# ASU CR Cards NDT Round 5

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#### The aff’s commitment to attaching ourselves to structures outside of ourselves replicates the same affect of belonging that maintains liberalism. Their optimistic belief that merely changing the way that society is structured can lead to some change promotes the same obstacle to one’s desires. We should not try to confirm the system by trying to change the system but rather turn inwards to confirm of the centrality of our own desires.

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[Lauren, *Cruel Optimism*, Duke University Press, pg. 223-228, 2011, RSR]

Intensely political seasons spawn reveries of a different immediacy. People imagine alternative environments where authenticity trumps ideology, truths cannot be concealed, and communication feels intimate, face-to face. In these times, even politicians imagine occupying a post–public sphere public where they might just somehow make an unmediated transmission to the body politic. “Somehow you just got to go over the heads of the filter and speak directly to the people,” then- President George W. Bush commented in October 2003, echoing a long tradition of sentimental political fantasies and soon followed by condemnations of the “filter” by the Republican National Committee and the presidential campaign of John McCain and Sarah Palin.1 What is “the filter” that demands circumnavigation? Bush seems to be inverting the meaning of his own, mixed, metaphor. A filter, after all, separates out noise from communication and, in so doing, makes communication possible. Jacques Attali and Michel Serres have both argued that there is no communication without noise, as noise interferes from within any utterance, threatening its tractability.2 The performance of distortion that constitutes communication therefore demands discernment, or filtering. However steadfast one’s commitment to truth, there is no avoiding the noise. Yet Bush’s wish to skirt the filter points to something profound in the desire for the political. He wants to transmit not the message but the noise. He wants the public to feel the funk, the live intensities and desires that make messages affectively immediate, seductive, and binding.3 In his head a public’s binding to the political is best achieved neither by policy nor ideology but the affect of feeling political together, an effect of having communicated true feeling without the distancing mediation of speech.4 The transmission of noise performs political attachment as a sustaining intimate relation, without which great dramas of betrayal are felt and staged. In The Ethical Soundscape, Charles Hirschkind talks about the role of “maieutic listening” in constructing the intimate political publics of Egypt.5 There, the feeling tones of the affective soundscape produce attachments to and investments in a sense of political and social mutuality that is performed in moments of collective audition. This process involves taking on listening together as itself an object/scene of desire. The attainment of that attunement produces a sense of shared worldness, apart from whatever aim or claim the listening public might later bring to a particular political world because of what they have heard. From Hirschkind’s perspective the social circulation of noise, of affective binding, converts the world to a space of moral action that seems juxtapolitical— proximate to, without being compromised by, the instrumentalities of power that govern social life.6 Speaking above the filter would confirm to Bush’s whole listening audience that they already share an affective environment; mobilizing “the ethical and therapeutic virtues of the ear”7 would accomplish the visceral transmission of his assurance not only that he has made a better good life possible for Americans and humans around the globe, but that, affectively speaking, there is already a better sensorial world right here, right now, more intimate and secure and just as real as the world made by the media’s anxiogenic sensationalist analysis. This vision locates the desire for the political in an alternative commons in the present that the senses confirm and circulate as though without mediation. What exactly is the problem with “the filter”? The contemporary filtered or mediated political sphere in the United States transmits news 24/7 from a new ordinary created by crisis, in which life seems reduced to discussions about tactics for survival and who is to blame. The filter tells you that the public has entered a historical situation whose contours it does not know. It impresses itself upon mass consciousness as an epochal crisis, unfolding like a disaster film made up of human- interest stories and stories about institutions that have lost their way.8 It is a moment on the verge of a postnormative phase, in which fantasmatic clarities about the conditions for enduring collectivity, historical continuity, and infrastructural stability have melted away, along with predictable relations between event and effect. Living amidst war and environmental disaster, people are shown constantly being surprised at what does and does not seem to have a transformative impact. Living amid economic crisis, people are shown constantly being surprised at the amount, location, and enormity of moral and affective irregulation that come from fading rules of accountability and recognition. What will govern the terms and relations of reliable reciprocity among governments, intimates, workers, owners, churches, citizens, political parties, or strangers? What forms of life will secure the sense of affective democracy that people have been educated to expect from their publics? Nobody knows. The news about the recent past and the pressures of the near future demand constant emergency cleanup and hyperspeculation about what it means to live in the ongoing present among piles of cases where things didn’t work out or seem to make sense, at least not yet. There are vigils; there is witnessing, testimony, and yelling. But there is not yet a consensual rubric that would shape these matters into an event. The affective structure of the situation is therefore anxious and the political emotions attached to it veer wildly from recognition of the enigma that is clearly there to explanations that make sense, the kind of satisfying sense that enables enduring. Uncertainty is the material that Bush wished to bracket. His desire for a politics of ambient noise, prepropositional transmission, and intuitive reciprocity sought to displace the filtered story of instability and contradiction from the center of sociality. He also wishfully banished self- reflexive, cultivated opinion and judgment from their central public- sphere function. In short, as Jacques Rancière would put it, Bush’s wishful feeling was to separate the political from politics as such.9 In so doing he would cast the ongoing activity of social antagonism to the realm of the epiphenomenal, in contrast to which the affective feedback loop of the political would make stronger the true soul- to- soul continuity between politicians and their public. Foucault used to call “sexuality” that noisy affectivity that Bush wanted to transmit from mouth to ear, heart to heart, gut to gut.10 From his perspective, at least, the political is best lodged in the appetites. These are not politically tendentious observations. Perhaps when Bush uttered his desire for affective communication to be the medium of the political, he was trying cynically to distract the public gaze from some of his particular actions. But the wish to inhabit a vaguely warm sense of alreadyestablished, autonomic, and atmospheric solidarity with the body politic is hardly his special desire. Indeed, in his preference for the noise of immediacy, he has many bedfellows in the body politic with whom he shares little else politically, namely, the ones who prefer political meetings in town halls, caucuses, demonstrations, and other intimate assemblies to the pleasure of disembodied migratory identification that constitutes mass publics. He also joins his antagonists in the nondominant classes who have long produced intimate publics to provide the feeling of immediacy and solidarity by establishing in the public sphere an affective register of belonging to inhabit when there are few adequate normative institutions to fall back on, rest in, or return to. Public spheres are always affect worlds, worlds to which people are bound, when they are, by affective projections of a constantly negotiated common interestedness. But an intimate public is more specific. In an intimate public one senses that matters of survival are at stake and that collective mediation through narration and audition might provide some routes out of the impasse and the struggle of the present, or at least some sense that there would be recognition were the participants in the room together.11 An intimate public promises the sense of being held in its penumbra. You do not need to audition for membership in it. Minimally, you need just to perform audition, to listen and to be interested in the scene’s visceral impact.12 You might have been drawn to it because of a curiosity about something minor, unassociated with catastrophe, like knitting or collecting something, or having a certain kind of sexuality, only after which it became a community of support, offering tones of suffering, humor, and cheerleading. Perhaps an illness led to seeking out a community of survival tacticians. In either case, any person can contribute to an intimate public a personal story about not being defeated by what is overwhelming. More likely, though, participants take things in and sometimes circulate what they hear, captioning them with opinion or wonder. But they do not have to do anything to belong. They can be passive and lurk, deciding when to appear and disappear, and consider the freedom to come and go the exercise of sovereign freedom. Indeed, in liberal societies, freedom includes freedom from the obligation to pay attention to much, whether personal or political—no- one is obliged to be conscious or socially active in their modes and scenes of belonging. For many this means that political attention is usually something delegated and politics is something overheard, encountered indirectly and unsystematically, through a kind of communication more akin to gossip than to cultivated rationality.13 But there is nothing fundamentally passive or superficial in overhearing the political. What hits a person encountering the dissemination of news about power has nothing to do with how thorough or cultivated their knowledge is or how they integrate the impact into living. Amidst all of the chaos, crisis, and injustice in front of us, the desire for alternative filters that produce the sense—if not the scene—of a more livable and intimate sociality is another name for the desire for the political. This is why an intimate attachment to the political can amount to a relation of cruel optimism. I have argued throughout this book that an optimistic attachment is cruel when the object/scene of desire is itself an obstacle to fulfilling the very wants that bring people to it: but its life- organizing status can trump interfering with the damage it provokes. It may be a relation of cruel optimism, when, despite an awareness that the normative political sphere appears as a shrunken, broken, or distant place of activity among elites, members of the body politic return periodically to its recommitment ceremonies and scenes. Voting is one thing; collective caring, listening, and scanning the airwaves, are others. All of these modes of orientation and having a feeling about it confirm our attachment to the system and thereby confirm the system and the legitimacy of the affects that make one feel bound to it, even if the manifest content of the binding has the negative force of cynicism or the dark attenuation of political depression. How and why does this attachment persist? Is it out of habit? Is it in hopes of the potentiality embedded in the political as such? Or, from a stance of critical engagement, an investment in the possibility of its repair? The exhausting repetition of the politically depressed position that seeks repair of what may be constitutively broken can eventually split the activity of optimism from expectation and demand.14 Maintaining this split enables one to sustain one’s attachment to the political as such and to one’s sense of membership in the idea of the polity, which is a virtual—but sensual, not abstract—space of the commons. And so, detaching from it could induce many potential losses along with new freedoms. Grant Farred calls fidelity to the political without expectation of recognition, representation, or return a profoundly ethical act.15 His exemplary case derives from voting patterns of African Americans in the 2004 presidential election, but the anxiety about the costs of this ethical commitment has only increased with the election of Barack Obama as the President of the emotional infrastructure of the United States as well as of its governing and administrative ones.16 What is the relation between the “Yes We Can!” optimism for the political and how politics actually works? What is the effect of Obama’s optimization of political optimism against the political depression of the historically disappointed, especially given any President’s limited sovereignty as a transformative agent in ordinary life? How can we track the divergences between politically orchestrated emotions and their affective environments? Traditionally, political solidarity is a more of a structure than a feeling—an identification with other people who are similarly committed to a project that does not require affective continuity or warm personal feeling to sustain itself. But maintaining solidarity requires skills for adjudicating incommensurate visions of the better good life. The atrophy of these skills is at risk when politics is reduced to the demand for affective attunement, insofar as the sense of belonging is threatened by the inconvenience of antagonistic aims. Add to this the possibility that “the political” as we know it in mass democracy requires such a splitting of attachment and expectation. Splitting off political optimism from the way things are can sustain many kinds of the cruelest optimism.

#### A search for the true meaning of history is pointless. There is no true essence; rather, objects always succumb to the movement of history, which is what we should analyze.

-History own meaning for us

Foucault, French historian and philosopher, ‘77

[Michel, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”, In Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews, edited by D.F. Bouchard, Ithica, Cornell University Press, RSR]

Why does Nietzsche challenge the pursuit of the origin (Ur­ sprung), at least on those occasions when he is truly a genealogist? First, because it is an attempt to capture the exact essence of things, their purest possibilities, and their carefully protected identities; because this search assumes the existence of immobile forms that precede the external world of accident and succession. This search is directed to "that which was already there," the image of a primordial truth fully adequate to its nature, and it necessitates the removal of every mask to ultimately disclose an original identity. However, if the genealogist refuses to extend his faith in metaphysics, if he listens to history, he finds that there is "something altogether different" behind things: not a timeless and essential secret, but the secret that they have no essence or that their essence was fabricated in a piecemeal fash­ ion from alien forms. Examining the history of reason, he learns that it was born in an altogether "reasonable" fashion-from chance;11 devotion to truth and the precision of scientific meth­ ods arose from the passion of scholars, their reciprocal hatred, their fanatical and unending discussions, and their spirit of com­ petition-the personal conflicts that slowly forged the weapons of reason. 12 Further, genealogical analysis shows that the concept of liberty is an "invention of the ruling classes" 13 and not fundamental to man's nature or at the root of his attachment to being and truth. What is found at the historical beginning of things is not the inviolable identity of their origin; it is the dissension of other things. It is disparity.14 History also teaches how to laugh at the solemnities of the origin. The lofty origin is no more than "a metaphysical exten­ sion which arises from the belief that things are most precious and essential at the moment of birth." 15 We tend to think that this is the moment of their greatest perfection, when they emerged dazzling from the hands of a creator or in the shadowless light of a first morning. The origin always precedes the Fall. It comes before the body, before the world and time; it is associated with the gods, and its story is always sung as a theogony. But historical beginnings are lowly: not in the sense of modest or dis­ creet like the steps of a dove, but derisive and ironic, capable of undoing every infatuation. "We wished to awaken the feeling of man's sovereignty by showing his divine birth: this path is now forbidden, since a monkey stands at the entrance." 16 Man originated with a grimace over his future development; and Zar­ athustra himself is plagued by a monkey who jumps along be­ hind him, pulling on his coattails. The final postulate of the origin is linked to the first two in being the site of truth. From the vantage point of an absolute distance, free from the restraints of positive knowledge, the origin makes possible a field of knowledge whose function is to recover it, but always in a false recognition due to the excesses of its own speech. The origin lies at' a place of inevitable loss, the point where the truth of things corresponded to a truthful discourse, the site of a fleeting articulation that discourse has obscured and finally lost. It is a new cruelty of history that compels a reversal of this relationship and the abandonment of "adolescent" quests: behind the always recent, avaricious, and measured truth, it posits the ancient proliferation of errors. It is now impossible to believe that "in the rending of the veil, truth remains truthful; we have lived long enough not to be taken in." 17 Truth is undoubtedly the sort of error that cannot be refuted because it was hardened into an unalterable form in the long baking process of history . 18 Moreover, the very question of truth, the right it appropriates to refute error and oppose self to appearance, the manner in which it developed (initially made available to the wise, then withdrawn by men of piety to an unattainable world where it was given the double role of consolation and imperative, finally rejected as a useless notion, superfluous and contradicted on all sides)-does this not form a history, the history of an error we call truth? Truth, and its original reign, has had a history within history from which we are barely emerging "in the time of the shortest shadow," when light no longer seems to flow from the depths of the sky or to arise from the first moments of the day.19 A genealogy of values, morality, asceticism, and knowledge will never confuse itself with a quest for their "origins," will never neglect as inaccessible the vicissitudes of history. On the contrary, it will cultivate the details and accidents that accompany every beginning; it will be scrupulously attentive to their petty malice; it will await their emergence, once unmasked, as the face of the other. Wherever it is made to go, it will not be reticent-in "excavating the depths," in allowing time for these elements to escape from a labyrinth where no truth had ever detained them. The genealogist needs history to dispel the chimeras of the origin, somewhat in the manner of the pious phi­ losopher who needs a doctor to exorcise the shadow of his soul. He must be able to recognize the events of history, its jolts, its surprises, its unsteady victories and unpalatable defeats-the basis of all beginnings, atavisms, and heredities. Similarly, he must be able to diagnose the illnesses of the body, its conditions of weakness and strength, its breakdowns and resistances, to be in a position to judge philosophical discourse. History is the concrete body of a development, with its moments of intensity, its lapses, its extended periods of feverish agitation, its fainting spells; and only a metaphysician would seek its soul in the dis­ tant ideality of the origin.

#### The aff is ressentiment – the aff forces us to relieve history as they will us backwards towards that which cannot be changed. Debate exacerbates these problems; the ballot writes structures it into our identity and institutionalizes politics’ dependence on it. The ballot then becomes a vehicle for revenge in belonging to it.

Brown 1995 [Wendy, Professor of Political Science at Berkeley, States of Injury, pp. 66-74]

Liberalism contains from its inception a generalized incitement to what Nietzsche terms ressentiment, the moralizing revenge of the powerless, "the triumph of the weak as weak. "22 This incitement to ressentiment inheres in two related constitutive paradoxes of liberalism: that between individual liberty and social egalitarianism, a paradox which produces failure turned to recrimination by the subordinated, and guilt turned to resentment by the "successful"; and that between the individualism that legitimates liberalism and the cultural homogeneity required by its commitment to political universality, a paradox which stimulates the articulation of politically significant differences on the one hand, and the suppression of them on the other, and which offers a form of articulation that presses against the limits of universalist discourse even while that which is being articulated seeks to be harbored within-included in-the terms of that universalism. Premising itself on the natural equality of human beings, liberalism makes a political promise of universal individual freedom in order to arrive at social equality, or achieve a civilized retrieval of the equality postulated in the state of nature. It is the tension between the promises of individualistic liberty and the requisites of equality that yields ressentiment in one of two directions, depending on the way in which the paradox is brokered. A strong commitment to freedom vitiates the fulfillment of the equality promise and breeds ressentiment as welfare state liberalism--attenuations of the unmitigated license of the rich and powerful on behalf of the "disadvantaged." Conversely, a strong commitment to equality, requiring heavy state interventionism and economic redistribution, attenuates the commitment to freedom and breeds ressentiment expressed as neoconservative anti-statism, racism, charges of reverse racism, and so forth. However, it is not only the tension between freedom and equality but the prior presumption of the self-reliant and self-made capacities of liberal subjects, conjoined with their unavowed dependence on and construction by a variety of social relations and forces, that makes all liberal subjects, and not only markedly disenfranchised ones, vulnerable to ressentiment: it is their situatedness within power, their production by power, and liberal discourse's denial of this situatedness and production that cast the liberal subject into failure, the failure to make itself in the context of a discourse in which its self-making is assumed, indeed, is its assumed nature. This failure, which Nietzsche calls suffering, must either find a reason within itself (which redoubles the failure) or a site of external blame upon which to avenge its hurt and redistribute its pain. Here is Nietzsche's account of this moment in the production of ressentiment: For every sufferer instinctively seeks a cause for his suffering, more exactly, an agent; still more specifically, a guilty agent who is susceptible to suffering--in short, some living thing upon which he can, on some pretext or other, vent his affects, actually or in effigy .... This ... constitutes the actual physiological cause of ressentiment, vengefulness, and the like: a desire to deaden pain by means of affects... to deaden, by means of a more violent emotion of any kind, a tormenting, secret pain that is becoming unendurable, and to drive it out of consciousness at least for the moment: for that one requires an affect, as savage an affect as possible, and, in order to excite that, any pretext at all.23 Ressentiment in this context is a triple achievement: it produces an affect (rage, righteousness) that overwhelms the hurt; it produces a culprit responsible for the hurt; and it produces a site of revenge to displace the hurt (a place to inflict hurt as the sufferer has been hurt). Together these operations both ameliorate (in Nietzsche's term, "anaesthetize") and externalize what is otherwise "unendurable." In a culture already streaked with the pathos of ressentiment for the reasons just discussed, there are several distinctive characteristics of late modern postindustrial societies that accelerate and expand the conditions of its production. My listing will necessarily be highly schematic: First, the phenomenon William Connolly names "increased global contingency" combines with the expanding pervasiveness and complexity of domination by capital and bureaucratic state and social networks to create an unparalleled individual powerlessness over the fate and direction of one's own life, intensifying the experiences of impotence, dependence, and gratitude inherent in liberal capitalist orders and constitutive of ressellfiment.24 Second, the steady desacralization of all regions of life--what Weber called disenchantment, what Nietzsche called the death of god-would seem to add yet another reversal to Nietzsche's genealogy of ressentiment as perpetually available to "alternation of direction." In Nietzsche's account, the ascetic priest deployed notions of "guilt, sin, sinfulness, depravity, damnation" to "direct the ressentiment of the less severely afflicted sternly back upon themselves ... and in this way exploited the bad instincts of all sufferers for the purpose of self-discipline, self-surveillance, and self-overcoming. "25 However, the desacralizing tendencies of late modernity undermine the efficacy of this deployment and turn suffering's need for exculpation back toward a site of external agency26 Third, the increased fragmentation, if not disintegration, of all forms of association not organized until recently by the commodities market-communities, churches, families-and the ubiquitousness of the classificatory, individuating schemes of disciplinary society, combine to produce an utterly unrelieved individual, one without insulation from the inevitable failure entailed in liberalism's individualistic construction. 27 ln short, the characteristics of late modern secular society, in which individuals are buffeted and controlled by global configurations of disciplinary and capitalist power of extraordinary proportions, and are at the same time nakedly individuated, stripped of reprieve from relentless exposure and accountability for themselves, together add up to an incitement to ressentiment that might have stunned even the finest philosopher of its occasions and logics. Starkly accountable yet dramatically impotent, the late modern liberal subject quite literally seethes with ressentiment11. Enter politicized identity, now conceivable in part as both product of and reaction to this condition, where "reaction" acquires the meaning Nietzsche ascribed to it: namely, an effect of domination that reiterates impotence, a substitute for action, for power, for self-affirmation that reinscribes incapacity, powerlessness, and rejection. For Nietzsche, ressentiment itself is rooted in reaction-the substitution of reasons, norms, and ethics for deeds-and he suggests that not only moral systems but identities themselves take their bearings in this reaction. As Tracy Strong reads this element of Nietzsche's thought: Identity ... does not consist of an active component, but is reaction to something outside; action in itself, with its inevitable self-assertive qualities, must then become something evil, since it is identified with that against which one is reacting. The will to power of slave morality must constantly reassert that which gives definition to the slave: the pain he suffers by being in the world. Hence any attempt to escape that pain will merely result in the reaffirmation of painful structures. 28 If the "cause" of ressentiment is suffering, its "creative deed" is the reworking of this pain into a negative form of action, the "imaginary revenge" of what Nietzsche terms "natures denied the true reaction, that of deeds. "29 This revenge is achieved through the imposition of suffering "on whatever does not feel wrath and displeasure as he does"30 (accomplished especially through the production of guilt), through the establishment of suffering as the measure of social virtue, and through casting strength and good fortune ("privilege,·· as we say today) as self-recriminating, as its own indictment in a culture of suffering: "it is disgraceful to be fortunate, there is too much misery. "'1 But in its attempt to displace its suffering, identity structured by ressentiment at the same time becomes invested in its own subjection. This investment lies not only in its discovery of a site of blame for its hurt will, not only in its acquisition of recognition through its history of subjection (a recognition predicated on injury, now righteously revalued), but also in the satisfactions of revenge, which ceaselessly reenact even as they redistribute the injuries of marginalization and subordination in a liberal discursive order that alternately denies the very possibility of these things and blames those who experience them for their own condition. Identity politics structured by ressentiment reverse without subverting this blaming structure: they do not subject to critique the sovereign subject of accountability that liberal individualism presupposes, nor the economy of inclusion and exclusion that liberal universalism establishes. Thus, politicized identity that presents itself as a self-affirmation now appears as the opposite, as predicated on and requiring its sustained rejection by a "hostile external world." Insofar as what Nietzsche calls slave morality produces identity in reaction to power, insofar as identity rooted in this reaction achieves its moral superiority by reproaching power and action themselves as evil, identity structured by this ethos becomes deeply invested in its own impotence, even while it seeks to assuage the pain of its powerlessness through its vengeful moralizing, through its wide distribution of suffer-through its reproach of power as such. Politicized identity, premised on exclusion and fueled by the humiliation and suffering imposed by its historically structured impotence in the context of a discourse of sover- eign individuals, is as likely to seek generalized political paralysis, to feast on generalized political impotence, as it is to seek its own or collective liberation through empowerment. Indeed, it is more likely to punish and reproach-"punishment is what revenge calls itself; with a hypocritical lie it creates a good conscience for itself"33\_than to find venues of self- affirming action.¶ But contemporary politicized identity's desire is not only shaped by the extent to which the sovereign will of the liberal subject, articulated ever more nakedly by disciplinary individuation and capitalist disinternments, is dominated by late-twentieth-century configurations of political and economic powers. It is shaped as well by the contemporary problematic of history itself, by the late modern rupture of history as a narrative, as ended because it has lost its end-a rupture that paradoxically gives history an immeasurable weight. As the grim experience of reading Discipline and Punish makes clear, there is a sense in which the gravitational force of history is multiplied at precisely the moment that history's narrative coherence and objectivist foundation is refuted. As the problematic of power in history is resituated from subject positioning to subject construction; as power is seen to operate spatially, infiltrationally, "microphysically" rather than only temporally, permeating every heretofore designated "interior" space in social lives and individuals; as eroding historical metanarratives take with them both laws of history and the futurity such laws purported to assure; as the presumed continuity of history is replaced with a sense of its violent, contingent, and ubiquitous force -history becomes that which has weight but no trajectory, mass but no coherence, force but no direction: it is war without ends or end. Thus, the extent to which "the tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living" is today unparalleled, even as history itself disintegrates as a coherent category or practice. We know ourselves to be saturated by history, we feel the extraordinary force of its and determinations; we are also steeped in a discourse of its insignificance, above all, we know that history will no longer (always already did not) act as our redeemer.¶ I raise the question of history because in thinking about late modern politicized identity's structuring by ressentiment, I have thus far focused on its foundation in the sufferings of a subordinated sovereign subject. Bur Nietzsche's account of the logic of ressentiment is also linked to that feature of the will that is stricken by history, that rails against time itself, that cannot "will backwards," that cannot exert its power over the past- either as a specific set of events or as time itself.¶ Willing liberates; but what is it that puts even the liberator himself in fetters? "It was"-that is the name of the will's gnashing of teeth and most secret melancholy. Powerless against what has been done, he is an angry spectator of all that is past. . . . He cannot break time and time's covetousness, that is the will's loneliest melancholy.¶ Although Nietzsche appears here to be speaking of the will as such, Zarathustra's own relationship to the will as a "redeemer of history" makes clear that this "angry spectatorship" can with great difficulty be reworked as a perverse kind of mastery, a mastery that triumphs over the past by reducing its power, by remaking the present against the terms of the past-in short, by a project of self-transformation that arrays itself against its own genealogical consciousness. In contrast with the human ruin he sees everywhere around him-"fragments and limbs and dreadful accidents"-it is Zarathustra's own capacity to discern and to make a future that spares him from a rancorous sensibility, from crushing disappointment in the liberatory promise of his will:¶ The now and the past on earth-alas, my friends, that is what I find most unendurable; and l should not know how to live if I were not also a seer of that which must come. A seer, a willer, a creator, a future himself and a bridge to the future-and alas, also, as it were, a cripple at this bridge: all this is Zarathustra. ¶ Nietzsche here discerns both the necessity and the near impossibility- the extraordinary and fragile achievement-of formulating oneself as a creator of the future and a bridge to the future in order to appease the otherwise inevitable rancor of the will against time, in order to redeem the past by lifting the weight of it, by reducing the scope of its determinations. "And how could I bear to be a man if man were not also a creator and guesser of riddles and redeemer of accidents'" Of course, Zarathustra's exceptionality in what he is willing to confront and bear, in his capacities to overcome in order to create, is Nietzsche's device for revealing us to ourselves. The ordinary will, steeped in the economy of slave morality, devises means "to get rid of his melancholy and to mock his dungeon," means that reiterate the cause of the melancholy, that continually reinfect the narcissistic wound to its capaciousness inflicted by the past. "Alas," says Nietzsche, "every prisoner becomes a fool; and the imprisoned will redeems himself foolishly. "3" From this foolish redemption-foolish because it does not resolve the will's rancor but only makes a world in its image-is born the wrath of revenge: "that which was" is the name of the stone [the will] cannot move. And so he moves stones out of wrath and displeasure, and he wreaks revenge on whatever does not feel wrath and displeasure as he does. Thus the will, the liberator, took to hurting; and on all who can suffer he wreaks revenge for his inability to go backwards. This . . is what revenge is: the will's ill will against time and its ‘it was’. "?•9 Revenge as a "reaction," a substitute for the capacity to act, produces identity as both bound to the history that produced it and as a reproach to the present which embodies that history. The will that "took to hurting'' in its own impotence against its past becomes (in the form of an identity whose very existence is due to heightened consciousness of the immovability of its "it was," its history of subordination) a will that makes not only a psychological but a political practice of revenge, a practice that reiterates the existence of an identity whose present past is one of insistently irredeemable injury. This past cannot be redeemed unless the identity ceases to be invested in it, and it cannot cease to be invested in it without giving up its identity as such, thus giving up its economy of avenging and at the same time perpetuating its hurt-"when he then stills the pain of the wound he at the same time infects that wound. "40 In its emergence as a protest against marginalization or subordination, politicized identity thus becomes attached to its own exclusion both because it is premised on this exclusion for its very existence as identity and because the formation of identity at the site of exclusion, as exclusion, augments or "alters the direction of the suffering" entailed in subordination or marginalization by finding a site of blame for it. But in so doing, it installs its pain over its unredeemed history in the very foundation of its political claim, in its demand for recognition as identity. In locating a site of blame for its powerlessness over its past-a past of injury, a past as a hurt will-and locating a "reason" for the "unendurable pain" of social powerlessness in the present, it converts this reasoning into an ethicizing politics, a politics of recrimination that seeks to avenge the hurt even while it reaffirms it, discursively codifies it. Politicized identity thus enunciates itself, makes claims for itself, only by entrenching, restating, dramatizing, and inscribing its pain in politics; it can hold out no future-for itself or others-that triumphs over this pain. The loss of historical direction, and with it the loss of futurity characteristic of the late modern age, is thus homologically refigured in the structure of desire of the dominant political expression of the age: identity politics. In the same way, the generalized political impotence produced by the ubiquitous yet discontinuous networks of late modern political and economic power is reiterated in the investments of late modern democracy’s primary oppositional political formations.

#### Presenting Native scholarship through damage narratives is a double erasure that’s implicated in Settler colonialism—academia ventriloquizing the speaking subaltern fits neatly in a scheme of self-aggrandizement and voyeurism. Vote negative to refuse academic research of native pain

Tuck and Yang, ‘14

-Knowledge of the other must be refused – knowing allows conquering.

-Intellectuals will speak for the other and reinterpret the other – academy bad.

-Pain narratives fix pain into identity – prevent movements beyond it.

-Desire centered frameworks understand pain exist but do not center it – focus on future and past.

[Eve (Assistant Professor of Educational Foundations and Coordinator of Native American Studies at the State University of New York at New Paltz. Earned her Ph.D.in Urban Education at The Graduate Center, The City University of New York in 2008) and K Wayne (Ph.D., 2004, Social and Cultural Studies, University of California, Berkeley), “R-Words: Refusing Research, pg. 225-231, RSR]

Under coloniality, Descartes’ formulation, cognito ergo sum (“I think, therefore I am”) transforms into ego conquiro (“I conquer, therefore I am”; Dussel, 1985; Maldonado-Torres, 2007; Ndlvou-Gatsheni, 2011). Nelson Maldonado-Torres (2009) expounds on this relationship of the conqueror’s sense-of-self to his knowledge-of-others (“I know her, therefore I am me”). Knowledge of self/Others became the philosophical justification for the acquisition of bodies and territories, and the rule over them. Thus the right to conquer is intimately connected to the right to know (“I know, therefore I conquer, therefore I am”). Maldonado- Torres (2009) explains that for Levi Strauss, the self/Other knowledge paradigm is the methodological rule for the birth of ethnology as a science (pp. 3–4). Settler colonial knowledge is premised on frontiers; conquest, then, is an exercise of the felt entitlement to transgress these limits. Refusal, and stances of refusal in research, are attempts to place limits on conquest and the colonization of knowledge by marking what is off limits, what is not up for grabs or discussion, what is sacred, and what can’t be known. To speak of limits in such a way makes some liberal thinkers uncomfortable, and may, to them, seem dangerous. When access to information, to knowledge, to the intellectual commons is controlled by the people who generate that information [participants in a research study], it can be seen as a violation of shared standards of justice and truth. (Simpson, 2007, p. 74) By forwarding a framework of refusal within (and to) research in this chapter, we are not simply prescribing limits to social science research. We are making visible invisibilized limits, containments, and seizures that research already stakes out. One major colonial task of social science research that has emerged is to pose as voicebox, ventriloquist, interpreter of subaltern voice. Gayatri Spivak’s important monograph, Can the Subaltern Speak? (2010), is a foundational text in postcolonial studies, prompting a variety of scholarly responses, spin-offs, and counterquestions, including does the subaltern speak? Can the colonizer/settler listen? Can the subaltern be heard? Can the subaltern act? In our view, Spivak’s question in the monograph, said more transparently, is can the subaltern speak in/ to the academy? Our reading of the essay prompts our own duet of questions, which we move in and out of in this essay: What does the academy do? What does social science research do? Though one might approach these questions empirically, we emphasize the usefulness of engaging these questions pedagogically; that is, posing the question not just to determine the answer, but because the rich conversations that will lead to an answer are meaningful. The question—What does or can research do?—is not a cynical question, but one that tries to understand more about research as a human activity. The question is similar to questions we might ask of other human activities, such as, why do we work? Why do we dance? Why do we do ceremony? At first, the responses might be very pragmatic, but they give way to more philosophical reflections. Returning to Spivak’s question, in Can the Subaltern Speak? Spivak casts Foucault and Deleuze as “hegemonic radicals” (2010, p. 23) who unwittingly align themselves with bourgeois sociologists who fill the place of ideology with a continuistic “unconscious” or a parasubjective “culture” . . . . In the name of desire, they tacitly reintroduce the undivided subject into the discourse of power . . . (pp. 26–27) Observing Foucault and Deleuze’s almost romantic admiration for the “reality” of the factory, the school, the barracks, the prison, the police station, and their insistence that the masses know these (more) real realities perfectly well, far better than intellectuals, and “certainly say it very well,” (Deleuze, as cited in Spivak, 2010, p. 27), Spivak delivers this analysis: “The ventriloquism of the speaking subaltern is the left intellectual’s stock-in-trade” (2010, p. 27). Spivak critiques the position of the intellectual who is invested in the ventriloquism of the speaking subaltern for the banality of what serves as evidence of such “speech,” and for the ways in which intellectuals take opportunity to conflate the work and struggle of the subaltern with the work of the intellectual, which only serves to make more significant/authentic their own work (p. 29). All of it is part of a scheme of self-aggrandizing. Rosalind Morris, reading Spivak, criticizes nostalgia in the academy that “bears a secret valorization and hypostatization of subalternity as an identity—to be recalled, renarrated, reclaimed, and revalidated” (2010, p. 8). Subalternity is less an identity than what we might call a predicament, but this is true in a very odd sense. For, in Spivak’s definition, it is the structured place from which the capacity to access power is radically obstructed. To the extent than anyone escapes the muting of subalternity, she ceases being a subaltern. Spivak says this is to be desired. And who could disagree? There is neither authenticity nor virtue in the position of the oppressed. There is simply (or not so simply) oppression. Even so, we are moved to wonder, in this context, what burden this places on the memory work in the aftermath of education. What kind of representation becomes available to the one who, having partially escaped the silence of subalternity, is nonetheless possessed by the consciousness of having been obstructed, contained, or simply misread for so much of her life? (Morris, 2010, p. 8) We take this burden of speaking in/to the academy, while being misrecognized as the speaking subaltern or being required to ventriloquate for the subaltern, as a starting dilemma for the work of representation for decolonizing researchers. It is our sense that there is much value in working to subvert and avert the carrying out of social science research under assumptions of subalternity and authenticity, and to refuse to be a purveyor of voices constructed as such. This is the place from which we begin this essay, inside the knowledge that in the same ways that we can observe that the colonizer is constituted by the production of the Other, and Whiteness is constituted by the production of Blackness (Fanon, 1968; Said, 1978), the work of research and the researcher are constituted by the production and representation of the subaltern subject. Further, as we explore in Axiom I, representation of the subject who has “partially escaped the silence of subalternity” (Morris, 2010, p. 8) takes the shape of a pain narrative. Elsewhere, Eve (Tuck, 2009, 2010) has argued that educational research and much of social science research has been concerned with documenting damage, or empirically substantiating the oppression and pain of Native communities, urban communities, and other disenfranchised communities. Damage-centered researchers may operate, even benevolently, within a theory of change in which harm must be recorded or proven in order to convince an outside adjudicator that reparations are deserved. These reparations presumably take the form of additional resources, settlements, affirmative actions, and other material, political, and sovereign adjustments. Eve has described this theory of change1 as both colonial and flawed, because it relies upon Western notions of power as scarce and concentrated, and because it requires disenfranchised communities to position themselves as both singularly defective and powerless to make change (2010). Finally, Eve has observed that “won” reparations rarely become reality, and that in many cases, communities are left with a narrative that tells them that they are broken. Similarly, at the center of the analysis in this chapter is a concern with the fixation social science research has exhibited in eliciting pain stories from communities that are not White, not wealthy, and not straight. Academe’s demonstrated fascination with telling and retelling narratives of pain is troubling, both for its voyeurism and for its consumptive implacability. Imagining “itself to be a voice, and in some disciplinary iterations, the voice of the colonised” (Simpson, 2007, p. 67, emphasis in the original) is not just a rare historical occurrence in anthropology and related fields. We observe that much of the work of the academy is to reproduce stories of oppression in its own voice. At first, this may read as an intolerant condemnation of the academy, one that refuses to forgive past blunders and see how things have changed in recent decades. However, it is our view that while many individual scholars have chosen to pursue other lines of inquiry than the pain narratives typical of their disciplines, novice researchers emerge from doctoral programs eager to launch pain-based inquiry projects because they believe that such approaches embody what it means to do social science. The collection of pain narratives and the theories of change that champion the value of such narratives are so prevalent in the social sciences that one might surmise that they are indeed what the academy is about. In her examination of the symbolic violence of the academy, bell hooks (1990) portrays the core message from the academy to those on the margins as thus: No need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. No need to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it has become mine, my own. Re-writing you I write myself anew. I am still author, authority. I am still colonizer the speaking subject and you are now at the center of my talk. (p. 343) Hooks’s words resonate with our observation of how much of social science research is concerned with providing recognition to the presumed voiceless, a recognition that is enamored with knowing through pain. Further, this passage describes the ways in which the researcher’s voice is constituted by, legitimated by, animated by the voices on the margins. The researcher-self is made anew by telling back the story of the marginalized/subaltern subject. Hooks works to untangle the almost imperceptible differences between forces that silence and forces that seemingly liberate by inviting those on the margins to speak, to tell their stories. Yet the forces that invite those on the margins to speak also say, “Do not speak in a voice of resistance. Only speak from that space in the margin that is a sign of deprivation, a wound, an unfulfilled longing. Only speak your pain” (hooks, 1990, p. 343). The costs of a politics of recognition that is rooted in naming pain have been critiqued by recent decolonizing and feminist scholars (Hartman, 1997, 2007; Tuck, 2009). In Scenes of Subjection, Sadiya Hartman (1997) discusses how recognizing the personhood of slaves enhanced the power of the Southern slaveowning class. Supplicating narratives of former slaves were deployed effectively by abolitionists, mainly White, well-to-do, Northern women, to generate portraits of abuse that ergo recognize slaves as human (Hartman, 2007). In response, new laws afforded minimal standards of existence, “making personhood coterminous with injury” (Hartman, 1997, p. 93), while simultaneously authorizing necessary violence to suppress slave agency. The slave emerges as a legal person only when seen as criminal or “a violated body in need of limited forms of protection” (p. 55). Recognition “humanizes” the slave, but is predicated upon her or his abjection. You are in pain, therefore you are. “[T]he recognition of humanity require[s] the event of excessive violence, cruelty beyond the limits of the socially tolerable, in order to acknowledge and protect the slave’s person” (p. 55). Furthermore, Hartman describes how slave-as-victim as human accordingly establishes slave-as-agent as criminal. Applying Hartman’s analysis, we note how the agency of Margaret Garner or Nat Turner can only be viewed as outsider violence that humane society must reject while simultaneously upholding the legitimated violence of the state to punish such outsider violence. Hartman asks, “Is it possible that such recognition effectively forecloses agency as the object of punishment . . . Or is this limited conferral of humanity merely a reinscription of subjugation and pained existence?” (p. 55). As numerous scholars have denoted, many social science disciplines emerged from the need to provide justifications for social hierarchies undergirded by White supremacy and manifest destiny (see also Gould, 1981; Selden, 1999; Tuck & Guishard, forthcoming). Wolfe (1999) has explored how the contoured logic of settler colonialism (p. 5) can be mapped onto the microactivities of anthropology; Guthrie (1976) traces the roots of psychology to the need to “scientifically” prove the supremacy of the White mind. The origins of many social science disciplines in maintaining logics of domination, while sometimes addressed in graduate schools, are regularly thought to be just errant or inauspicious beginnings—much like the ways in which the genocide of Indigenous peoples that afforded the founding of the Unites States has been reduced to an unfortunate byproduct of the birthing of a new and great nation. Such amnesia is required in settler colonial societies, argues Lorenzo Veracini, because settler colonialism is “characterized by a persistent drive to supersede the conditions of its operation,” (2011, p. 3); that is, to make itself invisible, natural, without origin (and without end), and inevitable. Social science disciplines have inherited the persistent drive to supersede the conditions of their operations from settler colonial logic, and it is this drive, a kind of unquestioning push forward, and not the origins of the disciplines that we attend to now. We are struck by the pervasive silence on questions regarding the contemporary rationale(s) for social science research. Though a variety of ethical and procedural protocols require researchers to compose statements regarding the objectives or purposes of a particular project, such protocols do not prompt reflection upon the underlying beliefs about knowledge and change that too often go unexplored or unacknowledged. The rationale for conducting social science research that collects pain narratives seems to be self-evident for many scholars, but when looked at more closely, the rationales may be unconsidered, and somewhat flimsy. Like a maritime archaeological site, such rationales might be best examined in situ, for fear of deterioration if extracted. Why do researchers collect pain narratives? Why does the academy want them? An initial and partial answer is because settler colonial ideology believes that, in fiction author Sherril Jaffe’s words, “scars make your body more interesting,” (1996, p. 58). Jaffe’s work of short, short of fiction bearing that sentiment as title captures the exquisite crossing of wounds and curiosity and pleasure. Settler colonial ideology, constituted by its conscription of others, holds the wounded body as more engrossing than the body that is not wounded (though the person with a wounded body does not politically or materially benefit for being more engrossing). In settler colonial logic, pain is more compelling than privilege, scars more enthralling than the body unmarked by experience. In settler colonial ideology, pain is evidence of authenticity, of the verifiability of a lived life. Academe, formed and informed by settler colonial ideology, has developed the same palate for pain. Emerging and established social science researchers set out to document the problems faced by communities, and often in doing so, recirculate common tropes of dysfunction, abuse, and neglect. Scholars of qualitative research Alecia Youngblood Jackson and Lisa Mazzei (2009) have critically excavated the privileging of voice in qualitative research, because voice is championed as “true and real,” and “almost a mirror of the soul, the essence of self,” (p. 1). The authors interpret the drive to “make voices heard and understood, bringing meaning and self to consciousness and creating transcendental, universal truths” as gestures that reveal the primacy of voice in conventional qualitative research (p. 1). We contend that much of what counts as voice and makes voice count is pain. In an example drawn from outside of social science research, in Wayne’s work as a writing instructor with Southeast Asian refugee students, he learned from them that much of the writing they were encouraged to do followed a rarefied narrative pattern of refugee-as-victim. As it were, youth and young adults learn these narratives in schools, in which time and again refugee-victim stories are solicited by well-intentioned ESL teachers who argue that such narratives are poetic, powerful, and represent the “authentic voice” of the student. Similarly, Robin Kelley (1997), speaking about the Black experience in Harlem in the 1960s, describes White liberal teachers as “foot soldiers in the new ethnographic army” (p. 20), soliciting stories from their students about pain in their lives and unwittingly reducing their students to “cardboard typologies who fit neatly into their own definition of the ‘underclass’” (p. 17). Such examples of teachers’ solicitations of youth narratives of pain confirm the deep relationship between writing or talking about wounds, and perceptions of authenticity of voice. Craig Gingrich-Philbrook (2005) articulates a related critique of autoethnography, positioning himself as a “narrator who appreciates autoethnography, at least as compared to its positivist alternatives, but one who simultaneously distrusts autoethnography’s pursuit of legitimacy in the form of the patriarch’s blessing and family values” (p. 298). Gingrich-Philbrook locates his concern in what autoethnography/ers are willing to do to secure academic legitimacy (p. 300): “My fears come down to the consequences of how badly autoethnography wants Daddy’s approval” (p. 310). By this Gingrich-Philbrook means that much of autoethnography has fixated on “attempting to justify the presence of the self in writing to the patriarchal council of self-satisfied social scientists” (p. 311). Though Gingrich-Philbrook does not go into detail about how precisely the “presence of the self” is justified via the performativity of subjugated knowledges (what we are calling pain narratives), he insists that autoethnography is distracted by trying to satisfy Daddy’s penchant for accounts of oppression. In my own autobiographical performance projects, I identify this chiasmatic shift in the possibility that all those performances I did about getting bashed only provided knowledge of subjugation, serving almost as an advertisement for power: ‘‘Don’t let this happen to you. Stay in the closet.’’ In large part motivated by Elizabeth Bell’s writings about performance and pleasure, I decided to write more about the gratifications of same-sex relationships, to depict intimacy and desire, the kinds of subjugated knowledges we don’t get to see on the after school specials and movies of the week that parade queer bruises and broken bones but shy away from the queer kiss. (p. 312) Participatory action research and other research approaches that involve participants in constructing the design and collection of voice (as data) are not immune to the fetish for pain narratives. It is a misconception that by simply building participation into a project—by increasing the number of people who collaborate in collecting data—ethical issues of representation, voice, consumption, and voyeurism are resolved. There are countless examples of research in which community or youth participants have made their own stories of loss and pain the objects of their inquiry (see also Tuck & Guishard, forthcoming). Alongside analyses of pain and damage-centered research, Eve (Tuck 2009, 2010) has theorized desire-based research as not the antonym but rather the antidote for damage-focused narratives. Pain narratives are always incomplete. They bemoan the food deserts, but forget to see the food innovations; they lament the concrete jungles and miss the roses and the tobacco from concrete. Desirecentered research does not deny the experience of tragedy, trauma, and pain, but positions the knowing derived from such experiences as wise. This is not about seeing the bright side of hard times, or even believing that everything happens for a reason. Utilizing a desire-based framework is about working inside a more complex and dynamic understanding of what one, or a community, comes to know in (a) lived life. Logics of pain focus on events, sometimes hiding structure, always adhering to a teleological trajectory of pain, brokenness, repair, or irreparability—from unbroken, to broken, and then to unbroken again. Logics of pain require time to be organized as linear and rigid, in which the pained body (or community or people) is set back or delayed on some kind of path of humanization, and now must catch up (but never can) to the settler/unpained/abled body (or community or people or society or philosophy or knowledge system). In this way, the logics of pain has superseded the now outmoded racism of an explicit racial hierarchy with a much more politically tolerable racism of a developmental hierarchy.2 Under a developmental hierarchy, in which some were undeterred by pain and oppression, and others were waylaid by their victimry and subalternity, damagecentered research reifies a settler temporality and helps suppress other understandings of time. Desire-based frameworks, by contrast, look to the past and the future to situate analyses. Desire is about longing, about a present that is enriched by both the past and the future; it is integral to our humanness. It is not only the painful elements of social and psychic realities, but also the textured acumen and hope. (Tuck, 2010, p. 644) In this way, desire is time-warping. The logics of desire is asynchronous just as it is distemporal, living in the gaps between the ticking machinery of disciplinary institutions. To be clear, again, we are not making an argument against the existence of pain, or for the erasure of memory, experience, and wisdom that comes with suffering. Rather, we see the collecting of narratives of pain by social scientists to already be a double erasure, whereby pain is documented in order to be erased, often by eradicating the communities that are supposedly injured and supplanting them with hopeful stories of progress into a better, Whiter, world. Vizenor talks about such “the consumer notion of a ‘hopeful book,’” and we would add hopeful or feel-good research, as “a denial of tragic wisdom” bent on imagining “a social science paradise of tribal victims” (1993, p. 14). Desire interrupts this metanarrative of damaged communities and White progress.

#### We must move to a politics of post sentimentality. The impossibility to move beyond history does not mean that history has to define us. Instead, we should move our demands to the now and away from a historical reading of who we are.

Berlant, ‘98

[Lauren, George M. Pullman Professor, Department of English, University of Chicago, “Poor Eliza,” American Literature, Vol. 70, No. 3, No More Separate Spheres! (Sep., 1998), Duke University Press, pg. 635-668, RSR]

Written in 1949, Baldwin's exhortation to refuse to pass on the contradictions of sentimental liberalism might be taken up by Toni Morrison, say. For if The Bluest Eye casts Shirley Temple and her ilk among the most vicious lying weapons of whiteness, Beloved under- stands that there is no transcendence anywhere-not through a thrilling or a comforting image. Surely Beloved quotes "poor Eliza" in its constant return to Sethe's river crossing. But Morrison's novel shows that when you cross the Ohio you do not transcend it but take it with you. At any moment a woman who has crossed or who descends from one who has risked the water might be walking through the grass thinking sentimental thoughts about the love and family and peace she might experience when she has the time and money and freedom, when suddenly "she had to lift her skirts, and the water she voided was endless," so that a viewer might "be obliged to see her squatting in front of her own privy making a mudhole too deep to be witnessed without shame";34 or perhaps she would be overcome by singing, "where the voices of women searched for the right combination, the key, the code, the sound that broke the back of words. Building voice upon voice until they found it, and when they did it was a wave of sound wide enough to sound deep water ... and she trembled like the baptized in its wash";35 or perhaps, breaking the water of pregnancy lying flat in a boat, she would remember the middle passage or just think about rain and other kinds of beloved weather. Whatever the case, the desire to disinherit a community from the stories that bind it to weepy repetitions of sublime death and dry, safe local entertainments motivates the novel Beloved to show that rather than seeking transcendence of the self who exemplifies the impossibility of exis- tence outside history, and rather than merely repeating the tragedies that seemed long ago to constitute whatever horizon of possibility your identity might aspire to, the postsentimental project would have you refuse to take on the history of the Other as your future, or as the solution to the problem of passing (over) water in the present tense. Sethe's flood poses a challenge to the tears of sentimental culture: to refuse the too-quick gratification after the none-too-brief knowledge of pain. Above all it understands that whatever transformation we might imagine being wrought from the world-making effects of identification must start right here, in the place of corporeal self-knowledge that can neither be alienated into the commodity form nor provide instruction and entertainment to audiences committed to experiencing the same changes over and over again. It asks us to demand of the sentimental project that its protests and complaints be taken seriously in themselves, which involves occupying the present tense with no more time for the big deferrals or fantasies of the always imminent time when the nation and heterosexuality finally pay out fully their parts of the bargain through which they have secured social dominance and ideological hegemony. The old motto of sentimentality might be taken from Fannie Hurst: "Every normal female yearns to be a lumi- nous person."36 But in the meantime, as we wait for the rapture to take place sometime in the always receding future, we might think about living by an interim slogan-perhaps, as Sethe says, "No more running-from nothing.

### Case

#### Placing essentialist Identities at the center of their project leads to infighting over who is authentic enough to speak for indigenous communities – we get so focused on the messenger that the message is lost.

Grande 2k [Sandy, Associate Professor of Education at Connecticut College, “American Indian identity and intellectualism: The quest for a new red pedagogy,” *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 13.4 (2000): 343-359]

The impact of essentialist discourse and its misperceived struggle over authenticity is perhaps best seen in the myriad of turf wars currently playing out among subaltern scholars of color and Whitestream academics. Questions of who is Indian enough, Black enough, or otherwise subjugated enough to write and speak for the marginalized seem to dominate such circles. In terms of American Indian scholarship, battle lines have been drawn between Indigenous scholars working to claim intellectual sovereignty and Whites working against the essentialist grain to sustain and re-assert the validity of their own scholarship. To a large extent, such campaigns are simply the logical consequences of centuries of intellectual hegemony and academic colonialism where Whites defined Indian history and American Indians served as the objects of definition. Thus, to some degree, the current renegotiation of this pattern represents a good and necessary feature of the process of reclamation and emancipation. The problem, however, is that since racial groups are not stable or homogeneous entities and racial differences are equally unstable effects of social and economic contradictions, the matter of ‘‘drawing lines ’’ becomes equally fraught with the same power-politics inherent in the system of Whitestream imperialism. Without the structures of a broader cultural critique, subjects are left to duke it out over the relativistic discourses of voice and authenticity. More significantly, the endless struggles over legitimacy have been so consumed with the ‘‘messenger’’ that the all-important ‘‘message’’ has long been forgotten. This is not a small, or simple, outcome as messages from Indian country need to be heard, particularly as assaults on tribal land, resources, and rights continue to be waged. The issue of identity is, thus, not incidental but, in fact, central to the state of American Indian intellectualism and scholarship.

#### Tying identity to land reinforces the topography of power—it essentializes identity and attaches it to discrete territorial units, repeating the very logic of the nation-state

Gupta and Ferguson, 1992. (Akhil, Department of Anthropology, Stanford University; James, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Irvine; “Beyond ‘Culture’: Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference”, Cultural Anthropology 7.1 page 6-7, JSTOR.)

Representations of space in the social sciences are remarkably dependent on images of break, rupture, and disjunction. The distinctiveness of societies, nations, and cultures is based upon a seemingly unproblematic division of space, on the fact that they occupy "naturally" discontinuous spaces. The premise of discontinuity forms the starting point from which to theorize contact, conflict, and contradiction between cultures and societies. For example, the representation of the world as a collection of "countries," as in most world maps, sees it as an inherently fragmented space, divided by different colors into diverse national societies, each "rooted" in its proper place (cf. Malkki, this issue). It is so taken for granted that each country embodies its own distinctive culture and society that the terms "society" and "culture" are routinely simply appended to the names of nation-states, as when a tourist visits India to understand "Indian culture" and "Indian society," or Thailand to experience "Thai culture," or the United States to get a whiff of "American culture." Of course, the geographical territories that cultures and societies are believed to map onto do not have to be nations. We do, for example, have ideas about culture-areas that overlap several nation-states, or of multicultural nations. On a smaller scale, perhaps, are our disciplinary assumptions about the association of culturally unitary groups (tribes or peoples) with "their" territories: thus, "the Nuer" live in "Nuerland" and so forth. The clearest illustration of this kind of thinking are the classic "ethnographic maps" that purported to display the spatial distribution of peoples, tribes, and cultures. But in all these cases, space itself becomes a kind of neutral grid on which cultural difference, historical memory, and societal organization are inscribed. It is in this way that space functions as a central organizing principle in the social sciences at the same time that it disappears from analytical purview. This assumed isomorphism of space, place, and culture results in some significant problems. First, there is the issue of those who inhabit the border, that "narrow strip along steep edges" (Anzaldua 1987:3) of national boundaries. The fiction of cultures as discrete, object-like phenomena occupying discrete spaces becomes implausible for those who inhabit the borderlands. Related to border inhabitants are those who live a life of border crossings-migrant workers, nomads, and members of the transnational business and professional elite. What is "the culture" of farm workers who spend half a year in Mexico and half a year in the United States? Finally, there are those who cross borders more or less permanently- immigrants, refugees, exiles, and expatriates. In their case, the disjuncture of place and culture is especially clear: Khmer refugees in the United States take "Khmer culture" with them in the same complicated way that Indian immigrants in England transport "Indian culture" to their new homeland. A second set of problems raised by the implicit mapping of cultures onto places is to account for cultural differences within a locality. "Multiculturalism" is both a feeble acknowledgment of the fact that cultures have lost their moorings in definite places and an attempt to subsume this plurality of cultures within the framework of a national identity. Similarly, the idea of "subcultures" attempts to preserve the idea of distinct "cultures" while acknowledging the relation of different cultures to a dominant culture within the same geographical and territorial space. Conventional accounts of ethnicity, even when used to describe cultural differences in settings where people from different regions live side by side, rely on an unproblematic link between identity and place.' Although such concepts are suggestive because they endeavor to stretch the naturalized association of culture with place, they fail to interrogate this assumption in a truly fundamental manner. We need to ask how to deal with cultural difference while abandoning received ideas of (localized) culture. Third, there is the important question of postcoloniality. To which places do the hybrid cultures of postcoloniality belong'! Does the colonial encounter create a "new culture" in both the colonized and colonizing country, or does it destabilize the notion that nations and cultures are isomorphic'! As discussed below, postcoloniality further problematizes the relationship between space and culture. Last, and most important, challenging the ruptured landscape of independent nations and autonomous cultures raises the question of understanding social change and cultural transformation as situated within interconnected spaces. The presumption that spaces are autonomous has enabled the power of topography to conceal successfully the topography of power.

The inherently fragmented space assumed in the definition of anthropology as the study of cultures (in the plural) may have been one of the reasons behind the long-standing failure to write anthropology's history as the biography of imperialism. For if one begins with the premise that spaces have always been hierarchically interconnected, instead of naturally disconnected, then cultural and social change becomes not a matter of cultural contact and articulation but one of rethinking difference through connection. To illustrate, let us examine one powerful model of cultural change that attempts to relate dialectically the local to larger spatial arenas: articulation. Articulation models, whether they come from Marxist structuralism or from "moral economy," posit a primeval state of autonomy (usually labeled "precapitalist"), which is then violated by global capitalism. The result is that both local and larger spatial arenas are transformed, the local more than the global to be sure, but not necessarily in a redetermined direction. This notion of articulation allows one to explore the richly unintended consequences of, say, colonial capitalism, where loss occurs alongside invention. Yet, by taking a preexisting, localized "community" as a given starting point, it fails to examine sufficiently the processes (such as the structures of feeling that pervade the imagining of community) that go into the construction of space as place or locality in the first instance. In other words, instead of assuming the autonomy of the primeval community, we need to examine how it was formed as a community out of the interconnected space that always already existed. Colonialism, then, represents the displacement of one form of interconnection by another. This is not to deny that colonialism, or an expanding capitalism, does indeed have profoundly dislocating effects on existing societies. But by always foregrounding the spatial distribution of hierarchical power relations, we can better understand the process whereby a space achieves a distinctive identity as a place. Keeping in mind that notions of locality or community refer both to a demarcated physical space and to clusters of interaction, we can see that the identity of a place emerges by the intersection of its specific involvement in a system of hierarchically organized spaces with its cultural construction as a community or locality

## 2NC

### Berlant K

#### No cards.

## 1NR

### Berlant K

#### Third is truth and power – Their attempt to separate truth from power is the ultimate form of ressentiment. The attempt to moralize against suffering relies on an epistemological distinction between truth and power which *authorizes* the innocence of suffering to speak ethically against oppression. This obscurses the co-production of truth and power.

Brown 1995 [Wendy, Professor of Political Science at Berkeley, *States of Injury*, pp. 43-47]

In On the Genealogy of Morals, Nietzsche inaugurates his deconstruction of morality with an intentionally disturbing query: What if moral goodness were not the telos of the human capacity for splendor and accomplishment but rather, its nemesis? "What if a symptom of regression were inherent in the 'good,' likewise a danger, a seduction, a poison, a narcotic, through which the present was possibly living at the expense of the future?" 2 6 In short, what if morality is not a spur to great human achievements but a strangulation of them? Nietzsche traces these possibilities by hypothesizing morality "as consequence, as symptom, as mask, as tartufferie, as illness, as misunderstanding, but also morality as cause, as remedy, as stimulant, as restraint, as poison. "27 Through a weave of etymological, demographic, literary, and historical fragments, Nietzsche conjures a genealogy of morality that begins with the historical inversion of an aristocratic equation of power with truth, goodness, beauty, happiness, and piety. This ancient equation Nietzsche endorses for its homage to "the noble instincts of man." In his telling, the equation is inverted through "the slave revolt in morality," a 2,000-year-old and -long revolt accompanying the birth of Western civilization, "which we no longer see because it--has been victorious .. , The slave revolt in morality begins when ressentiment itself becomes creative and gives birth to values: the ressentiment of natures that are deemed the true reaction, that of deeds, and compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge." In his insistence that morality springs from and compensates powerlessness, Nietzsche challenges the Marxist thesis that all ideology, including ethical and moral codes, issues from class divisions to legitimate the power of the privileged. In Nietzsche's account, morality emerges from the powerless to avenge their incapacity for action; it enacts their resentment of strengths that they cannot match or overthrow. Rather than a codification of domination, moral ideas are a critique of a certain kind of power, a complaint against strength, an effort to shame and discredit domination by securing the ground of the true and the good from which to (negatively) judge it. In this way, of course, morality itself becomes a power, a weapon (which is how it eventually triumphs), although this expression of the "will to power" is far from the sort Nietzsche savors or respects: power born of weakness and resentment fashions a culture whose values and ambitions mirror the pettiness of its motivating force. Moreover, ressentiment’s acquisition of power is facilitated by what Nietzsche terms the overdeveloped quality of its cleverness; it ascends to power through its cultivation of reason-an "imaginary revenge" taken in lieu of "the true reaction, that of deeds." Because ressentiment reacts, needs a hostile external world in order to exist at all, and is preoccupied with discerning and discrediting the nature of what it seeks to undercut, "a race of such men of ressentiment is bound to become eventually cleverer than any noble race; it will also honor cleverness to a far greater degree: namely, as a condition of existence of the first importance.” Nietzsche means to be telling a generic story about the West and especially about modernity, a story in which "slave morality" has triumphed so completely that "we have lost our love for man," "we are weary of man''-this, and not Nietzsche's analysis, betokens "the true nihilism of our age." I want to suggest that much North Atlantic feminism partakes deeply of both the epistemological spirit and political structure of ressentiment and that this constitutes a good deal of our nervousness about moving toward an analysis as thoroughly Nietzschean in its wariness about truth as postfoundational political theory must be. Surrendering epistemological foundations means giving up the ground of specifically moral claims against domination-especially the avenging of strength through moral critique of it-and moving instead into the domain of the sheerly political: "wars of position'' and amoral contests about the just and the good in which truth is always grasped as coterminous with power, as always already power, as the voice of power3 -' In William Connoloy’s words, overcoming the demand for epistemological foundations does not foreclose ethics but opens up alternative ethical possibilities. '4 Apparently lacking confidence in our capacity to work and prevail in such domains of the political and the ethical feminism appears extremely hesitant about this move. This hesitation is evident first in the feminist worry that postmodern theories of discourse "reduce all discourse to rhetoric. ... allowing no distinction between reason and power. " Presumably, the objection here lies not in the discernment of power, even violence, in discourse itself-most feminists work assiduously at just such discernments-but to the reduction of all discourse to rhetoric, to the insistence on the will to power in all of reason's purveyors, ourselves included. Consider Nancy Hartsock's "need to be assured that some systematic [ undistorted or power-free?] knowledge about our world and ourselves is possible ... ,, Now for the morally superior position issuing from ressentiment to ''work," reason must drape itself in powerlessness or dispossession: it attacks by differentiating itself from the political-ontological nature of what it criticizes, by adopting the stance of reason against power, or, in Marx's case, by adopting scientific objectivity against power’s inherent cloaking in ideology. Thus, this desire for accounts of knowledge that position us outside of power would appear to be rooted in the need to make power answer to reason/morality and to prohibit demands tor accountability in the opposite direction. In Nietzsche's telling, the supreme strategy of morality based in ressentiment-the source of its triumph over two thousand years—is denial that it has an involvement with power, that it contains a will to power or seeks to (pre)dominate. There is no more vivid historical illustration of morality’s dependence upon a discursive boundary between truth and power than Plato's attempt to distinguish Socrates from his rivals, the Sophists, by contrasting Socrates' ostensible devotion to truth for its own sake with the Sophists' practice of openly consorting with political interests. In this picture, the impoverished, purely philosophical, and formally powerless Socrates is presented as uncontaminated by power interests or power desires; his life and utterances are cast by Plato as "moral" and "true'' because they are not directly hinged to political power, indeed, because philosophy is "out of power." Not surprisingly, Socrates becomes Nietzsche's prime example of (plebeian) ressentiment--"One chooses dialectic only when one has no other means .... Is dialectic only a form of revenge in Socrates?"37 A contemporary feminist instance of the Platonic strategy for legitimizing "our truth" through its relation to worldly powerlessness, and discrediting ''theirs" through its connection to power, is again provided by Hartsock. Arguing that there can or must be an "epistemological base" such that knowledge of "how the world really works" is possible, she declares: Those (simply) critical of modernity can call into question whether we ever really knew the world (and a good case can be made that "they" at least did not). They are in fact right that they have not known the world as it is rather than as they wished and needed it to be; they created their world not only in their own image but in the image of their fantasies. 3H In this account, powerlessness is implicitly invested in the Truth while power inherently distorts. Truth is always on the side of the damned or the excluded; hence Truth is always clean of power, bur therefore also always positioned to reproach power. On the other hand, according to Hartsock, "the vision available to the rulers will be both partial and will reverse the real order of things. "39 What would be required for us to live and work politically without such myths, without claiming that our knowledge is uncorrupted by a will to power, without insisting that our truths are less partial and more moral than "theirs"? Could we learn to contest domination with the strength of an alternative vision of collective life, rather than through moral reproach? In a word, could we develop a feminist politics without ressentiment?

#### We don’t call for an abandonment of indigenous identity, but not attaching a value in history as a formulation with identity, which is key to value of life

Brown 1995 [Wendy, Professor of Political Science at Berkeley, *States of Injury*, pp. 74-76]

What might be entailed in transforming these investments in an effort to fashion a more radically democratic and emancipatory political culture? One avenue of exploration may lie in Nietzsche's counsel on the virtues of "forgetting," for if identity structured in part by ressentiment resubjugates itself through its investment in its own pain, through its refusal to make itself in the present, memory is the house of this activity and this refusal. Yet erased histories and historical invisibility are themselves such integral elements of the pain inscribed in most subjugated identities that the counsel of forgetting, at least in its unreconstructed Nietzschean form, seems inappropriate if not cruel 41 Indeed, it is also possible that we have reached a pass where we ought to part with Nietzsche, whose skills as diagnostician often reach the limits of their political efficacy in his privileging of individual character and capacity over the transformative possibilities of collective political invention, in his remove from the refigurative possibilities of political conversation or transformative cultural practices. For if I am right about the problematic of pain installed at the heart of many contemporary contradictory demands for political recognition, all that such pain may long for—more than revenge—is the change to be heard into a certain release, recognized into self-overcoming, incited into possibilities for triumphing over, and hence losing, itself. Our challenge, then, would be to configure a radically democratic political culture that can sustain such a project in its midst without being overtaken by it, a challenge that includes guarding against abetting the steady slide of political into therapeutic discourse, even as we acknowledge the elements of suffering and healing we might be negotiating. What if it were possible to incite a slight shift in the character of political expression and political claims common to much politicized identity? What if we sought to supplant the language of "I am" -with its defensive closure on identity, its insistence on the fixity of position, its equation of social with moral positioning--with the language of "I want this for us"? (This is an "I want" that distinguishes itself from a liberal expression of self-interest by virtue of its figuring of a political or collective good as its desire.) What if we were to rehabilitate the memory of desire within identificatory processes, the moment in desire--either "to have" or "to be"—prior to its wounding?42 What if "wanting to be" or “wanting to have" were taken up as modes of political speech that could destabilize the formulation of identity as fixed position, as entrenchment by history, and as having necessary moral entailments, even as they affirm “position" and "history" as that which makes the speaking subject intelligible and locatable, as that which contributes to a hermeneutics for adjudicating desires? If every “I am'' is something of a resolution of the movement of desire into fixed and sovereign identity; then this project might involve not only learning to speak but to read "l am" this way: as potentially in motion, as temporal, as not-I, as deconstructable according to a genealogy of want rather than as fixed interests or experiences. 43 The subject understood as an effect of an (ongoing) genealogy of desire, including the social processes constitutive of, fulfilling, or frustrating desire, is in this way revealed as neither sovereign nor conclusive even as it is affirmed as an "I.'' In short, if framed in a political language, this deconstruction could be that which reopens a desire for futurity where Nietzsche saw it foreclosed by the logics of rancor and ressentiment. Such a slight shift in the character of the political discourse of identity eschews the kinds of ahistorical or utopian turns against identity politics made by a nostalgic and broken humanist Left as well as the reactionary and disingenuous assaults on politicized identity tendered by the Right. Rather than opposing or seeking to transcend identity investments, the replacement-even the admixture-of the language of "being" with "wanting" would seek to exploit politically a recovery of the more expansive moments in the genealogy of identity formation, a recovery of the moment prior to its own foreclosure against its want, prior to the point at which its sovereign subjectivity is established through such foreclosure and through eternal repetition of its pain. How might democratic discourse itself be invigorated by such a shift from ontological claims to these kinds of more expressly political ones, claims that, rather than dispensing blame for an unlivable present, inhabited a necessarily agonistic theater of discursively forging an alternative future?