### fiat double bind

#### This argument is dumb- they’ve conceded multiple pieces of evidence that the impact to the 1ac is true

#### Political agency

# introna

#### This card is functionally a reason why there’s no impact to death

**Yes value to life. Our status as beings inheres an affirmation of life in the face of extinction and nonbeing.**

**Bernstein ‘2** (Richard J., Vera List Prof. Phil. – New School for Social Research, “Radical Evil: A Philosophical Interrogation”, p. 188-192)

This is precisely what Jonas does in The Phenomenon of Life, his rethinking of the meaning of organic life. He tealizes that his philosophical project goes against many of the deeply embedded prejudices and dogmas of contemporary philosophy. He challenges two well-entrenched dogmas: that there is no metaphysical truth, and that there is no path from the "is" to the "ought". To escape from ethical nihilism, we must show that there is a metaphysical ground of ethics, an objective basis for valueand purpose in being itself. These are strong claims; and, needless to say, they are extremely controversial. In defense of Jonas, it should be said that he approaches this task with both boldness and intellectual modesty. He frequently acknowledges that he cannot "prove" his claims, but he certainly believes that his "premises" do "more justice to the total phenomenon of man and Being in general" than the prevailing dualist or reductionist alternatives. "But in the last analysis my argument can do no more than give a rational grounding to an option it presents as a choice for a thoughtful person — an option that of course has its own inner power of persuasion. Unfortunately I have nothing better to offer. Perhaps a future metaphysics will be able to do more." 8 To appreciate how Jonas's philosophical project unfolds, we need to examine his philosophical interpretation of life. This is the starting point of his grounding of a new imperative of responsibility. It also provides the context for his speculations concerning evil. In the foreword to The Phenomenon of Life, Jonas gives a succinct statement of his aim. Put at its briefest, this volume offers an "existential" interpretation of biological facts. Contemporary existentialism, obsessed with man alone, is in the habit of claiming as his unique privilege and predicament much of what is rooted in organic existence as such: in so doing, it withholds from the organic world the insights to be learned from the awareness of self. On its part, scientific biology, by its rules confined to the physical, outward facts, must ignore the dimension of inwardness that belongs to life: in so doing, it submerges the distinction of "animate" and "inanimate." A new reading of the biological record may recover the inner dimension — that which we know best -- for the understanding of things organic and so reclaim for psycho-physical unity of life that place in the theoretical scheme which it had lost through the divorce of the material and the mental since Descartes. p. ix) Jonas, in his existential interpretation of bios, pursues "this underlying theme of all of life in its developmentthrough the ascending order of organic powers and functions: metabolism, moving and desiring, sensing and perceiving, imagination, art, and mind — a progressive scale of freedom and peril, culminating in man, who may understand his uniqueness anew when he no longer sees himself in metaphysical isolation" (PL, p. ix). The way in which Jonas phrases this theme recalls the Aristotelian approach to bios, and it is clear that Aristotle is a major influence on Jonas. There is an even closer affinity with the philosophy of nature that Schelling sought to elaborate in the nineteenth century. Schelling (like many post- Kantian German thinkers) was troubled by the same fundamental dichotomy that underlies the problem for Jonas. The dichotomy that Kant introduced between the realm of "disenchanted" nature and the realm of freedom leads to untenable antinomies. Jonas differs from both Aristotle and Schelling in taking into account Darwin and contemporary scientific biology. A proper philosophical understanding of biology must always be compatible with the scientific facts. But at the same time, it must also root out misguided materialistic and reductionist interpretations of those biological facts. In this respect, Jonas's naturalism bears a strong affinity with the evolutionary naturalism of Peirce and Dewey. At the same time, Jonas is deeply skeptical of any theory of evolutionary biology that introduces mysterious "vital forces" or neglects the contingencies and perils of evolutionary development.' Jonas seeks to show "that it is in the dark stirrings of primeval organic substance that a principle of freedom shines forth for the first time within the vast necessity of the physical universe" (PL 3). Freedom, in this broad sense, is not identified exclusively with human freedom; it reaches down to the first glimmerings of organic life, and up to the type of freedom manifested by human beings. " 'Freedom' must denote an objectively discernible mode of being, i.e., a manner of executing existence, distinctive of the organic per se and thus shared by all members but by no nonmembers of the class: an ontologically descriptive term which can apply to mere physical evidence at first" (PL 3). This coming into being of freedom is not just a success story. "The privilege of freedom carries the burden of need and means precarious being" (PL 4). It is with biological metabolism that this principle of freedom first arises. Jonas goes "so far as to maintain that metabolism, the basic stratum of all organic existence, already displays freedom — indeed that it is the first form freedom takes." 1 ° With "metabolism — its power and its need — not-being made its appearance in the world as an alternative embodied in being itself; and thereby being itself first assumes an emphatic sense: intrinsically qualified by the threat of its negative it must affirm itself, and existence affirmed is existence as a concern" (PL 4). This broad, ontological understanding of freedom as a characteristic of all organic life serves Jonas as "an Ariadne's thread through the interpretation of Life" (PL 3). The way in which Jonas enlarges our understanding of freedom is indicative of his primary argumentative strategy. He expands and reinterprets categories that are normally applied exclusively to human beings so that we can see that they identify objectively discernible modes of being characteristic of everything animate. Even inwardness, and incipient forms of self; reach down to the simplest forms of organic life. 11 Now it may seem as if Jonas is guilty of anthropomorphism, of projecting what is distinctively human onto the entire domain of living beings. He is acutely aware of this sort of objection, but he argues that even the idea of anthropomorphism must be rethought. 12 We distort Jonas's philosophy of life if we think that he is projecting human characteristics onto the nonhuman animate world. Earlier I quoted the passage in which Jonas speaks of a "third way" — "one by which the dualistic rift can be avoided and yet enough of the dualistic insight saved to uphold the humanity of man" (GEN 234). We avoid the "dualistic rift" by showing that there is genuine continuity of organic life, and that such categories as freedom, inwardness, and selfhood apply to everything that is animate. These categories designate objective modes of being. But we preserve "enough dualistic insight" when we recognize that freedom, inwardness, and selfhood manifest themselves in human beings in a distinctive manner. I do not want to suggest that Jonas is successful in carrying out this ambitious program. He is aware of the tentativeness and fallibility of his claims, but he presents us with an understanding of animate beings such that we can discern both continuity and difference.' 3 It should now be clear that Jonas is not limiting himself to a regional philosophy of the organism or a new "existential" interpretation of biological facts. His goal is nothing less than to provide a new metaphysical understanding of being, a new ontology. And he is quite explicit about this. Our reflections [are] intended to show in what sense the problem of life, and with it that of the body, ought to stand in the center of ontology and, to some extent, also of epistemology. . . The central position of the problem of life means not only that it must be accorded a decisive voice in judging any given ontology but also that any treatment of itself must summon the whole of ontology. (PL 25) The philosophical divide between Levinas and Jonas appears to be enormous. For Levinas, as long as we restrict ourselves to the horizon of Being and to ontology (no matter how broadly these are conceived), there is no place for ethics, and no answer to ethical nihilism. For Jonas, by contrast, unless we can enlarge our understanding of ontology in such a manner as would provide an objective grounding for value and purpose within nature, there is no way to answer the challenge of ethical nihilism. But despite this initial appearance of extreme opposition, there is a way of interpreting Jonas and Levinas that lessens the gap between them. In Levinasian terminology, we can say that Jonas shows that there is a way of understanding ontology and the living body that does justice to the nonreducible alterity of the other (l'autrui). 14 Still, we might ask how Jonas's "existential" interpretation of biological facts and the new ontology he is proposing can provide a metaphysical grounding for a new ethics. Jonas criticizes the philosophical prejudice that there is no place in nature for values, purposes, and ends. Just as he maintains that freedom, inwardness, and selfhood are objective modes of being, so he argues that values and ends are objective modes of being. **There is a basic value inherent in organic being, a basic affirmation, "The Yes' of Life**" (IR 81). 15 "**The self-affirmation of being becomes emphatic in the opposition of life to death. Life is the explicit confrontation of being with not-being**. . . . The 'yes' of all striving is here sharpened by the active `no' to not-being" (IR 81-2). Furthermore — and this is the crucial point for Jonas — **this affirmation of life that is in all organic being has a binding obligatory force upon human beings**. This blindly self-enacting "yes" gains obligating force in the seeing freedom of man, who as the supreme outcome of nature's purposive labor is no longer its automatic executor but, with the power obtained from knowledge, can become its destroyer as well. He must adopt the "yes" into his will and impose the "no" to not-being on his power. But precisely this transition from willing to obligation is the critical point of moral theory at which attempts at laying a foundation for it come so easily to grief. Why does now, in man, that become a duty which hitherto "being" itself took care of through all individual willings? (IR 82). We discover here the transition from is to "ought" — from the self-affirmation of life to the binding obligation of human beings to preserve life not only for the present but also for the future. But why do we need a new ethics? The subtitle of The Imperative of Responsibility — In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age — indicates why we need a new ethics.Modern technology has transformed the nature and consequences of human ac-tion so radically that the underlying premises of traditional ethics are no longer valid. For the first time in history human beings possess the knowledge and the power to destroy life on this planet, including human life. Not only is there the new possibility of total nuclear disaster; there are the even more invidious and threatening possibilities that result from the unconstrained use of technologies that can destroy the environment required for life. The major transformation brought about by modern technology is that the consequences of our actions frequently exceed by far anything we can envision. Jonas was one of the first philosophers to warn us about the unprecedented ethical and political problems that arise with the rapid development of biotechnology. He claimed that this was happening at a time when there was an "ethical vacuum," when there did not seem to be any effective ethical principles to limit ot guide our ethical decisions. In the name of scientific and technological "progress," there is a relentless pressure to adopt a stance where virtually anything is permissible, includ-ing transforming the genetic structure of human beings, as long as it is "freely chosen." We need, Jonas argued, a new categorical imperative that might be formulated as follows: "Act so that the effects of your action are compatible with the permanence of genuine human life"; or expressed negatively: "Act so that the effects of your action are not destructive of the future possibility of such a life"; or simply: "**Do not compromise the conditions for an indefinite continuation of humanity on earth**"; or again turned positive: "In your present choices, include the future wholeness of Man among the objects of your will." (IR 11)

## Shell--VTL = Subjective

**The relationship towards death is, and must be, an individual determination—if a person perceives their interests as valuable, or that death will be a different state, then our obligation would be to prevent their death**

**Paterson, 03** - Department of Philosophy, Providence College, Rhode Island (Craig, “A Life Not Worth

Living?”, Studies in Christian Ethics, <http://sce.sagepub.com>)

In determining whether a life is worth living or not, **attention should be focused upon an array of ‘interests’ of the person**, and these, for the competent patient at least, are going to vary considerably, since they will be informed by the patient’s underlying dispositions, and, for the incompetent, by a minimal quality threshold. It follows that for competent patients, a broad-ranging assessment of quality of life concerns is the trump card as to whether or not life continues to be worthwhile. Different patients may well decide differently. That is the prerogative of the patient, for the only unpalatable alternative is to force a patient to stay alive. For Harris, life can be judged valuable or not when the person assessing his or her own life determines it to be so. **If a person values his or her own life, then that life is valuable, precisely to the extent that he or she values it**. Without any real capacity to value, there can be no value. As Harris states, ‘. . . the value of our lives is the value we give to our lives’. It follows that the **primary** **injustice** done to a person is to deprive the person of a life **he or she may think valuable**. Objectivity in the value of human life, for Harris, essentially becomes one of negative classification (ruling certain people out of consideration for value), allied positively to a broad range of ‘critical interests’; interests worthy of pursuing — **friendships, family, life goals, etc**. — which are subjected to de facto **self-assessment** for the further determination of meaningful value. Suicide, assisted suicide, and voluntary euthanasia, can therefore be justified, on the grounds that once the competent nature of the person making the decision has been established, the thoroughgoing commensuration between different values, in the form of interests or preferences, is essentially left up to the individual to determine for himself or herself.

## Extinction Bad

**Focus on survival is good because it gives future generations the opportunity to love, create, and experience joy**

**Morgan,** Prof. Public Speaking and Current Affairs**, December ’09**  (Dennis, Hankuk U., Futures, “World on fire: two scenarios of the destruction of human civilization and possible extinction of the human race”, 41:10, ScienceDirect)

To be or not to be—that is indeed the ultimate question that humanity must answer. Will Shakespeare’s words continue to inspire generations to come, or will his works be completely lost and forgotten? The same question can be asked about all of the great works of art and expressions of the human spirit that have evolved through the ages. Will everything that is good and noble in human evolution, civilization, and culture be abandoned and completely lost or else completely forgotten by the ‘‘lucky’’ remnant that somehow manages to survive—if there are survivors? The ‘‘second death’’ is most tragic, for not only will our history be lost, but the future will be lost too. **Will the yet-born never even be given the opportunity to receive the wisdom and beauty of the human spirit** and experience what it means to be alive? How can we cheat them of this grand opportunity that should be theirs by right? **Love will be lost,** and our planet may very well become just as dead as every other planet that we know about in the universe. Who knows? Perhaps our planet is the only one in which the miracle of life managed to evolve. There is still so much more for us to discover about the universe and our own origins. We have not yet ‘‘come of age’’ as one race—the human race. We have yet to understand what it even means to be human, and before we do, are we to just let it slide through our hands and lose it all? Why??? For various psychological reasons, we have shielded ourselves in a state of denial concerning the price of our progress and the real nature and state of industrial civilization and its development. Perhaps we have shielded ourselves from the ugly side of our own human nature. How could we fail to see that we are standing on a precipice, at the very brink of falling headlong into an abyss of no return? We must not fall into this abyss blind and mute without a fight for life. We should look squarely at it and squarely at ourselves and ask ourselves Stephen Hawking’s question. Our species is about 100,000 years old. Civilization is only a fraction of that, yet long before the advent of human civilization, at a very threshold moment in human evolution, man discovered how to make and use fire. But do we really own it, or will we instead burn by the very fire we make? Do we really have as much control over it as we’d like to think we have**? Knowing the ultimate cost, the risk of the complete destruction of human civilization and the possible extermination of our own species and perhaps all life,** the future itself, **how can we take such a risk**? We live on a planet of finite resources with a finite atmosphere that miraculously supports life. Now, the development of industrial civilization has taken us to such a point that we have reached the endgame: we are standing on a precipice overlooking the abyss—from which there is no return. The 21st century is the most important and critical century because it is the century when humankind will determine whether we fall headlong into that abyss or whether we manage to gather real courage, wisdom and restraint to resist the temptation of such awful and ultimately self-destructive power. We must tear the scales from our eyes and view that power for what it is. This is the time that represents a moment of challenge for the ultimate survival of the species. If we fail, we will pay the ultimate price from which there will be no return. As long as our hearts still beat and we still breathe the air every day, then we are still alive, and that means that we still have a chance to make a difference and change the course that we’re on now. Let us not fall into the abyss headlong, blind and mute. Indeed, **we must fight for life and for the yet-born generations of the future,** and they will bear the fruit of our labor. They will look back proudly and say, ‘‘These are our true ancestors who cared enough about us to fight for our right to exist. Without them, **we would not be able to love, to make music and gaze upon the stars at night**. **We would not be able to be filled with the wonder and joy of life and the beauty of nature**. Without them, this Earth would have been an unlivable place like so many other planets, and we would not have come into existence. **Thus, they have bequeathed to us this precious ethic - to care about the future and the yet-born future generations** - to leave them a world that is at least as wonderful and joyous as the one we were born into.’’

**Extinction is bad because it sacrifices the opportunity for cultural evolution – and future human life is a normative good since they’ll enjoy it**

**Cohen and Lee ’86** (Avner and Steven, “Nuclear weapons and the future of humanity: the fundamental questions”, p. 332-333)

I shall reinforce this conclusion with several arguments for the claim that, while preventing the existence of future generations would not be against their interests, it is nevertheless of the utmost moral importance not to prevent their existence. One such argument appeals to the fact that our lives would be impoverished by the expectation that we will be the final generation. At present our lives are enriched by the assumption that they will be linked in various ways with the lives of future people. We rely on future generations for the furtherance and completion of projects we have begun or taken over from our ancestors; we depend on them to preserve and enrich our culture, and to help fulfill our ideals; and we hope that they will benefit from and appreciate our works, providing us with posthumous recognition. If we were to suppose that there would be no future generations, many of our present activities would be robbed of much of their meaning. These are undoubtedly important reasons for ensuring the existence of future generations. Again, however, if the force of these points is only that it would be worse for existing people if there were to be no future generations, then these points will contribute nothing to the argument against nuclear deterrence that is not already provided by premises 1b and 1c. It is, however, equally plausible to suppose that there is independent value in, say, the evolution of our culture, so that it is important for our culture to continue to develop quite apart from the fact that our lives would be impoverished by the belief that the evolution of our culture were at an end. If this further claim is accepted, we have a reason for ensuring the existence for future generations that is independent of the interests of existing people. Another and perhaps stronger argument for the claim that it is morally important to ensure the existence of future generations also makes no appeal to the interests of existing people. This argument moves from the claim that there is a principle of non-malfeasance that provides a moral reason not to bring a person into existence if his life would be worse than no life at all, or "worth not living," to the claim that there is a principle of beneficence that provides a moral reason to bring a person into existence if his life would, on balance, be worth living. The argument takes as its first premise the claim that it would be wrong, other things being equal, to bring a person into existence if his life would predictably be worth not living. This seems uncontroversial. But how can we best explain why it would be wrong? It is tempting to appeal to side-effects, to the fact that it is normally worse for existing people if a person who is utterly wretched comes to exist. But this explanation is excluded by the ceteris paribus clause. And in any case the appeal to side-effects could provide only a partial explanation of why it would be wrong to bring a miserable person into existence. For it is only contingently true that it is worse for existing people when miserable people come into existence. There could be cases in which this would be better for existing people.

## f/l—at: value to life

**1. This argument is itself the zero point—**

a.) There is always a value to life and that is determined by the individual**.**

Plus, survival is a prerequisite to value

**Schwartz, 02** (Lisa, Medical Ethics, http://www.fleshandbones.com/readingroom/pdf/399.pdf)

The second assertion made by supporters of the quality of life as a criterion for decision- making is closely related to the first, but with an added dimension. This assertion suggests that the determination of the value of the quality of a given life is a subjective determi-nation to be made by the person experiencing that life. The important addition here is that the decision is a personal one that, ideally, ought not to be made externally by another person but internally by the individual involved. Katherine Lewis made this decision for herself based on a comparison between two stages of her life. So did James Brady. Without this element, decisions based on quality of life criteria lack salient information and the patients concerned cannot give informed consent. Patients must be given the opportunity to decide for themselves whether they think their lives are worth living or not. To ignore or overlook patients’ judgement in this matter is to violate their autonomy and their freedom to decide for themselves on the basis of relevant informa- tion about their future, and comparative con- sideration of their past. As the deontological position puts it so well, to do so is to violate the imperative that we must treat persons as rational and as ends in themselves. It is important to remember the subjectiv-ity assertion in this context, so as to empha-size that the judgement made about the value of a life ought to be made only by the person concerned and not by others.

b.) It is paternalistic and insulting for them to determine value for everyone else when they do not have a god’s eye view.

**2. If their warrant is that the state might assign the value of life as zero—that’s just a bad slippery slope argument with no specific scenario or probability—**

a.) Democracy and economic liberalization checks—we’re a long way from running over people with tanks, and the large-scale genocides that have occurred have only been from totalitarian regimes

**O’Kane, 97** (“Modernity, the Holocaust, and politics”, Economy and Society, February, ebsco)

Chosen policies cannot be relegated to the position of immediate condition (Nazis in power) in the explanation of the Holocaust. Modern bureaucracy is not ‘intrinsically capable of genocidal action’ (Bauman 1989: 106). Centralized state coercion has no natural move to terror. In the explanation of modern genocides it is chosen policies which play the greatest part, whether in effecting bureaucratic secrecy, organizing forced labour, implementing a system of terror, harnessing science and technology or introducing extermination policies, as means and as ends. As Nazi Germany and Stalin’s USSR have shown, furthermore, those chosen policies of genocidal government turned away from and not towards modernity. The choosing of policies, however, is not independent of circumstances. An analysis of the history of each case plays an important part in explaining where and how genocidal governments come to power and analysis of political institutions and structures also helps towards an understanding of the factors which act as obstacles to modern genocide. But it is not just political factors which stand in the way of another Holocaust in modern society. Modern societies have not only pluralist democratic political systems but also economic pluralism where workers are free to change jobs and bargain wages and where independent firms, each with their own independent bureaucracies, exist in competition with state-controlled enterprises. In modern societies this economic pluralism both promotes and is served by the open scientific method. By ignoring competition and the capacity for people to move between organizations whether economic, political, scientific or social, Bauman overlooks crucial but also very ‘ordinary and common’ attributes of truly modern societies. It is these very ordinary and common attributes of modernity which stand in the way of modern genocides.

b.) Its not even close to an extinction claim—even if the state kills some people, the worst genocides in history were under Nazism and Communism and didn’t exceed tens of millions—nuclear extinction clearly outweighs

**3. Turn—elevating other values over extinction destroys the value to life and makes extinction certain—their representation that they know the absolute truth of the value to life makes it easier to end it**

**Schell, 82** (Jonathan, writer for the New Yorker and nuclear weapons expert, The Fate of the Earth)

For the generations that now have to decide whether or not to risk the future of the species, the implication of our species’ unique place in the order of things is that while things in the life of mankind have worth, we must never raise that worth above the life of mankind and above our respect for that life’s existence. To do this would be to make of our highest ideals so many swords with which to destroy ourselves. To sum up the worth of our species by reference to some particular standard, goal, or ideology, no matter how elevated or noble it might be, would be to prepare the way for extinction by closing down in thought and feeling the open-ended possibilities for human development which extinction would close down in fact. There is only one circumstance in which it might be possible to sum up the life and achievement of the species, and that circumstance would be that it had already died, but then, of course, there would be no one left to do the summing up. Only a generation that believed itself to be in possession of final, absolute truth could ever conclude that it had reason to put an end to human life, and only generations that recognized the limits to their own wisdom and virtue would be likely to subordinate their interests and dreams to the as yet unformed interests and undreamed dreams of the future generations, and let human life go on.

**4. The risk of extinction outweighs all other values**

**Schell, 1982** (Jonathan, writer for the New Yorker and nuclear weapons expert, The Fate of the Earth)

But the mere risk of extinction has a significance that is categorically different from, and immeasurably greater than, that of any other risk, and as we make our decisions we have to take that significance into account. Up to now, every risk has been contained within the frame of life; **extinction will shatter the frame**. It represents not the defeat of some purpose but an abyss in which all human purposes would be drowned for all time. We have no right to place the possibility of limitless, eternal defeat on the same footing as risks that we run in the ordinary conduct of our affairs in our particular transient moment of human history. To employ a mathematical analogy, we can say that although the risk of extinction may be fractional, the stake is, humanly speaking, infinite, and a fraction of infinity is still infinity. In other words, once we learn that a holocaust *might* lead to extinction, we have no right to gamble, because if we lose, the game will be over, and neither we nor anyone else will ever get another chance. Therefore, although, scientifically speaking, there is all the difference in the world between the mere possibility that a holocaust will bring about extinction and the certainty of it, morally they are the same, and we have no choice but to address the issue of nuclear weapons as though we knew for a certainty that their use would put an end to our species.

**5. Turn—their ethical stance that focuses on the value to life over the protection of life makes mass atrocities inevitable**

**Federer 03 (**William Federer is a best-selling author and president of Amerisearch Inc. 10-18-03

http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE\_ID=35138

Even before the rise of Adolf Hitler's Third Reich, the way for the gruesome Nazi Holocaust of human extermination and cruel butchery was being prepared in the 1930 German Weimar Republic through the medical establishment and philosophical elite's adoption of the "quality of life" concept in place of the "sanctity of life." The Nuremberg trials, exposing the horrible Nazi war crimes, revealed that Germany's trend toward atrocity began with their progressive embrace of the Hegelian doctrine of "rational utility," where an individual's worth is in relation to their contribution to the state, rather than determined in light of traditional moral, ethical and religious values. This gradual transformation of national public opinion, promulgated through media and education, was described in an article written by the British commentator Malcolm Muggeridge entitled "The Humane Holocaust" and in an article written by former United States Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop, M.D., entitled "The Slide to Auschwitz," both published in The Human Life Review, 1977 and 1980 respectively. Muggeridge stated: "Near at hand, we have been accorded, for those that have eyes to see, an object lesson in what the quest for 'quality of life' without reference to 'sanctity of life' can involve ... [namely] the great Nazi Holocaust, whose TV presentation has lately been harrowing viewers throughout the Western world. In this televised version, an essential consideration has been left out – namely, that the origins of the Holocaust lay, not in Nazi terrorism and anti-Semitism, but in pre-Nazi Weimar Germany's acceptance of euthanasia and mercy-killing as humane and estimable. ... "It took no more than three decades to transform a war crime into an act of compassion, thereby enabling the victors in the war against Nazism to adopt the very practices for which the Nazis had been solemnly condemned at Nuremberg." The transformation followed thus: The concept that the elderly and terminally ill should have the right to die was promoted in books, newspapers, literature and even entertainment films, the most popular of which were entitled "Ich klage an (I accuse)" and "Mentally Ill."

One euthanasia movie, based on a novel by a National Socialist doctor, actually won a prize at the world-famous Venice Film Festival! Extreme hardship cases were cited, which increasingly convinced the public to morally approve of euthanasia. The medical profession gradually grew accustomed to administering death to patients who, for whatever reasons, felt their low "quality of life" rendered their lives not worth living, or as it was put, lebensunwerten Lebens, (life unworthy of life). In an Associated Press release published in the New York Times Oct. 10, 1933, entitled "Nazi Plan to Kill Incurables to End Pain; German Religious Groups Oppose Move," it was stated: "The Ministry of Justice, in a detailed memorandum explaining the Nazi aims regarding the German penal code, today announced its intentions to authorize physicians to end the sufferings of the incurable patient. The memorandum ... proposed that it shall be possible for physicians to end the tortures of incurable patients, upon request, in the interest of true humanity. "This proposed legal recognition of euthanasia – the act of providing a painless and peaceful death – raised a number of fundamental problems of a religious, scientific and legal nature. The Catholic newspaper Germania hastened to observe: 'The Catholic faith binds the conscience of its followers not to accept this method.' ... In Lutheran circles, too, life is regarded as something that God alone can take. ... Euthanasia ... has become a widely discussed word in the Reich. ... No life still valuable to the State will be wantonly destroyed." Nationalized health care and government involvement in medical care promised to improve the public's "quality of life." Unfortunately, the cost of maintaining government medical care was a contributing factor to the growth of the national debt, which reached astronomical proportions. Double and triple digit inflation crippled the economy, resulting in the public demanding that government cut expenses. This precipitated the 1939 order to cut federal expenses. The national socialist government decided to remove "useless" expenses from the budget, which included the support and medical costs required to maintain the lives of the retarded, insane, senile, epileptic, psychiatric patients, handicapped, deaf, blind, the non-rehabilitatable ill and those who had been diseased or chronically ill for five years or more. It was labeled an "act of mercy" to "liberate them through death," as they were viewed as having an extremely low "quality of life," as well as being a tax burden on the public. The public psyche was conditioned for this, as even school math problems compared distorted medical costs incurred by the taxpayer of caring for and rehabilitating the chronically sick with the cost of loans to newly married couples for new housing units. The next whose lives were terminated by the state were the institutionalized elderly who had no relatives and no financial resources. These lonely, forsaken individuals were needed by no one and would be missed by no one. Their "quality of life" was considered low by everyone's standards, and they were a tremendous tax burden on the economically distressed state. The next to be eliminated were the parasites on the state: the street people, bums, beggars, hopelessly poor, gypsies, prisoners, inmates and convicts. These were socially disturbing individuals incapable of providing for themselves whose "quality of life" was considered by the public as irreversibly below standard, in addition to the fact that they were a nuisance to society and a seed-bed for crime. The liquidation grew to include those who had been unable to work, the socially unproductive and those living on welfare or government pensions. They drew financial support from the state, but contributed nothing financially back. They were looked upon as "useless eaters," leeches, stealing from those who worked hard to pay the taxes to support them. Their unproductive lives were a burden on the "quality of life" of those who had to pay the taxes. The next to be eradicated were the ideologically unwanted, the political enemies of the state, religious extremists and those "disloyal" individuals considered to be holding the government back from producing a society which functions well and provides everyone a better "quality of life." The moving biography of the imprisoned Dietrich Bonhoffer chronicled the injustices. These individuals also were a source of "human experimental material," allowing military medical research to be carried on with human tissue, thus providing valuable information that promised to improve the nation's health. Finally, justifying their actions on the purported theory of evolution, the Nazis considered the German, or "Aryan," race as "ubermenschen," supermen, being more advanced in the supposed progress of human evolution. This resulted in the twisted conclusion that all other races, and in particular the Jewish race, were less evolved and needed to be eliminated from the so-called "human gene pool," ensuring that future generations of humans would have a higher "quality of life." Dr. Koop stated: "The first step is followed by the second step. You can say that if the first step is moral then whatever follows must be moral. The important thing, however, is this: Whether you diagnose the first step as being one worth taking or being one that is precarious rests entirely on what the second step is likely to be. ... I am concerned about this because when the first 273,000 German aged, infirm and retarded were killed in gas chambers there was no outcry from that medical profession either, and it was not far from there to Auschwitz." Can this holocaust happen in America? Indeed, it has already begun. The idea of killing a person and calling it "death with dignity" is an oxymoron. The "mercy-killing" movement puts us on the same path as pre-Nazi Germany. The "quality of life" concept, which eventually results in the Hegelian utilitarian attitude of a person's worth being based on their contribution toward perpetuating big government, is in stark contrast to America's founding principles. This philosophy which lowers the value of human life, shocked attendees at the Governor's Commission on Disability, in Concord, N.H., Oct. 5, 2001, as they heard the absurd comments of Princeton University professor Peter Singer. The Associated Press reported Singer's comments: "I do think that it is sometimes appropriate to kill a human infant," he said, adding that he does not believe a newborn has a right to life until it reaches some minimum level of consciousness. "For me, the relevant question is, what makes it so seriously wrong to take a life?" Singer asked. "Those of you who are not vegetarians are responsible for taking a life every time you eat. Species is no more relevant than race in making these judgments." Singer's views, if left unchecked, could easily lead to a repeat of the atrocities of Nazi Germany, if not something worse.

**Economic predictions are good, several reasons –**

**a) key to solve practical problems**

**Chow 02** – Professor of Political Economics at Cornell, MIT, Columbia University, and Princeton, and Former Manager of Economic Research at the Thomas J. Watson Research Center (Gregory, “On the Predictability of Economic Events”, July 1 of 2002, <http://www.princeton.edu/~gchow/AcadSin.pdf)//AW>

Usefulness Of Forecasting Economic forecasts are made partly to test whether certain economic theories or models are valid, but also to solve practical problems. Government policy makers, business executives and private individuals can all benefit from accurate economic forecasts. The two examples of forecasting automobile and computer demand benefited decision makers in the General Motors and IBM corporations. The third and fourth examples on forecasting inflation and the demand for durable goods are relevant for economic decision makers in China. Knowing the effects of increasing money supply on the inflation rate can help economic officials decide how rapidly the supply of money should be allowed to increase. If the slow-down in demand for consumer goods in 1998-1999 was due to the accelerations principle, the government should reconsider its ad hoc policies to influence stock prices in order to increase demand.

**b) social science proves our argument**

**Schwenkler 09** – Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Mt. Saint Mary’s University (John, “In Defense of Economics”, The American Scene, September 19 of 2009, <http://www.theamericanscene.com/2009/02/19/in-defense-of-economics>)

I’ve generally been quite sympathetic to Jim’s recent criticisms of the science (or “science”, depending) of economics, but it seems to me that his demand for economic principles to be put through the gauntlet of “rigorous, replicated falsification trials” ends up setting the bar a bit too high. For one thing, unlike in the “hard” sciences, it’s very often unclear what such a process could be in the case of economics: we’re usually dealing with large-scale human societies, after all, so running experiments under sufficiently controlled or randomized conditions isn’t a possibility; and by analogy, we don’t want to end up saying, for example, that the theory of evolution is junk science because its primary objects of study (whole species, huge stretches of time, the very distant past, and so on) aren’t subject to tightly controlled experiment. Yes, the range of possible experiments is limited, but in economics as in any other science we do (or at least: try to do) the best we can with what we’ve got.

**c) consensus of tests flow AFF**

**Camerer 06** - American behavioral economist and a Robert Kirby Professor of Behavioral Finance and Economics at the California Institute of Technology (Colin, “Neuroeconomics:

Using neuroscience to make economic predictions”, May 2 of 2006, <http://www.hss.caltech.edu/~camerer/Hahn06v3.pdf)//AW>

In many simple choice domains, evolution has had a long time to sculpt pan-species mechanisms that are crucial for survival (food, sex, and safety). In these domains, evolution has either created neural circuits which approximate Bayesian-rational choice, or learning mechanisms that generate Bayesian-rational choice with sufficient experience in a stationary environment, putting to use highly-developed capacities for sensory evaluation (vision, taste, smell), memory, and social imitation. For example, Glimcher and Platt (1999) find remarkable neurons in monkey lateral intraparietal cortex (LIP) which fire at a rate that is almost perfectly correlated with the expected value of an upcoming juice reward, triggered by a monkey eye movement (saccade) (see also Bayer and Glimcher, 2005). Deaner, Khera, and Platt (2005) find that monkeys can reliably trade off juice rewards with exposure to visual images (including images of females from behind, and faces of high and low status conspecific monkeys). Monkeys can also learn to approximate mixed-strategies in games (Glimcher, Dorris, and Bayer, 2005), probably using generalized reinforcement algorithms (Lee et al., 2004). Neuroscientists are also finding prefrontal neurons that appear to express values of choices (Padoa-Schioppa and Assad, 2006) and potential locations of “neural currency” that creates tradeoffs (Shizgal, 1997). Following a long tradition in “animal economics” (Battalio, Green and Kagel book), Chen, Lakshminarayanan, and Santos (2006) show that capuchin monkeys respond to price changes, obeying the GARP axiom, when exchanging tokens for different food rewards.

### 2ac – baudrillard

#### Framework – the k must prove that the whole plan is bad – weighing the AFF is vital to fair and predictable engagement – allowing the neg to negate only small parts doesn’t disprove the desirability of the plan – the ballot should simulate the plans enactment and test whether it’s better than the status quo or competitive alternative

#### instead of dealing with real problems on the ground, they retreat to the masturbatory sanctuary of word games. The correct course of action is not word play, it is education and action to abate the consequences of atrocity. Their position is ultimately one which authorizes colonialism and genocide

**BALSAS, 2006** [BALSAS is an interdisciplinary journal on media culture. Interview with Art Group BBM, “on first cyborgs, aliens and other sides of new technologies,” translated from lithiuanian <http://www.balsas.cc/modules.php?name=News&file=print&sid=151>]

Valentinas: We all know that Jean Baudrillard did not believe that the Gulf War did take place, as it was over-mediated and over-simulated. In fact, the Gulf War II is still not over, and Iraq became much more than just a Frankenstein laboratory for the new media, technology and “democracy” games. What can we learn from wars that do not take place, even though they cannot be finished? Are they becoming a symptom of our times as a confrontation between multiple time-lines, ideologies and technologies in a single place?

Lars: Actually, it has always been the same: new wars have been better test-beds for the state of art technologies and the latest computer-controlled firearms. The World War I already was a fully mechanized war where pre-robots were fighting each other and gassing the troops. And afterwards, the winners shape the new world order.

Olaf: **Who on hell is Baudrillard**? The one who earns money by publishing his prognoses after the things happen? **What a fuck,** **French philosophy deals too much with luxury problems and elegantly ignores the problem itself**. It’s no wonder, **this is the colonizer’s mentality**, you can hear it roaring in their words: **they use phrases made to camouflage genocide.**

I went to see that Virilio’s exhibition "Ce qui arrive" at Foundation Cartier in 2003. I was smashed by that banal presentation of  the evil of all kinds: again, natural catastrophes and evil done by man were exposed on the same wall, glued together with a piece of "theory". There you find it all, filed up in one row: the pure luxury of the Cartier-funded Jean Nouvel building, an artwork without any blood in its veins, and that late Christian philosophy about the techno-cataclysm being the revenge of God. **Pure shit, turned into gold in the holy cellars of the modern alchemists’ museums.**

The artist-made video "documents" of the Manhattan towers opposed to Iraqian war pictures: that’s not Armageddon, that’s man-invented war technology to be used to subdue others. And **there is always somebody who pushes the buttons,** even when the button is a computer mouse some ten thousand kilometers away from the place where **people die**, or even if it is a civil airplanes redirected by Islamists. Everybody knows that. **War technology has always been made to make killing easier**. And to produce martyrs as well.

Janneke: Compare Baudrillard with **Henry Dunant,** the founder of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Dunant was no philosopher, he was just an intelligent rich man in the late 19th century. But his ideas went far more in the direction where **you should hope to find** **philosophers** as well. He experienced war as a "randonneur": he passed by, he saw the suffering and the inhumanity of war. **And he felt obliged to act**. Apart from the maybe 10 days he spent on the battlefield, on the beautiful meadows in the Europeans Alps, helping wounded people to survive, as a complete medical layman he decided to do something more sustainable against these odds. He knew that his efforts couldn’t prevent war in general, but he felt that he could alter the cruelty of reality. **And he succeeded in doing it**. No wonder that in our days we find the most engaged people to support the TROIA projects intention in Geneva, where they are still based. And they are not only doing their necessary surgeon’s work in the field: they are as well **fighting with the same energy on the diplomatic battl**

#### *we need pragmatic action and carefully researched argumentation and information* to create real change—their failure to do so means you can vote negative on presumption—there is no end to wordplay—criticism, action, and change are impossible in their world—this is both a defense of our methodology and in indict to theirs

**King, 1998** *[*Anthony, Professor at Essex University, Telos Journal, “Baudrillard’s Nihilism and the End of Theory*”,* <http://eric.exeter.ac.uk/exeter/bitstream/10036/71394/1/King%2520Baudrillard%2520Telos.pdf>]

Compare this style of writing with J. G. Ballard’s *Crash* — a novel providing a very successful (and deliberately obscene) description of postmodern culture. It recognizes that culture’s bodily indulgence, and knows that it does not liberate the individual but reduces the body to a machine for pleasure, just as the car is a machine for speech. The car-crash and the sexact are the moments when the wholly technical machineries of the car and the bodies are decomposed in an instant of pain that is transformed (for ironic effect) into one of intense pleasure for the perverts who populate the book. In communicating this new, debased ethic of bodily pleasure, where the delight in bodily mutilation parallels a correlating spiritual disfigurement, Ballard describes a questionnaire about car crashes which Vaughan, the central figure in the book, has prepared and which lists every conceivable injury: “Lastly came that group of injuries which had clearly most preoccupied Vaughan — genital wounds caused during automobile accidents. . . . the breasts of teenage girls deformed by instrument binnacles, the partial mammoplasties of elderly housewives carried out by chromium louvres of windshield assemblies, nipples sectioned by manufacturers’ dashboard medallions; injuries to male and female genitalia caused by steering wheel shrouds, windshields during ejection, crushed door pillars, seat springs and handbrake units, cassette player instrument toggles.”28 The descriptions Ballard provides of both cars and bodies are wholly technical and anatomical, emphasizing that, in this culture, both “bodyworks” are (obscenely) reduced to the same level. Against Ballard’s rich, selfdeveloping text, Baudrillard’s writing is flat and strained. He simply breaks down his academic text into aphoristic gobblets and draws on alexicon of dead, static metaphors. In the end, Baudrillard falls between the two stools of demanding that academic writing is inadequate to the analysis of hyperreality, but still writing according to its conventions and thereby vitiating either the academic or the literary merit of his later work. However, even if Baudrillard wanted his later writing to be read as literature and even if he had been successful in producing text which could be judged as literature, the project of this later writing would still have been irretrievably self-deluded. Even if his terrorism were a successful form of literature, it could never (as he claims) communicate hyperreality to the reader directly, for all writing is necessarily mediated; all writing is an interpretation.29 Unavoidably, his terroristic writing is an interpretation of hyperreal culture, which does not obviate the necessity of interpretation, however directly it tries to communicate hyperreality.

In insisting on representing hyperreality directly, Baudrillard does not, as he claims, present a clearer idea of hyperreality but, on the contrary (and ironically), **a less illuminating and less direct one**. As a result of his demand to present hyperreality directly, he simply stops at the first point of the interpretive process and presents his initial assumptions as the definitive statement on contemporary culture. Thus, he does not provide a clearer insight into the true nature of televisual culture but rather obscures the role of television with an assertive and arrogant hypostatization of an immediate concept. **His terrorism halts the dialectical process at its first and most inadequate initial point, before the critical process has begun**. Instead of developing his concepts through a thorough immersion in “hyperreal” culture, refining his interpretation to make it more adequate to that object, Baudrillard reifies his first impressions into absolute truths. In breaking off the dialectical engagement with the actual social practices of postmodern culture, he hypostatizes his crude standpoint into “the truth.”

Ironically, **in trying to present hyperreality immediately, Baudrillard falls into exactly the same error for which he so effectively criticized Marx**. Just as Marx failed to provide a truly radical alternative to capitalism by employing the concepts of capitalist political economy, Baudrillard’s fragmented aphorisms are **unable** to provide a critical alternative to hyperreality, because they are **so** **thoroughly** **embedded** in and dependent on the **very cultural forms they are intended to oppose**. The fragmentation of Baudrillard’s later writing does not serve the critical purpose for which it was intended, but rather, if it has any effect, it sensitizes the reader to the global media culture Baudrillard wanted to resist. His attempt to portray a culture in which allegedly there is no longer any reality beyond its representations, **is the academic extension of that culture.** Contrary to his own intentions, it is the very intellectual path he has insisted on taking, which turns its back on careful research and close critical analysis, which makes the desert of hyperreality grow. It robs the reader of any critical understanding of contemporary culture. Moreover, it denies the importance of developing alternative knowledge and understandings, which would undermine media representations of the world **because it asserts that these alternative visions would always already be incorporated into hyperreality.** **It is not enough simply to say that television is a false reality;** **one must try and reconstruct a reality in which political freedom and critique are possible**, even though any constructed reality must itself always be subjected to critique. Consequently, against Baudrillard, **an appropriate form of academic resistance would be to insist upon even more rigorously researched and detailed work**.30 In particular, the dialectical method which demands the constant overhaul of concepts, whereby nothing is taken for granted, would have prevented Baudrillard from falling into the **hyperbolic reification of mere assertions.**

#### The alt engages in uncritical oversimplification—context and content ARE relevant—their blanket criticism is shoddy scholarship that ought to be rejected—prefer our appeal to specificity—specificity matters—take the common sense test

**Kellner, 2002** [Douglas, Prof at UCLA, “Baudrillard: A New McLuhan?” <http://gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/illumina%20folder/kell26.htm>]

Yet doubts remain as to whether the media are having quite the impact that Baudrillard ascribes to them and whether his theory provides adequate concepts to analyze the complex interactions between media, culture, and society today. In this section, I shall suggest that Baudrillard's media theory is **vitiated** by three subordinations which undermine its theoretical and political usefulness and which raise questions as well about the status of postmodern social theory. I shall suggest that the limitations in Baudrillard's theory can be related to his **uncritical** **assumption** of certain positions within McLuhan's media theory and that therefore earlier critiques of McLuhan can accurately and usefully be applied to Baudrillard. This critique will suggest that indeed Baudrillard is a "new McLuhan" who has repackaged McLuhan into new postmodern cultural capital.

**First**, in what might be called a formalist subordination, Baudrillard, like McLuhan, privileges the form of media technology over what might be called the media apparatus, and thus subordinates content, meaning, and the use of media to its purely formal structure and effects. Baudrillard -- much more so than McLuhan who at least gives some media history and analysis of the media environment -- tends to abstract media form and effects from the media environment and thus erases political economy, media production, and media environment (i.e. **society as large**) from his theory. Against abstracting media form and effects from context, I would argue that the **use** and **effects** of media **should be carefully examined and evaluated in terms of specific contexts.** **Distinctions between context and use, form and content, media and reality, all dissolve,** however, **in Baudrillard's one-dimensional theory where global theses and glib pronouncements replace careful analysis and critique**.

#### The alternative makes the problem worse—their refrencing to policy making as a “theatre” without real effects only helps the conservative controllers of the status quo.

**Kellner, 2002** [Douglas, Prof at UCLA, “Baudrillard: A New McLuhan?” <http://gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/illumina%20folder/kell26.htm>]

Another problem is that Baudrillard's formalism **vitates** the project of **ideology critique**, and against his claims that media content are irrelevant and unimportant, I would propose grasping the dialectic of form and content in media communication, seeing how media forms constitute content and how content is always formed or structured, while forms themselves can be ideological, as when the situation comedy form of conflict/resolution projects an ideological vision which shows all problems easily capable of being resolved within the existing society, or when action-adventure series formats of violent conflict as the essence of reality project a conservative view of human life as a battleground where only the fittest survive and prosper.[12] For a dialectical theory of the media, television would have **multiple** **functions** (and potential decodings) where sometimes the ideological effects may be predominant while at other times time functions a medium like television functions as mere noise or through the merely formal effects which Baudrillard puts at the center of his analysis.

Consequently, there is no real theory or practice of cultural interpretation in Baudrillard's media (increasingly **anti**-)theory, which also emanates an anti-hermeneutical bias that denies the importance of content and is against interpretation.[13] This brings us to a second subordination in Baudrillard's theory in which a more dialectical position is **subordinated** to media **essentialism** and technological **determinism**. For -- according to Baudrillard -- it is the technology of, say, television that determines its effects (one-way transmission, semiurgy, implosion, extermination of meaning and the social) rather than any particular content or message (i.e. for both Baudrillard and McLuhan "the media is the message"), or its construction or use within specific social systems. For Baudrillard, media technology and semiurgy are the demiurges of media practices and effects, separated from their uses by specific economic and political interests, individuals and groups, and the social systems within which they function. Baudrillard thus abstracts media from social systems and essentializes media technology as dominant social forces. Yet against Baudrillard, one could argue that capital continues to be a primary determinant of media form and content in neo-capitalist societies just as state socialism helps determine the form, nature, and effects of technologies in certain state socialist societies.

Baudrillard, like McLuhan, often makes essentializing distinctions between media like television or film, ascribing a particular essence to one, and an opposed essence to the other. Yet it seems highly problematical to reduce apparatuses as complex, contradictory, and many-sided as television (or film or any mass medium) to its formal properties and effects, or to a technological essence. It is therefore **preferable**, for theories of media in the capitalist societies, to see the media as syntheses of technology and capital, as technologies which serve **specific** interests and which have **specific** political and economic effects (rather than merely technological ones). It is also preferable to see the dialectic between media and society in specific historical conjunctures, to see how social content, trends, and imperatives help constitute the media which in turn influence social developments and help constitute social reality.

For Baudrillard, by contrast, the media today simply constitute a simulated, hyperreal, and obscene (in his technical sense) world(view), and a dialectic of media and society is shortcircuited in a new version of technological determinism. The political implications of this analysis are that constituting alternative media, or alternative uses or forms of existing media, is useless or worse because media in their very essence for him militate against emancipatory politics or any project of social transformation. **Such cynical views**, however, **primarily benefit conservative interests who presently control the media in their own interests** -- a point to which I shall soon return.

#### We can know the world. Common sense tells us this. Mediated perception does not mean reality is a pure social construct.

**Morris, 1997**

[Brian, Prof. Anthropology – Goldsmiths College, Critique of Anthropology, “In Defence of Realism and Truth: Critical Reflections on the Anthropological followers of Heidegger”, 17:3, p. 316-320]

It has long been known, of course, well before postmodernism came upon the anthropological scene, that we do not perceive or experience the world in pristine fashion. For our engagement with the world is always mediated by our personal interests, by our state of mind, by language and cultural conceptions, and, above all, by social praxis. As an early and important his¬torian of science put it in 1838: 'there is a mask of theory over the whole face of nature' (Megill, 1994: 66). The anthropologist Ruth Benedict in her classic anthropological text Patterns of Culture long ago emphasized that a person's ideas, beliefs and attitudes are largely culturally constituted. As she wrote: `No man ever looks at the world with pristine eyes. He sees it edited by a definitive set of customs and institutions and ways of thinking' (1934: 2). But as with Dilthey, her important mentor, this affirmation did not in the least imply a denial of the reality of the material world. This important insight which has been part of the common currency of the social sciences ever since the time of Marx, has, in recent decades, been taken up by philosophers and postmodernist anthropologists. But they seem to have taken this important insight to extremes, and in a `veritable epidemic' of `social constructivism' and `world making' have propounded a latter-day version of Kantian idealism, going even further than Kant in denying the reality of the material world, the `things-in-themselves'. Cultural idealism in its various guises, is thus now all the rage in the halls of academia, and has been adapted by a wide range of scholars — Kuhn, Althusser, Goodman, Rorty, Hindess and Hirst, Douglas, as well as postmodernist anthropologists (Devitt, 1984: 235). Such constructivism combines two basic Kantian ideas: that the world as we know it is constituted by our concepts; and that an independent world is forever beyond our ken (Devitt, 1984: ix). But, as already mentioned, many anthropologists go even further in an anti-realist direction, and deny the independent existence of a world beyond our cognition, a world that has causal powers and efficacy. With the free use of the term `worlds' they invariably conflate the cognitive reality which is culture — `discourses' is now the more popular term — and the material world that is independent of humans. Thus anthropologists now tell us that there is `no nature, no culture', or that nature, sex, emotions, the body, the senses, are purely social `constructs' or human `artefacts', or even that they do not `exist' outside of Western discourses. The suggestion that `nature' is a human construct or artefact (rather than being simply constituted or `edited'), or that it has 'disappeared' or does not `exist' are highly problematic notions. Derrida writes that 'nature, that which words . . . name, have always already escaped, have never existed' (1976: 159). Although making an important point about the nature of language, this phrase simply indicates just how alienated from nature contemporary philosophers seem to be. They seem unable to recognize that human beings are, as Nigel Pennick puts it 'rooted in the earth' (1996: 7). In a gleeful phrase, John Passmore notes that it is the French intellectual's dream `of a world which exists only in so far as it enters into a book' (1985: 32). Now either one means by `nature' the existential world in which we find ourselves — the trees, the clouds, the sky, the animals and plants, the rocks, and all those natural processes which are independent of human cognition, and on which human life depends. To suggest that this is a human creation or artefact, or does not exist, is plainly absurd. Or, on the other hand, one means by nature the highly variable `concept' of nature; to suggest that this is a social construct is rather banal, though the suggestion is dressed up as if it was some profound anthropological insight. Reacting against the notion that there is an isomorphic — reflective — relationship between consciousness (language) and the world — so-called logocentrism' — postmodernist anthropologists now seem to embrace a form of cultural (or linguistic) idealism, and deny the reality of the material world (nature), or sex or the senses. Although some anthropologists deny that `sex' exists (as there is nothing `pre-social', Moore, 1994: 816-19 affirms) baboons in Malawi have no difficulty at all in distinguishing between male and female humans (cf. Caplan, 1987, for a more balanced perspective). Realism, as many philosophers have insisted, is a metaphysical doctrine. It is about what exists in the world, and how the world is constituted. Contrary to what Kirsten Hastrup writes (1995: 60), it is not a theory of knowledge, or of truth, but of being, and so does not aim at providing a `faithful reflection to the world'. Realism, as a doctrine, is thus separate from semantic issues relating to truth and reference, and from issues dealing with our knowledge of the world (epistemology) — both human and natural. Roy Bhaskar has critiqued what he describes as the 'epistemic fallacy', the notion that ontological issues can be reduced to, or analysed in terms of statements about knowledge (epistemology) (1989: 13). Everyone, of course, is a `realist' or Toundationalise in some sense, making ontological assumptions about what is 'real' and what 'exists'. Metaphysics is thus not something that one can dispense with, or put an 'end' to — as both positivists and Heidegger and his acolytes suggest. For Plato, `ideas' or universals were 'real'; for Descartes, the transcendental ego was `real'; for some eco-feminists the mother goddess is `real'; while for empiricists it is sense impressions. As used here, realism entails the view that material things exist independently of human sense experience and cognition. It is thus opposed to idealism which either holds that the material world does not exist, or is simply an emanation of spirit, or that external realities do not exist apart from our knowledge or consciousness of them. Outside of philosophy departments, and among some religious mystics and anthropologists, realism is universally held by everybody, and forms the basis of both common sense and empirical science. Common sense, of course, sensus communis, can be interpreted in Aristotelean fashion as a kind of sixth sense that draws together the localized senses of sight, touch, taste, smell and hearing. It is this sixth sense, as Arendt writes, that gives us a sense of realness regarding the world (1978: 49). Like Arendt, Karl Popper critically affirmed the importance of common sense. He wrote: `I think very highly of common sense. In fact, I think that all philosophy must start from common sense views and from their critical examination.' But what, for Popper, was important about the common-sense view of the world was not the kind of epistemology associated with the empiricists - who thought that knowledge was built up out of sense impressions - but its realism. This is the view, he wrote, `that there is a real world, with real people, animals and plants, cars and stars in it. I think that this view is true and immensely important, and I believe that **no valid criticism of it has ever been proposed'** (Miller, 1983: 105). Science therefore was not the repudiation of common-sense realism, but rather a creative attempt to go beyond the world of ordinary experience, seeking to explain, as he put it, 'the everyday world by reference to hidden worlds'. In this it is similar to both religion and art. What characterizes science is that the product of the human imagination and intuition are controlled by rational criticism 'Criticism curbs the imagination but does not put it in chains' (1992a: 54). Science is therefore, for Popper, `hypothetico-deductive'. What exists, and how the world is constituted, depends, of course on what particular ontology or `world view' (to use Dilthey's term) is being expressed, although in terms of social praxis **the reality of the material world is always taken for granted for human survival depends on acknowledging and engaging with this world**. As Marx expressed it, we are always engaged in a `dialogue with the real world' (1975: 328). It is important then to defend a realist perspective, one Marx long ago described as historical materialism. It is a metaphysics that entails the rejection both of contemplative materialism (the assumption that there is a direct unmediated relationship between consciousness [language] and the world) and constructivism. The latter is just old-fashioned idealism in modern guise, the emphasis being on culture, language and discourses, rather than on individual perception (Berkeley) or a universal cognition (Kant). This approach may also be described as dialectical naturalism (Bookchin, 1990), transcendental or critical realism (Bhaskar, 1978: 25; Collier, 1994), or constructive realism (Ben-Ze'ev, 1995: 50) - recognizing the significant social and cognitive activity of the human agent, but acknowledging the ontological independence and causal powers of the natural world. As Mark Johnson simply puts it: 'How we carve up the world will depend both on what is "out there" independent of us, and equally on the referential scheme we bring to bear, given our purposes, interests, and goals' (1987: 202). Our engagement with the world is thus always mediated. Equally important is the fact that we are always, as Marx put it, engaged in a 'dialogue' with the material world. It is thus necessary to reject both idealism (constructivism) and reductive materialism (positivism, objectivism) as many classical sociologists and human scientists have insisted (see my account of anthropological studies of religion, Morris, 1987). Again, Johnson expresses this rather well: Contrary to idealism, we do not impose arbitrary concepts and structure upon an undifferentiated, indefinitely malleable reality — we do not simply construct reality according to our subjective desires and whims. Contrary to objectivism, we are not merely mirrors of nature that determines our concepts in one and only one way. (1987: 207) The 'end' of metaphysics is, of course, simply an intellectual posture of the positivists and the Heideggerians, for we all affirm in our beliefs and writings certain ontological assumptions about the world. What Flax means by the 'end' of 'metaphysics' is a rejection of a certain kind of idealist, or absolutist metaphysics, one of course, that the social sciences rejected long, long ago.