrants repeating. Despite the numerous differences about what types of arguments ought to have a place in competitive debate we all seemingly agree on at least one point – the vital necessity of a starting point. **This common starting point**, or topic, **is what** separates debate from other forms of communication and **gives the exchange a directed focus**.[[iii]](file:///F:\\First%20off%20is%20negation%20theory.htm" \l "_edn3" \o ")

#### *And, this form of argumentation outweighs*

**Shively ‘2K**

(Ruth Lessl, Assistant Prof Political Science – Texas A&M U., Partisan Politics and Political Theory, p. 181-2)

The requirements given thus far are primarily negative. The **ambiguists** must say "no" to-they **must reject and limit-some ideas**and actions. In what follows, we will also find that they must say "yes" to some things. In particular, they must say "yes" to the idea of rational persuasion. This means, first, that they must recognize the role of agreement in political contest, or the basic accord that is necessary to discord. The mistake that the ambiguists make here is a common one. **The mistake is in thinking that agreement** marks the end of contest-that consensus **kills debate**. **But**this is true only if the agreement is perfect-if there is nothing at all left to question or contest. In most cases, however, **our agreements are highly imperfect**. **We agree** on some matters but not on others, **on generalities but not on specifics**, on principles but not **on their applications,** and so on. And this kind of limited agreement is the starting condition of contest and debate. As John Courtney Murray writes: We hold certain truths; therefore we can argue about them. It seems to have been one of the corruptions of intelligence by positivism to assume that argument ends when agreement is reached. In a basic sense, the reverse is true. There can be no argument except on the premise, and within a context, of agreement. (Murray 1960, 10) In other words, *we cannot argue about something* if we are not communicating: **if** **we cannot agree on the topic and terms of argument** or if we have utterly different ideas about what counts as evidence or good argument. At the very least, we must agree about what it is that is being debated before we can debate it. For instance, **one cannot have an argument about euthanasia with someone who thinks euthanasia is a musical group.** One cannot successfully stage a sit-in if one's target audience simply thinks everyone is resting or if those doing the sitting have no complaints. Nor can one demonstrate resistance to a policy if no one knows that it is a policy. In other words, **contest is meaningless** if there is a lack of agreement or communication about what is being contested. Resisters, demonstrators, and **debaters must have some shared ideas about the subject and**/or the **terms** **of their disagreements.** The participants and the target of a sit-in must share an understanding of the complaint at hand. And a demonstrator's audience must know what is being resisted. In short, **the contesting of an idea presumes some agreement about what that idea is and how one might** go about intelligibly **contesting it**. In other words, contestation rests on some basic agreement or harmony.

#### *Decision-making DA—debate over a controversial point of action creates argumentative stasis—that avoids a devolution of debate into competing truth claims, which destroys the decision-making benefits of the activity*

**Steinberg 08**

lecturer of communication studies – University of Miami, and Freeley, Boston based attorney who focuses on criminal, personal injury and civil rights law,

(David L. and Austin J., Argumentation and Debate: Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making p. 45)

**Debate is a means of settling differences, so there must be a** difference of opinion or a **conflict of interest before** there can be **a debate. If** **everyone is in agreement** on a tact or value or policy, **there is no need 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 on issues, **there is no debate**. In addition, **debate cannot produce effective decisionswithout 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 are 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? Docs 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? I low 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 can!, 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 questionand identification of a line demarcating sides in the controversy. To be discussed and resolved effectively, controversies must be stated clearly. **Vague understanding results in unfocused deliberation and poor decisions,** frustration, and emotional distress, as **evidenced by the failure of**the United States **Congress to make progress on the immigration debate** during the summer of 2007.¶Someone disturbed by the problem of the 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.¶ **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 "homelessness" or "abortion" or "crime'\* or "global warming" we are likely to have an interesting discussion but not to establish profitable basis for argument. For example, **the statement "Resolved: That the pen is mightier than the sword" is debatable, yet fails to provide** much **basis for clear argumentation**. If we take this statement to mean that 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**.**¶**Although we now have a general subject**, we have not yet stated a problem. **It is still too broad**, too loosely worded to promote well-organized argument. What sort of writing are we concerned with—poems, novels, government documents, website development, advertising, or what? What does "effectiveness" mean 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 Liurania 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 treatv 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.

#### *Switch side is the only effective training for activism*

**Coverstone 05**

masters in communication from Wake Forest and longtime debate coach  
(Alan H., “Acting on Activism: Realizing the Vision of Debate with Pro-social Impact,” Paper presented at the National Communication Association Annual Conference, 11/17/05)  
Purely Preparatory Pedagogy?  
Many have argued the value of an academic oasis in which to learn the skills of public participation (Coverstone, 1995; Farrand, 2000; Mitchell & Suzuki, 2004). **Involvement in contest debates**, especially those whose winners rely heavily on up to the minute research and daily involvement in the political and academic discourse of the day, **without question offers a level of preparation for pro-social activism seldom surpassed in any educational institution today.** Mitchell agrees that the **skills developed** in contest debates **are incredibly useful as skills applied in public discourse**(Mitchell, 2004, p. 10), **and** political **news, advocacy groups, legal proceedings, academic institutions, and corporate boardrooms are littered with** key **figures who honed their skills in** the crucible of **high-level contest debating.**

#### *Hijacks education—predictability is the basis of negative strategy which is key to clash and depth of discussion. The impact is rigorous testing of policies which is the only way to truly understand the world.*

**Zappen ‘4**

James, Prof. Language and Literature – Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, “The Rebirth of Dialogue: Bakhtin, Socrates, and the Rhetorical Tradition”, p. 35-36)

Finally, Bakhtin describes the Socratic dialogue as a carnivalesque debate between opposing points of view, with a ritualistic crownings and decrownings of opponents. I call this Socratic form of debate a contesting of ideas to capture the double meaning of the Socratic debate as both a mutual testing of oneself and others and a contesting or challenging of others' ideas and their lives. Brickhouse and Smith explain that Socrates' testing of ideas and people is a mutual testing not only of others but also of himself: Socrates claims that he has been commanded by the god to examine himself as well as others; he claims that **the unexamined life is not worth living;** and, since he rarely submits to questioning himself, "it must be that in the process of examining others Socrates regards himself as examining his own life, too." Such **a mutual testing of ideas provides the only claim to knowledge**that Socrates can have: **since** neither **he nor anyone else knows the real definitions of things**, **he cannot claim to have any knowledge of his own**; **since, however, he subjects his beliefs to repeated testing, he can claim to have that limited human knowledge supported by the "inductive evidence" of "previous elenctic examinations.**" This mutual testing of ideas and people is evident in the Laches and also appears in the Gorgias in Socrates' testing of his own belief that courage is inseparable from the other virtues and in his willingness to submit his belief and indeed his life to the ultimate test of divine judgment, in what Bakhtin calls a dialogue on the threshold. The contesting or challenging of others' ideas and their lives and their ritualistic crowning/decrowning is evident in the Gorgias in Soocrates' successive refutations and humiliations of Gorgias, Polus, and Callicles

### Social Progress DA

#### *Social progress—their project fails without concrete policy guiding it Feaver 2001*

Assistant professor of political science at Duke (Peter, “Twenty-first century weapons proliferation”, p. 178)

At the same time, virtually all good theory has implications for policy. Indeed, if no conceivable extension of the theory leads to insights that would aid those working in the ‘real world’, what can be ‘good’ about good theory? **Ignoring the policy implications of theory is** often a sign of **intellectual laziness** on the part of the theorist. It is hard work to learn about the policy world and to make the connections from theory to policy. Often, the skill sets do not transfer easily from one domain to another, so **a formidable theorist can show embarrassing naivete when it comes to the policy domain** he or she putatively studies. Often, **when the policy implications are considered, flaws in the theory** (or at least in the presentation of the theory) **are uncovered**. **Thus, focusing attention on policy implications should lead to better theorizing.** The gap between theory and policy is more rhetoric than reality. **But rhetoric can create** a reality—or at least create **an undesirable** kind of **reality**—**where policy makers make policy throughignorant of the problems that good theory would expose**, while theorists spin arcane without a view to producing something that matters. It is therefore incumbent on those of us who study proliferation—a topic that raises interesting and important questions for both policy and theory—to bring the communities together. Happily, the best work in the proliferation field already does so.

#### *Specifically true of Latin America*

**Margheritis and Pereira ’07** (Ana- assistant professor of international relations and Latin American politics at the University of Florida and Anthony- associate professor of political science at Tulane University; “The Neoliberal Turn in Latin America: The Cycle of Ideas and the Search for an Alternative”; Latin American Perspectives, Vol. 34, No. 3, Contested Transformation (May, 2007),pp. 25-48)

**This analysis is offered from a critical point of view in the hope that it may not only provide a better understanding of the recent past but inform currentdebates about the way forward in economic policy making in Latin America**. It  is our conviction that the contested character of **the recent reform processrequires a revisionist exercise that unveils the shortcomings of prior policies andpaves the way for innovative ideas that address the material aspirations anddemands of***the majority of Latin Americans***better than the WashingtonConsensus did**. Our position is not that ideas were the prime movers of neoliberal transformation—interests and institutions were also important—but that the *mechanisms* for their promulgation *have been understudied.*

#### *The impact is war*

**Hanson 07**

Victor Davis Hanson, Professor of Classics at CSU Fullerton, “Why Study War?” City Journal, Summer)

It’s no surprise that civilian Americans tend to lack a basic understanding of military matters. Even when I was a graduate student, 30-some years ago, **military history**—understood broadly as the investigation of why one side wins and another loses a war, and encompassing reflections on magisterial or foolish generalship, technological stagnation or breakthrough, and the roles of discipline, bravery, national will, and culture in determining a conflict’s outcome and its consequences—**had**already **become unfashionable on campus**. Today, **universities are even less receptive** to the subject. **This state of affairs is profoundly troubling, for democratic citizenship requires knowledge of war**—and now, in the age of weapons of mass annihilation, more than ever. **I** came to the study of warfare in an odd way, at the age of 24. Without ever taking a class in military history, I naively began writing about war for a Stanford classics dissertation that explored the effects of agricultural devastation in ancient Greece, especially the Spartan ravaging of the Athenian countryside during the Peloponnesian War. The topic fascinated me. Was the strategy effective? Why assume that ancient armies with primitive tools could easily burn or cut trees, vines, and grain on thousands of acres of enemy farms, when on my family farm in Selma, California, it took me almost an hour to fell a mature fruit tree with a sharp modern ax? Yet even if the invaders couldn’t starve civilian populations, was the destruction still harmful psychologically? Did it goad proud agrarians to come out and fight? And what did the practice tell us about the values of the Greeks—and of the generals who persisted in an operation that seemingly brought no tangible results? I posed these questions to my prospective thesis advisor, adding all sorts of further justifications. The topic was central to understanding the Peloponnesian War, I noted. The research would be interdisciplinary—a big plus in the modern university—drawing not just on ancient military histories but also on archaeology, classical drama, epigraphy, and poetry. I could bring a personal dimension to the research, too, having grown up around veterans of both world wars who talked constantly about battle. And from my experience on the farm, I wanted to add practical details about growing trees and vines in a Mediterranean climate. Yet my advisor was skeptical. Agrarian wars, indeed **wars of any kind, weren’t popular in classics Ph.D. programs**, even though farming and fighting were the ancient Greeks’ two most common pursuits, the sources of anecdote, allusion, and metaphor in almost every Greek philosophical, historical, and literary text. Few classicists seemed to care any more that most notable Greek writers, thinkers, and statesmen—from Aeschylus to Pericles to Xenophon—had served in the phalanx or on a trireme at sea. Dozens of nineteenth-century dissertations and monographs on ancient warfare—on the organization of the Spartan army, the birth of Greek tactics, the strategic thinking of Greek generals, and much more—went largely unread. Nor was the discipline of military history, once central to a liberal education, in vogue on campuses in the seventies. It was as if the university had forgotten that history itself had begun with Herodotus and Thucydides as the story of armed conflicts. **W**hat lay behind this academic lack of interest? **The most obvious explanation: this was the immediate post-Vietnam era**. The public perception in the Carter years was that **America had lost a war that for moral and practical reasons it should never have fought**—a catastrophe, for many in the universities, that it must never repeat. **The necessary corrective wasn’t to learn how such wars started**, went forward, and were lost. **Better to ignore anything that had to do with such odious business in the first place.**The nuclear pessimism of the cold war, which followed the horror of two world wars, also dampened academic interest. The postwar obscenity of Mutually Assured Destruction had lent an apocalyptic veneer to contemporary war: as President Kennedy warned, “Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind.” Conflict had become something so destructive, in this view, that it no longer had any relation to the battles of the past. It seemed absurd to worry about a new tank or a novel doctrine of counterinsurgency when the press of a button, unleashing nuclear Armageddon, would render all military thinking superfluous. Further, the sixties had ushered in a utopian view of society antithetical to serious thinking about war. Government, the military, business, religion, and the family had conspired, the new Rousseauians believed, to warp the naturally peace-loving individual. Conformity and coercion smothered our innately pacifist selves. To assert that wars broke out because bad men, in fear or in pride, sought material advantage or status, or because good men had done too little to stop them, was now seen as antithetical to an enlightened understanding of human nature. “What difference does it make,” in the words of the much-quoted Mahatma Gandhi, “to the dead, the orphans, and the homeless whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty and democracy?” **The academic neglect of war is**even more **acute** today. Military history as a discipline has atrophied, **with** **very few professorships, journal articles, or degree programs.** In 2004, Edward Coffman, a retired military history professor who taught at the University of Wisconsin, reviewed the faculties of the top 25 history departments, as ranked by *U.S. News and World Report*. He found that of over 1,000 professors, only 21 identified war as a specialty. When war does show up on university syllabi, it’s often about the race, class, and gender of combatants and wartime civilians. So a class on the Civil War will focus on the Underground Railroad and Reconstruction, not on Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. One on World War II might emphasize Japanese internment, Rosie the Riveter, and the horror of Hiroshima, not Guadalcanal and Midway. A survey of the Vietnam War will devote lots of time to the inequities of the draft, media coverage, and the antiwar movement at home, and scant the air and artillery barrages at Khe Sanh. Those who want to study war in the traditional way face intense academic suspicion, as Margaret Atwood’s poem “The Loneliness of the Military Historian” suggests: Confess: it’s my profession that alarms you. This is why few people ask me to dinner, though Lord knows I don’t go out of my way to be scary. Historians of war must derive perverse pleasure, their critics suspect, from reading about carnage and suffering. Why not figure out instead how to outlaw war forever, as if it were not a tragic, nearly inevitable aspect of human existence? Hence the recent surge of “peace studies” (see “[The Peace Racket](http://www.city-journal.org/html/17_3_peace_racket.html)”). **The university’s aversion to the study of war certainly doesn’t reflect public lack of interest in the subject**. Students love old-fashioned war classes on those rare occasions when they’re offered, usually as courses that professors sneak in when the choice of what to teach is left up to them. I taught a number of such classes at California State University, Stanford, and elsewhere. They’d invariably wind up overenrolled, with hordes of students lingering after office hours to offer opinions on the battles of Marathon and Lepanto. Popular culture, too, displays extraordinary enthusiasm for all things military. There’s a new Military History Channel, and Hollywood churns out a steady supply of blockbuster war movies, from *Saving Private Ryan* to *300*. The post–Ken Burns explosion of interest in the Civil War continues. Historical reenactment societies stage history’s great battles, from the Roman legions’ to the Wehrmacht’s. Barnes and Noble and Borders bookstores boast well-stocked military history sections, with scores of new titles every month. A plethora of websites obsess over strategy and tactics. Hit video games grow ever more realistic in their reconstructions of battles. The public may feel drawn to military history because it wants to learn about honor and sacrifice, or because of interest in technology—the muzzle velocity of a Tiger Tank’s 88mm cannon, for instance—or because of a pathological need to experience violence, if only vicariously. **The importance**—and challenge—**of** the **academic study of war** **is to** elevate that popular enthusiasm into a more capacious and serious understanding, one that **seek**s **answers** to such questions as: *Why do wars break out?* How do they end? Why do the winners win and the losers lose? **How best to avoid wars or contain their worst effects? A** wartime public illiterate about the conflicts of the past can easily find itself paralyzed in the acrimony of the present.**Without standards of historical comparison, it will prove ill equipped to make informed judgments.** Neither our politicians nor most of our citizens seem to recall the incompetence and terrible decisions that, in December 1777, December 1941, and November 1950, led to massive American casualties and, for a time, public despair. So it’s no surprise that today so many seem to think that the violence in Iraq is unprecedented in our history. Roughly 3,000 combat dead in Iraq in some four years of fighting is, of course, a terrible thing. And it has provoked national outrage to the point of considering withdrawal and defeat, as we still bicker over up-armored Humvees and proper troop levels. But a previous generation considered Okinawa a stunning American victory, and prepared to follow it with an invasion of the Japanese mainland itself—despite losing, in a little over two months, four times as many Americans as we have lost in Iraq, casualties of faulty intelligence, poor generalship, and suicidal head-on assaults against fortified positions. It’s not that military history offers cookie-cutter comparisons with the past. Germany’s World War I victory over Russia in under three years and her failure to take France in four apparently misled Hitler into thinking that he could overrun the Soviets in three or four weeks—after all, he had brought down historically tougher France in just six. Similarly, the conquest of the Taliban in eight weeks in 2001, followed by the establishment of constitutional government within a year in Kabul, did not mean that the similarly easy removal of Saddam Hussein in three weeks in 2003 would ensure a working Iraqi democracy within six months. The differences between the countries—cultural, political, geographical, and economic—were too great. Instead, **knowledge of past wars establishes wide parameters of what to expect from new ones**. Themes, emotions, and rhetoric remain constant over the centuries, and thus generally predictable. Athens’s disastrous expedition in 415 BC against Sicily, the largest democracy in the Greek world, may not prefigure our war in Iraq. But the story of the Sicilian calamity does instruct us on how consensual societies can clamor for war—yet soon become disheartened and predicate their support on the perceived pulse of the battlefield. **Military history teaches us**, contrary to popular belief these days, **that** **wars aren’t necessarily the most costly of human calamities**. The first Gulf War took few lives in getting Saddam out of Kuwait; **doing nothing in Rwanda allowed** savage **gangs** and militias **to murder hundreds of thousands** with impunity. Hitler, Mao, Pol Pot, and Stalin killed far more off the battlefield than on it. The 1918 Spanish flu epidemic brought down more people than World War I did. And more Americans—over 3.2 million—lost their lives driving over the last 90 years than died in combat in this nation’s 231-year history. Perhaps what bothers us about wars, though, isn’t just their horrific lethality but also that people choose to wage them—which makes them seem avoidable, unlike a flu virus or a car wreck, and their tolls unduly grievous. Yet **military history also reminds us that war sometimes has an eerie utility**: as British strategist Basil H. Liddell Hart put it, “War is always a matter of doing evil in the hope that good may come of it.” Wars—or threats of wars—put an end to chattel slavery, Nazism, fascism, Japanese militarism, and Soviet Communism. Military history is as often the story of appeasement as of warmongering. The destructive military careers of Alexander the Great, Caesar, Napoleon, and Hitler would all have ended early had any of their numerous enemies united when the odds favored them. Western air power stopped Slobodan Milošević’s reign of terror at little cost to NATO forces—but only after a near-decade of inaction and dialogue had made possible the slaughter of tens of thousands. Affluent Western societies have often proved reluctant to use force to prevent greater future violence. “**War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things**,” observed the British philosopher John Stuart Mill. “The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse.” Indeed, by ignoring history, the modern age is free to interpret war as a failure of communication, of diplomacy, of talking—as if aggressors don’t know exactly what they’re doing. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, frustrated by the Bush administration’s intransigence in the War on Terror, flew to Syria, hoping to persuade President Assad to stop funding terror in the Middle East. She assumed that Assad’s belligerence resulted from our aloofness and arrogance rather than from his dictatorship’s interest in destroying democracy in Lebanon and Iraq, before such contagious freedom might in fact destroy him. For a therapeutically inclined generation raised on Oprah and Dr. Phil—and not on the letters of William Tecumseh Sherman and William Shirer’s *Berlin Diary*—problems between states, like those in our personal lives, should be argued about by equally civilized and peaceful rivals, and so solved without resorting to violence. Yet it’s **hard to find many wars that result from miscommunication. Far more often they break out because of** malevolent intent and **the absence of deterrence**. Margaret Atwood also wrote in her poem: “**Wars happen because the ones who start them / think they can win**.” Hitler did; so did Mussolini and Tojo—and their assumptions were logical, given the relative disarmament of the Western democracies at the time. Bin Laden attacked on September 11 not because there was a dearth of American diplomats willing to dialogue with him in the Hindu Kush. Instead, he recognized that a series of Islamic terrorist assaults against U.S. interests over two decades had met with no meaningful reprisals, and concluded that decadent Westerners would never fight, whatever the provocation—or that, if we did, we would withdraw as we had from Mogadishu.

#### The aff is a façade --- a pseudo-sign image of real progress

WILLIAMS 2k (Christopher R. Williams, PhD, forensic psychology, professor and chairman of the Department of Criminal Justice Studies at Bradley University, Bruce A. Arrigo, PhD, administration of justice, professor of criminology, law, and society, Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at the University of North Carolina, Faculty Associate in the Center for Professional and Applied Ethics, “The (Im)Possibility of Democratic Justice and the ‘Gift’ of the Majority,” Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice, Vol. 16, No. 3, August 2000, pgs. 321-343)

The impediments to establishing democratic justice in contemporary American society have caused a national paralysis; one that has recklessly spawned an aporetic1 existence for minorities. The entrenched ideological complexities afflicting under- and nonrepresented groups (e.g., poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, crime) at the hands of political, legal, cultural, and economic power elites have produced counterfeit, perhaps even fraudulent, efforts at reform: Discrimination and inequality in opportunity prevail (e.g., Lynch & Patterson, 1996). The misguided and futile initiatives of the state, in pursuit of transcending this public affairs crisis, have fostered a reification, that is, a reinforcement of divisiveness. This time, however, minority groups compete with one another for recognition, affirmation, and identity in the national collective psyche (Rosenfeld, 1993). What ensues by way of state effort, though, is a contemporaneous sense of equality for all and a near imperceptible endorsement of inequality; a silent conviction that the majority still retains power. **The “gift” of equality, procured through state legislative enactments as an emblem of democratic justice, embodies true (legitimated) power that remains nervously secure in the hands of the majority**. **The ostensible empowerment of minority groups is a facade; it is the ruse of the majority gift**. What exists, in fact, is a simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1981, 1983) of equality (and by extension, democratic justice): a pseudo-sign image (a hypertext or simulation) of real sociopolitical progress.

#### This narcissistic reinforcement of power turns the case

WILLIAMS 2k (Christopher R. Williams, PhD, forensic psychology, professor and chairman of the Department of Criminal Justice Studies at Bradley University, Bruce A. Arrigo, PhD, administration of justice, professor of criminology, law, and society, Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at the University of North Carolina, Faculty Associate in the Center for Professional and Applied Ethics, “The (Im)Possibility of Democratic Justice and the ‘Gift’ of the Majority,” Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice, Vol. 16, No. 3, August 2000, pgs. 321-343)

Reciprocation on your part is impossible. Even if one day you are able to return our monetary favor twofold, **we will always know that it was us who first hosted you;** extended to and entrusted in you an opportunity given your time of need. **As the initiators of such a charity, we are always in a position of power, and you are always indebted to us**. This is where the notion of egoism or conceit assumes a hegemonic role. By giving to you, a supposed act of generosity in the name of furthering your cause, we have not empowered you. Rather, we have empowered ourselves. We have less than subtlely let you know that we have more than you. We have so much more, in fact, that we can afford to give you some. **Our giving becomes, not an act of beneficence, but a show of power, that is, narcissistic hegemony**! Thus, we see that the majority gift is a ruse: a simulacrum of movement toward aporetic equality and a simulation of democratic justice. By relying on the legislature (representing the majority) when economic and social opportunities are availed to minority or underrepresented collectives, the process takes on exactly the form of Derrida’s gift. The majority controls the political, economic, legal, and social arenas; that is, it is (and always has been) in control of such communities as the employment sector and the educational system. The mandated opportunities that under- or nonrepresented citizens receive as a result of this falsely eudemonic endeavor are gifts and, thus, ultimately constitute an effort to make minority populations feel better. There is a sense of movement toward equality in the name of democratic justice, albeit falsely manufactured. 18 In return for this effort, the majority shows off its long-standing authority (this provides a stark realization to minority groups that power elites are the forces that critically form society as a community), forever indebts under- and nonrepresented classes to the generosity of the majority (after all, minorities groups now have, presumably, a real chance to attain happiness), and, in a more general sense, furthers the narcissism of the majority (its representatives have displayed power and have been generous). Thus, the ruse of the majority gift assumes the form and has the hegemonical effect of empowering the empowered, relegitimating the privileged, and fueling the voracious conceit of the advantaged.

#### Their demand for the ballot is trapped in a web of scheming --- this poisons their call for change

MCGOWAN 2009 (Todd McGowan, Associate Professor, film theory, University of Vermont, PhD, Ohio State University, studies the intersection of Hegel, psychoanalysis, and existentialism and cinema, “The Exceptional Darkness of The Dark Knight,” Jump Cut, No. 51, Spring 2009, http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/jc51.2009/darkKnightKant/text.html)

According to Kant, when we emerge as subjects, we do so as beings of radical evil, that is, beings **who do good for evil reasons**. We help our neighbor for the recognition we gain; we volunteer to help with the school dance in order to spend time with a potential romantic interest; we give money for disaster relief in order to feel comfortable about our level of material comfort; and so on. For Kant, this is the fundamental problem that morality confronts and the most difficult type of evil to extirpate. He explains, “**The human being (even the best) is evil only because he reverses the moral order of his incentives in incorporating them into his maxims**. He indeed incorporates the moral law into those maxims, together with the law of self-love; since, however, he realizes that the two cannot stand on an equal footing, but one must be subordinated to the other as its supreme condition, he makes the incentives of self-love and their inclinations the condition of compliance with the moral law — whereas it is this latter that, as the supreme condition of the satisfaction of the former, should have been incorporated into the universal maxim of the power of choice as the sole incentive.”[12] Though Kant believes that we have the capacity to turn from beings of radical evil to moral beings, we cannot escape a certain originary radical evil that leads us to place our incentives of self-love above the law and that prevents us from adhering to the law for its own sake.[13] Our first inclination always involves the thought of what we will gain from not lying rather than the importance of telling the truth. Even when we do tell the truth, we do so out of prudence or convenience rather than out of duty. This is why Kant contends that most obedience to the moral law is in fact radical evil — obedience for the wrong reasons. The presence of radical evil at the heart of obedience to the law taints this obedience and gives criminality the upper hand over the law. There is always a fundamental imbalance between law and criminality. Criminality is inscribed into the law itself in the form of misdirected obedience, and no law can free itself from its reliance on the evil of such obedience. A consequentialist ethics develops as a compromise with this radical evil at the heart of the law. Consequentialism is an ethics that sees value only in the end — obedience — and it disregards whatever evil means that the subject uses to arrive at that obedience. If people obey the law, the consequentialist thinks, it doesn’t matter why they do so. Those who take up this or some other compromise with radical evil predominate within society, and they constitute the behavioral norm. They obey the law when necessary, but they do so in order to satisfy some incentive of self-love. Theirs is a morality of calculation in which acts have value in terms of the ultimate good that they produce or the interest that they serve. Anyone who obeys the law for its own sake becomes exceptional. Both Batman and the Joker exist outside the calculating morality that predominates among the police, the law-abiding citizens, and the criminal underworld in Gotham. Both have the status of an exception because they adhere to a code that cuts against their incentives for self-love and violates any consequentialist morality or morality concerned solely with results. Though Batman tries to save Gotham and the Joker tries to destroy it, though Batman commits himself to justice and the Joker commits himself to injustice, they share a position that transcends the inadequate and calculated ethics authorized by the law itself. Their differences mask a similar relationship to Kantian morality. Through the parallel between them, Christopher Nolan makes clear the role that evil must play in authentic heroism. It is the Joker, not Batman, who gives the most eloquent account of the ethical position that they occupy together. He sets himself up against the consequentialist and utilitarian ethic that rules Gotham, and he tries to analyze this ethic in order to understand what motivates it. As the Joker sees it, despite their apparent differences, all of the different groups in Gotham indulge in an ethics of what he calls scheming. That is to say, they act not on the basis of the rightness or wrongness of the act itself but in order to achieve some ultimate object. In doing so, they inherently degrade their acts and deprive them of their basis in freedom. Scheming enslaves one to the object of one’s scheme.

#### The alternative is to vote negative because the 1AC’s ethics are right --- to be the Dark Knight --- this is the only option for true heroism and substantive change

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Just as The Dark Knight illustrates the inextricable relation between heroism and evil, it also undermines the idea of the hero who can appear as heroic. From early in the film, Batman proclaims his desire to step aside in order to cede his position to someone who can be heroic without wearing a mask. He sees this possibility in the figure of Harvey Dent. But the film shows that there is no hero without a mask — and, more specifically, without a mask of evil. As Slavoj Žižek puts it, “**The properly human good, the good elevated above the natural good, the infinite spiritual good, is ultimately the mask of evil**.”[20] Without the mask of evil, good cannot emerge and remains stuck the calculation of interest; without the mask of evil, good remains scheming. This is precisely what Harvey Dent evinces, despite the promise that Batman sees in him for the perfect form of heroism. Throughout the beginning part of the film, Harvey Dent seems like a figure of pure good. The purity of his goodness allows him to never be nonplused. Even when a mobster tries to shoot him in open court, he calmly grabs the gun from the mobster’s hand and punches the mobster in the face. After the punch, we see Dent’s expression of total equanimity, even in the midst of an attempted assassination. This coolness stems from his absolute certainty that events will ultimately follow according to his plans. The rapidity with which Nolan edits together the threat from the mobster and Dent’s response minimizes the spectator’s sense of danger. The threat against Dent’s life disappears almost before we can experience it as such, which suggests that it lacks a quality of realness, both for Dent and for the spectator. The court scene establishes him as a hero whom one cannot harm. Ironically, the superhero in the film, Batman, shows himself to be vulnerable when he first appears in the film, as dogs bite him through his protective armor. This distinction between Dent and Batman’s vulnerability explains why the former cannot be an authentic hero. In contrast to Batman, Dent’s heroism does not involve the experience of loss and is based on a repudiation of the very possibility of losing. Bruce Wayne adopted the identity of Batman after the trauma of being dropped in a cave full of bats and the loss of his parents, but no such traumatic loss animates the heroism of Dent. He is heroic through an immediate identification with the good, which enables him to have a purity that Batman doesn’t have. No rupture and subsequent return animates his commitment to justice. He can publicly avow his heroic actions because he performs them in a pure way, without resorting to the guise of evil. But the falsity of this immediate identification with the good becomes apparent in Dent’s disavowal of loss, which Nolan locates in the tic that marks Dent’s character — his proclivity for flipping a coin to resolve dilemmas. On several occasions, he flips the coin that his father had given him in order to introduce the possibility of loss into his activities. By flipping a coin, one admits that events might not go according to plan, that the other might win, and that loss is an ever-present possibility. Though the coin flip represents an attempt to master loss by rendering it random rather than necessary or constitutive, it nonetheless ipso facto accedes to the fact that one might lose. Dent first flips the coin when he is late to examine a key witness in court, and the coin flip will determine whether he or his assistant Rachel will do the questioning. When Rachel wonders how he could leave something so important to chance, Dent replies, “I make my own luck.” It is just after this that the mobster tries and fails to shoot Dent, further suggesting his invulnerability. Dent wins this and subsequent coin flips in the first part of the film because he uses a loaded coin, a coin with two heads. When it comes to the coin flip, Dent does make his own luck by eliminating the element of chance. The coin that he uses ensures that he will avoid the possibility of losing. The coin with two heads is certainly a clever device, but it also stands as the objective correlative for Dent’s lack of authentic heroism. The immediacy of his heroism cannot survive any mediation. Once loss is introduced into Dent’s world, his heroism disappears, and he becomes a figure of criminality. The transformation of Harvey Dent after his disfigurement is so precipitous that it strains credulity. One day he is the pure defender of absolute justice, and the next he is on a homicidal warpath willing to shoot innocent children. One could chalk up this rapid change to sloppy filmmaking on Christopher Nolan’s part, to an eagerness to move too quickly to the film’s concluding moments of tension. But the rapidity of the transformation signifies all the more because it seems so forced and jarring. It allows us to retroactively examine Harvey Dent’s relationship to the law earlier in the film. Dent becomes Two-Face after his injury, but in doing so he merely takes up the identity that police department had adopted for him when he was working for the Internal Affairs division. As an investigator of other officers, Dent earned this nickname by insisting on absolute purity and by targeting any sign of police corruption. Even Gordon, an officer who is not corrupt, complains to Dent of the paralyzing effects on the department of these tactics. On the one hand, an insistence on purity seems to be a consistently noncalculating ethical position. One can imagine this insistence obstructing the longterm goal of better law enforcement (which is why Gordon objects to it). On the other hand, however, the demand for purity always anticipates its own failure. The pure hero quickly becomes the criminal when an experience of loss disrupts this purity. This first occurs when Gordon is apparently killed at the police commissioner’s funeral. In response to this blatant display of public criminality, Dent abuses a suspect from the shooting and even threatens to kill him, using his trick coin as a device for mental torture. Even though Dent has no intention of actually shooting the suspect, Batman nonetheless scolds Dent for his methods when he interrupts the private interrogation. This scene offers the first insight into what Dent will become later in the film, but it also shows the implications of his form of heroism. Dent resorts to torture because his form of heroism has no ontological space for loss. When it occurs, his heroism becomes completely derailed. Rachel's death and his own disfigurement introduce traumatic loss into Dent’s existence. Nolan shows the ramifications of this change through the transformation that his coin undergoes during the explosion that kills Rachel. The explosion chars one side of Dent’s two-headed coin (which he had earlier flipped to Rachel as he was taken away to jail), so that it becomes, through being submitted to a traumatic force, a coin with two different sides. The film indicates here how trauma introduces loss into the world and how this introduction of loss removes all subjective certainty. When Dent as Two-Face flips the newly marked coin, the act takes on an entirely new significance. Unlike earlier, he is no longer certain about the result of the flip. He flips to decide whether he will kill the Joker in the hospital room, whether he will kill Detective Wuertz (Ron Dean) in a bar, or whether he will kill Detective Ramirez (Monique Curnen) in an alley. Of the three, only Wuertz ends up dead, but Dent also kills another officer and the criminal boss Maroni, along with some of his men. This rampage ends with Dent holding Gordon’s family hostage and threatening to kill the one whom Gordon holds most dear. Dent becomes a killer in order to inflict his own experience of loss on others: he tells Gordon that he wants to kill what is most precious to him so that Gordon will feel what he felt. Dent can so quickly take up this attitude because his heroism has no place for loss. When it occurs, the heroism becomes completely undone. After Dent’s death, the film ends with Batman accepting responsibility for the killings performed by Dent in order to salvage Dent’s public reputation and thereby sustain the image of the public hero. Gordon and Batman believe that this gesture is necessary for saving the city and keeping its hope for justice alive. When Gordon says, “Gotham needs its true hero,” we see a shot of him turning Dent’s face over, obscuring the burned side and exposing the human side. In death, Dent will begin to wear the mask that he would never wear in life. A mask of heroism will cover his criminality. As the film conceives it, this lie — that purity is possible — represents the sine qua non of social being. Without it, without the idea that one can sustain an ethical position, calculation of interest would have nothing to offset it, and the city would become identified with criminality. But the real interest of the film’s conclusion lies with Batman and the form of appearance that his heroism takes. It is as if Batman takes responsibility for Dent’s act not to save Dent’s face but to stain his own image irrevocably with evil. He remains the heroic exception, but his status changes radically. In order to guarantee that Dent dies as a hero, Batman must take responsibility for the murders that Dent committed. With this gesture, he truly adopts the mask of evil. In the closing montage sequence, we see the police hunting him down, Gordon smashing the Bat Signal, and finally Batman driving away into the night on his motorcycle. As this sequence concludes, we hear Gordon’s voiceover say, “He’s the hero Gotham deserves, but not the one it needs right now. And so we’ll hunt him, because he can take it. Because he’s not a hero. He’s a silent guardian, a watchful protector ... a dark knight.” As Gordon pronounces the final word, the film cuts to black from the image of Batman on his motorcycle. The melodrama of this voiceover elevates Batman's heroism, but it does so precisely because he agrees to appear as evil. This gesture, even more than any of his physical acts of courage, is the gesture of the true hero because it leaves him without any recognition for his heroism. For the hero who appears in the form of evil, heroic exceptionality must be an end in itself without any hope for a greater reward. When the exception takes this form, it loses the danger that adheres to the typical hero. The mask of evil allows the exception to persist without multiplying itself. By adopting this position at the end of the film, Batman reveals that he has taken up the lesson of the Joker and grasped the importance of the break from calculation. Dent, the hero who wants to appear heroic, descends into murderous evil. But Batman, the hero who accepts evil as his form of appearance, sustains the only possible path for heroic exceptionality. In an epoch when the law's inadequacy is evident, the need for the heroic exception becomes ever more pronounced, but the danger of the exception has also never been more apparent. Declarations of exceptionality abound in the contemporary world, and they allow us to see the negative ramifications that follow from the exception, no matter how heroic its intent. Audiences flock to superhero movies in search of a heroic exception that they can embrace, an exception that would work toward justice without simultaneously adding to injustice in the manner of today’s real world exceptions. In The Dark Knight, Christopher Nolan offers a viable image of heroic exceptionality. As he sees, its form of appearance must be its opposite if it to avoid implicating itself in the injustice that it fights. The lesson for our real world exceptions is thus a difficult one. Rather than being celebrated as the liberator of Iraq and the savoir of U.S. freedom, George W. Bush would have to act behind the scenes to encourage charges being brought against him as a war criminal at the World Court, and then he would have to flee to the streets of The Hague as the authorities pursue him there. In the eyes of the public, true heroes must identify themselves with the evil that we fight.