# Case

#### biopolitical governance at the level of the population is necessary to improve the quality of life. disadvantaged populations have the most to gain from the use of progressive governmenality like the case.

Ken BOOTH IR @ Aberystwyth ‘7 Theory of World Security p. 132-133

Daryl Glaser. a scholar from South Africa, and therefore somebody directly familiar with life in a state that was once committed to institutionalised racism, has offered an important counter to the Bauman thesis and the simplistic interhnkinil by postmodern writers of the Holocaust and modernimJ°" In a book written a decade after Mandela's release, Glaser argued that it was not the surveillance, statistics, and regulation that were the aspects of Nazi behaviour demanding attention. Nor was it the 'lawfulness, planning, bureaucratic regulation or the professionalisation of knowledge' that fed into Nazi racial policies. That is, Glaser claimed that the features of modernity showcased by the Bauman thesis were not what demanded attention; rather, it was the 'institutionalisation of a racial hierarchy of wealth, status and power, enforced by repressive, often arbitrary state authority, assisted by bad laws'. What was wrong in Nazi Germany (and in apartheid South Africa) was not 'modernity', but laws and politics that served ideas of racial superiority - a prejudice that was directly contrary to 'modern ideals like social justice'. Modernity for Glaser delivered ideas of social justice to South Africa, while its modalities in the form of statistics and regulation, and so on constituted the very means by which illiteracy could be overcome, and the health of the disadvantaged improved.

Rejecting the logic and political implications of the Bauman thesis, Glaser advocated 'more and better law, effectively enforced, and more "scientific" information about the condition of the people, not less of these "modern" goods'. His view was that the people(s) of post- apartheid South Africa were in a better position than in the recent past albeit still a perilous one, because the oppressed had identified with modernity's ideas of tolerance and equality, and had found solidarity in the global human rights supporters. Social development (improved literacy and better health), he stressed, requires planning, profession- alised knowledge, and other modalities of modernity - not their rejection. What Glaser called the 'organisational machinery of "modernity" to give effect to "modern" ideas like social justice' 107 does not guarantee the security and hence prospects for emancipation for South Africa's peoples, but it does give them hope.105

The idea of progress is not what it was, but is more useful as a result. It should never be considered as part of nature's plan for history, or pursued with hubris, but always with reflexivity The ideals of emancipation that inform progressive politics are guides for judgement and action; without them societies will replicate structural and other oppressions, and humanity will never be what it might become.

#### Change and survival are key to avoid passivity and ressentiment

May 5 (Todd, Professor of Philosophy at Clemson University, September 2005, “To change the world, to celebrate life,” Philosophy & Social Criticism, Vol. 31, No. 5-6)

For those among us who seek in philosophy a way to grapple with our lives rather than to solve logical puzzles; for those whose reading and whose writing are not merely appropriate steps toward academic advancement but a struggle to see ourselves and our world in a fresher, clearer light; for those who find nourishment among impassioned ideas and go hungry among empty truths: there is a struggle that is often waged within us. It is a struggle that will be familiar to anyone who has heard in Foucault’s sentences the stammering of a fellow human being struggling to speak in words worth hearing. Why else would we read Foucault? We seek to conceive what is wrong in the world, to grasp it in a way that offers us the possibility for change. We know that there is much that is, to use Foucault’s word, ‘intolerable’. There is much that binds us to social and political arrangements that are oppressive, domineering, patronizing, and exploitative. We would like to understand why this is and how it happens, in order that we may prevent its continuance. In short, we want our theories to be tools for changing the world, for offering it a new face, or at least a new expression. There is struggle in this, struggle against ideas and ways of thinking that present themselves to us as inescapable. We know this struggle from Foucault’s writings. It is not clear that he ever wrote about anything else. But this is not the struggle I want to address here. For there is, on the other hand, another search and another goal. They lie not so much in the revisioning of this world as in the embrace of it. There is much to be celebrated in the lives we lead, or in those led by others, or in the unfolding of the world as it is, a world resonant with the rhythms of our voices and our movements. We would like to understand this, too, to grasp in thought the elusive beauty of our world. There is, after all, no other world, except, as Nietzsche taught, for those who would have created another one with which to denigrate our own. In short, we would like our thought to celebrate our lives. To change the world and to celebrate life. This, as the theologian Harvey Cox saw, is the struggle within us.1 It is a struggle in which one cannot choose sides; or better, a struggle in which one must choose both sides. The abandonment of one for the sake of the other can lead only to disaster or callousness. Forsaking the celebration of life for the sake of changing the world is the path of the sad revolutionary. In his preface to Anti-Oedipus, Foucault writes that one does not have to be sad in order to be revolutionary. The matter is more urgent than that, however. One cannot be both sad and revolutionary. Lacking a sense of the wondrous that is already here, among us, one who is bent upon changing the world can only become solemn or bitter. He or she is focused only on the future; the present is what is to be overcome. The vision of what is not but must come to be overwhelms all else, and the point of change itself becomes lost. The history of the left in the 20th century offers numerous examples of this, and the disaster that attends to it should be evident to all of us by now. The alternative is surely not to shift one’s allegiance to the pure celebration of life, although there are many who have chosen this path. It is at best blindness not to see the misery that envelops so many of our fellow humans, to say nothing of what happens to sentient nonhuman creatures. The attempt to jettison world-changing for an uncritical assent to the world as it is requires a self-deception that I assume would be anathema for those of us who have studied Foucault. Indeed, it is anathema for all of us who awaken each day to an America whose expansive boldness is matched only by an equally expansive disregard for those we place in harm’s way. This is the struggle, then. The one between the desire for life-celebration and the desire for world-changing. The struggle between reveling in the contingent and fragile joys that constitute our world and wresting it from its intolerability. I am sure it is a struggle that is not foreign to anyone who is reading this. I am sure as well that the stakes for choosing one side over another that I have recalled here are obvious to everyone. The question then becomes one of how to choose both sides at once.

Extra-legalism creates the “myth of activism” – eroding any possibility for actual reform

Orly Lobel ‘7 -- Professor of Law @ University of San Diego, “The Paradox of Extralegal Activism Critical Legal Consciousness and Transformative Politics” Harvard Law Review, Vol. 120, 2007

At this point, the paradox of extralegal activism unfolds. While public interest thinkers increasingly embrace an axiomatic rejection of law as the primary form of progress, their preferred form of activism presents the very risks they seek to avoid. The rejected “myth of the law” is replaced by a “myth of activism” or a “myth of exit,” romanti- cizing a distinct sphere that can better solve social conflict. Yet these myths, like other myths, come complete with their own perpetual perils. The myth of exit exemplifies the myriad concerns of cooptation. For feminist agendas, for example, the separation of the world into distinct spheres of action has been a continuous impediment to meaning- ful reform. Efforts to create better possibilities for women to balance work and family responsibilities, including relaxing home work rules and supporting stay-at-home parents through federal child care legisla- tion, have been couched in terms of support for individual choice and private decisionmaking.173 Indeed, recent initiatives in federal child care legislation to support stay-at-home parents have been clouded by preconceptions of the separation of spheres and the need to make one- or-the-other life choices. Most importantly, the emergence of a sphere- oriented discourse abandons a critical perspective that distinguishes between valuing traditional gender-based characteristics and celebrat- ing feminine difference in a universalist and essentialist manner.174 Not surprisingly then, some feminist writers have responded to civil society revivalism with great skepticism, arguing that efforts to align feminine values and agendas with classic republican theory of civil so- ciety activism should be understood, at least in part, as a way of le- gitimizing historical social structures that subordinated women.175 The feminist lesson on the law/exit pendulum reveals a broader pattern. In a classic example of cooptation, activists should be con- cerned about the infusion (or indeed confusion) of nonlegal strategies with conservative privatization agendas. Indeed, in significant social policy contexts, legal scholarship oriented toward the exploration of ex- tralegal paths reinforces the exact narrative that it originally resisted — that the state cannot and should not be accountable for sustaining and improving the lifeworld of individuals in the twenty-first-century economy and that we must seek alternative ways to bring about social reform. Whether using the terminology of a path-dependent process, an inevitable downward spiral, a transnational prisoner’s dilemma, or a global race to the bottom, current analyses often suggest a lack of control over the forces of new economic realities. Rather than counter- ing the story of lack of control, pointing to the ongoing role of gov- ernment and showing the contradictions between that which is being kept regulated and that which is privatized, alternative extralegal scholarship accepts these developments as natural and inevitable. Similar to the arguments developed in relation to the labor movement — in which focusing on a limited right to collective bargaining demo- bilized workers and stripped them of their voice, participation, and de- cisionmaking power — contemporary extralegal agendas are limited to very narrow and patterned sets of reforms.

### Reformism Good

#### Using pedagogical institutions to make prescriptions for change prevents docile acceptance of oppression. Evaluating the likely consequences of our prescriptions shapes successful social change.

Susan Carle, Law @ American University, 2005 (“Theorizing Agency.” 55 Am. U.L. Rev. 307 lexis)

Precisely because he believed in the power of human agency, Dewey devoted a great deal of his writing to developing prescriptions for change in response to the issues of his times. It is worth quickly surveying some of those prescriptions here because they help illuminate the relationship between Dewey’s theory of the self and his overall philosophic system. Dewey’s deliberative theory ties elegantly into his theory of democracy, which in turn displays an ascetically pleasing “fit”274 with his pedagogical vision. Dewey’s political theory is a large topic, to which he devoted much writing but to which I can give only passing attention. Suffice it to say that Dewey passionately believed in the virtues of democracy; indeed, Dewey scholars have described democracy as Dewey’s deepest preoccupation— the underlying passion that motivated him in his prolific output.275 Unlike philosophers such as John Rawls, however, Dewey uncoupled democracy from the institutions of Western capitalism, and was intensely critical of capitalism as he saw it developing in his lifetime. To Dewey, capitalism spelled economic inequality, which was anathema to his vision of democracy based in local deliberative processes.276 Dewey saw education as the process through which children would acquire the habits that would allow them to become members of a democracy, well equipped for the kind of reflective thought and deliberation that democracy required.277 Thus, education was for Dewey a fundamental method of social progress and reform.278 For this reason, Dewey, unlike most modern philosophers, gave pedagogy a central place in his philosophy. Dewey saw education as the scientific laboratory in which the ideas of pragmatism would be put to the test of experience.279 To Dewey, the ability to engage in good deliberative judgment—to exercise clear foresight on ethical as well as instrumental matters—was a habit that could and should be cultivated through education. Thus Dewey thought that education should not be a “succession of studies but the development of new attitudes towards, and new interests in, experience.”280 No relativist on matters concerning his own place and time, Dewey denounced the “inert stupid quality of current customs,” which “perverts learning into a willingness to follow where others point the way, into conformity, constriction, surrender of scepticism and experiment.”281 In lieu of teaching to new generations habits that represent such “enslavement to old ruts,”282 Dewey wanted to inculcate better habits—“flexible, sensitive” ones that could grow “more varied, more adaptable by practice and use.”283 These, in turn, were the habits Dewey identified as necessary for democracy to succeed. Here, the contrasts with Stanley Fish are stark. Fish, as we have seen, argues that teaching methods of critical analysis to students does not change practice outside the classroom.284 Practice in the world outside the classroom and the doing of theory proceed on two unrelated planes. Dewey, conversely, repudiated the separation of theory and practice as a false dualism, arguing that those who espouse theory for theory’s sake are in fact espousing “two kinds of practice.”285 Moreover, he argued, “[t]hose who wish a monopoly of social power find desirable the separation of habit and thought” because this “dualism enables them to do the thinking and planning, while others remain the docile . . . instruments of execution.”286 Thus, for Dewey, theory was a form of practice in the world that had great potential to fuel political and social change, and the decision to do and teach theory as a practice separate from political and social issues was a political decision with particular normative consequences—namely, the promotion of political disengagement and apathy.287

#### Reality and law are coproductive. Changing our thinking about law helps to reconstitute the material realities that we live in. The K implies an impossible immutable position outside law.

Jane Baron, Law @ Temple – Beasley School of Law, 2003 (“Romancing the Real.” 57 U. Miami L. Rev. 573 lexis)

Yet, imagine that what Gordon said were true. There would be an easily discernable point to doing what we legal academics (and isn't Schlag one of us?) do. If legal conceptions and the social world were connected in some way, then thinking about law would also be a way of thinking about the material world, and trying to change the way we think about law - for instance, to use my earlier example, trying to convince people that property need not be modeled on ownership but on obligation - would be a way of trying to change the material world. Questioning what legal doctrine foregrounds and backgrounds, n46 revealing "nested oppositions" in legal rules, n47 and all manner of similar analyses [\*587] of the patterns and structure of standard legal argumentation, including the kinds of analyses Schlag himself has so often performed (consider The Empty Circles of Liberal Justification n48), would, or could, at least potentially be useful; if we could see and make others see how we ourselves artificially "froze" reality, we could unfreeze it. n49 At the very least, we could begin to think about changing it because we would no longer be victims of belief in reality's immutability. n50 Twenty-plus years of engaging in various versions of this practice have revealed how much more complicated all this is than it originally seemed. From Stanley Fish we learned how silly it might be to envision standing outside one's own structures of belief in order to change them. n51 From feminists and critical race theorists we learned that "we" might not be "we," but multiple intersecting and overlapping "we's" with potentially differing interests and engagements. n52 From law and society folks we learned to question whether there was any relation between lawyers' and judges' ideas about law and actual social practices; if there was little relation to begin with, changes in legal consciousness (even if "we" could actually effect such changes) would be unlikely to have much impact on everyday behaviors. n53 None of this proves that legal change and social change are impossible, only that effecting social change through law is considerably more difficult and chancy than first had been thought. One could see, however, why it might be worth trying to solve (or work around) the problems: thinking about law would still be a way - perhaps now a more nuanced, humbled way - of trying to fix what was wrong with the world. This strategy would not work, of course, if "the world" is intractably out there, isolated from and immune to thought. That is exactly as Schlag presents the world in those excerpts and in the lists culled from them. The question is why, knowing better - that is, having no illusions about a pure factuality unmediated by perspective or shaping - Schlag would choose to portray "reality" that way.

#### Without specific detailed description of how the alt can work towards solutions you should be highly skeptical of their critique

**Bryant 12** ( levi, prof of philosophy at Collins college, Critique of the Academic Left, http://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2012/11/11/underpants-gnomes-a-critique-of-the-academic-left/)

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

# Genealogy K

#### Perm do both—we are a focus on past violence, but also a forward move

In the context of indigenous politics, focus on the past distracts from dealing with today's problems – as evidenced by the affirmative's failure to present a plan

Tate 81 MICHAEL L. TATE, Associate Professor of History, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Government Publications Review, Vol. 8App. 499-518,198l RED POWER: GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS AND THE RISING INDIAN ACTIVISM OF THE 1970s http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/0196335X81901175

Given the forceful nature and antiestablishment philosophy of the Red Power Movement it is understandable that many Americans of the 1970s reentered their periodic love affair with the “Noble Red Man.” Books of varying quality reached best seller’ lists by recounting examples of disgraceful government treatment of Indians during the nineteenth century and resurrecting the poetic speeches allegedly made by great Indian chiefs long ago. But even in this new popularization of the Indian image, the same old mistaken orientation was perpetuated as historians and the non-Indian public continued to dwell on the past rather than on the present. Vine Deloria, Jr., a Standing Rock Sioux and author of the highly successful Custer Died for Your Sins, chided scholars and the public for this misplaced focus when he wrote in 1976:

It is imperative that Indian history move immediately into this century, whether or not historians consider the twentieth century to be history. We are fast approaching the final decades of this century, and we have been without any discernible Indian policy since 1958, when termination was practically abandoned by the Interior Department. Since that time, both Congress and the executive branch have operated on an ad-hoc, let’s-put-out-the-fire basis which has served neither the federal government nor the Indians but has only postponed the solution of longstanding problems. When one gets a good perspective on the twentieth century, then the nature of these problems is illuminated so that the problems which plague Indians are seen as indications of a long process of change of cultural and economic forms which repeat basic patterns over and over again [l].

#### ‘GENEALOGY MISSES THE POINT AND REPLICATES ITS OWN PROBLEMS—CREATING A HIERARCHIZED AND REGIMENTED DISCIPLINE

Jacqueline **Stevens**, Istanbul Bilgi University, “On the Morals of Genealogy,” POLITICAL THEORY v. 31 n. 4, August 20**03**, [www.lawso.ucsb.edu/documents/jstevens\_Genealogy.pdf](http://www.lawso.ucsb.edu/documents/jstevens_Genealogy.pdf), accessed 6/21/06.

What does the past mean to us? Why do we value it? How ought we to pursue our questions about the past? For the last few decades, Foucault has given us the answers, solutions that seem both obvious and difficult. The pro­liferation of works calling themselves “genealogical” and acknowledging their debt to Foucault suggests his lessons (e.g., Foucault [1969] 1972a, [1971] 1977a, [1976] 1980) have been taken to heart. While Foucault’s insights took a while to gain acceptance, his many initiates now do genealogy instead of history. But then again, when we look at what has been learned, the matter seems unhappily unsettled, with genealogists far more anxious and defensive than one might expect among associates in a gay science. While the genealogical form remains fashionably that of a counter-narrative—notwith­standing the high status of its practitioners in various disciplines—the actual substance of this endeavor remains rather murky despite its aherents’ efforts to elucidate. Consider the reams of paper devoted to distinguishing Foucauldian “genealogy” from his “archaeology,” amid the strong suspicion that the difference amounts only to a shift in vocabulary, not method.1 As a consequence of Foucault’s influence, one can now list hundreds of books and articles whose authors pursue a “genealogy” and not a “history” of this or that.2 So, we might now ask: What does a genealogy mean to us? What is the value of a genealogy? How ought we to pursue questions about geneal­ogies? The quick answer first. We value genealogies for political resistance, aesthetic criticism, and rote professionalization. No serious student of cul­tural studies today would do a “history of X” and not its genealogy for her dis­sertation. The fad indicates nothing especially insidious about cultural stud­ies or the linguistic turn in parts of the academy, but amounts to one more disciplining convention. Far less insistent or hegemonic than, say, the requirement of rational choice theory or behavioral studies in the social sci­ences, the prevalence of a Foucauldian lexicon in the humanities calls atten­tion to itself precisely because of its advocates’general reluctance to impose orthodoxies. The problem with the success of Foucault’s method is not its opacity or relativism, as conservative critics of Foucault carp, but rather that it holds forth its own specialized jargon that turns out to be belied by its own intellectual history, leading to strained readings and analyses that at times mirror the pointless, obsessive methodism in other fields.

# Puar

#### Perm do both—better accesses politics of assemblage

#### Queerness shouldn’t abandon the politics—the problem is the Christian right

**Brenkman** **2002** (John Brenkman, Distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature at the CUNY Graduate Center and Baruch College, 2002, Narrative, Vol. 10, No. 2, p. 190-191)

I have not tried to offer a more optimistic (or futurist) assessment of the gay struggle than Edelman, though he has construed my remarks in that way; his essay very pointedly conveyed a sense of the ongoing ordeal of gays in American society and a pessimism regarding inaction on the AIDS crisis, domestic partner rights, and anti-gay violence and the persistence of repressive restrictions on sexual freedom. I have also not challenged his criticism of the figure of the child as futurity, because I find it is very persuasive. So, too, Edelman offers a compelling interpretation of homophobia in his delineation of how this discourse figures the child as future in order to make the queer the figure of the death and jouissance, of the negativity, that haunts all (normalizing) fantasies of the sexual relation and sexual identity. What I have challenged is the claim that this discourse defines, or even dominates, the political realm as such. It is the discourse of conservative Catholicism and Christian fundamentalism, and even though it resonates in strands of liberal discourse, it represents an intense reaction, backlash, against changes that have already taken place in American the gay and lesbian movement. society, many of them as the direct result of feminism and the gay and lesbian movement. It is indeed important not to underestimate the depth and danger of this reaction, but it is a reactionary, not a foundational, discourse. The uncoupling of sexuality and reproduction is ubiquitous in American culture today as a result of multiple developments beyond the expansion of gay rights and the right to abortion, including birth control, divorce, and changing patterns of family life, as well as consumerism and mass culture; it may well be that the sheer scope, and irreversibility, all of these developments also intensifies the targeting of gays by conservative ideology and Christian fundamentalist movements. But that is all the more reason to recognize that the deconstruction of the phobic figuration of the queer is a struggle to be pursued inside as well as outside politics.

K oversimplifies, shouldn’t have particular prior questions.

Tomlinson 13 [Barbara Tomlinson, Department of Feminist Studies, University of California, Santa Barbara, To Tell the Truth and Not Get Trapped: Desire, Distance, and Intersectionality at the Scene of Argument, Signs, Vol. 38, No. 4, Summer 2013]

Many critics approach intersectionality carelessly, however, through metacommentary and complaint and through recommendations to bring its radical critique under control by advocating recourse to specific disciplinary methods—without acknowledging that such methods may have long been criticized for their service to dominant discourses. Critics assume that their task is to critique intersectionality, not to foster intersectionality’s ability to critique subordination. The rhetorical frameworks and tropes examined here misrepresent the history and arguments of intersectionality, treat it as a unitary entity rather than an analytic tool used across a range of disciplines, distort its arguments, engage in presentist analytics, reduce intersectionality’s radical critique of power to desires for identity and inclusion, and offer a deradicalized intersectionality as an asset for dominant disciplinary discourses. The frequent use of such argumentative strategies truncates our ability to consider clearly potential concepts of intersectionality. It also hobbles the development of feminist and antiracist arguments. Rather than generating new challenges, these critiques of intersectionality often structure themselves through conceptual binaries that have long been criticized for oversimplifying the complex, dialogic, flexible, and even contradictory relations inherent to arguments about antisubordination. They repeatedly present “strains of particularism versus univeralism, personal narrative versus grand theory, identity-based versus structural, static versus dynamic, parochial versus cosmopolitan, underdeveloped versus sophisticated, old versus new, race versus class, US versus Europe, and so on” (Crenshaw 2011b, 222–23).\

#### **Reject Puar’s analysis—it’s non-falsifiable and not backed up by evidence—queer reformism doesn’t cause Islamophobia**

Sketchy Thoughts 8 Queer and prison rights activist and publisher from Montreal; “Jasbir Puar's Homonationalism Talk: A Real Disappointment” *Sketchy Thoughts*; November 6, 2008; http://sketchythoughts.blogspot.com/2008/11/jasbir-puars-homonationalism-talk-real.html

¶ In fact, without drawing any distinctions, acknowledging any other forms of solidarity activism, or providing any other examples to back up her charge, Puar accused the "Islamophobic Gay Left" of being complicit with imperialism, point finale. Rather than explain this in terms of political dynamics or material forces in the real world, without looking at the history/herstory that got us to this point, Puar stated that this imperialist bent was "constitutive" of queer identity as it has been constructed. (That she has also stated that "the rise of queer" is contingent, or dependent, on the rise of racism should be noted. Whether this is a contradiction in her thought, or a paradox she needs to explore, i do not know.)¶ While there were a lot of esoteric catchphrases summing up the whys and hows of this, there was nothing - nada, zilch - in the way of actual historical or political explanations. It seems this judgment on a terrain of struggle was the product of a lot of mental energy and pure logic, no actual practical experience necessary. That would just get in the way.¶ Essentially, stripped of the post-Deleuzian windowdressings, what i think i understood was (1) queer activism replicates some forms of oppression, especially around "race" and religious identity, (2) the queer tradition of being transgressive creates as its flipside the framing of the cultural or racial "other" as being the real transgressor/pervert, and the proof that these "facts" lead queerness to be pro-imperialist is (3) that imperialism really loves imperial homos theseadays.¶ In scattershot order:¶ (1) OF COURSE queer activism replicates other forms of oppression. All activity replicates most parts of the dominant culture, to some degree or another. Inactivity also replicates forms of oppression, in spades. The question those of us who actually want to change the real-and-existing world have to ask ourselves is, how can we frame our activity in a way that minimizes the bad shit, while putting ourselves in a good position to deal with problems as they arise. As a priority, those of us who hope for revolution need to break social movements away from the state while orienting them - and ourselves - constantly towards the most oppressed layers of society.¶ This may be what Puar means when she insists on the importance of intersectionality and assemblages, but acknowledging that people are oppressed in many different ways should not be used as an excuse to abstain from organizing around one specific form of oppression. Avoiding activism altogether certainly doesn't extricate you from oppressive social relations, either; it simply makes you dull and complicit.¶ (3) Imperialism Loves Imperial Homos. We've all noticed this. It was news several years ago, it's old hat now. There has been a sea change in popular representations of and (to a lesser degree) attitudes towards queers over the past twenty years. The LBGTIAetc. movement has become co-opted in step with its anxiety about adding letters to its acronym. The racist right-wing leadership of the movement is happy to front for imperialist crimes and doesn't actually give a shit about the most oppressed queers.¶ PLEASE! Tell us something we don't know!¶ Again, these are arguments in favour of activism, not against it. Activism against the movement leadership, perhaps, though more often than not simply engaging in militant activism with an eye to challenging all forms of oppression will be enough to make the old leadership irrelevant. The leadership is held by conservatives because there is a vacuum radicals are not filling.¶ (2) Queer Transgressivity Is Bad??? If there was a logical proof that traditions of queer transgression were to blame for the oppressive othering of imperialism's victims, i didn't get it. Saying it's so doesn't make it so, you have to show me why and how this mechanism works. Seriously, i'd be interested.¶ When one says - to give an example - that the condition of the labour aristocracy is dependent on the exploitation of the Third World proletariat, one can show numbers, trade balances, statistics regarding wages, displacement, and wealth produced or extracted. If you really want you can go down to the port in Old Montreal and see the wealth come in on container ships, or you can travel up to James Bay and see the hydroelectric dams fueling this economy and devastating Indigenous land. It's visible, it's material, and it's not shrouded in mystery. You can then disagree with the argument by marshaling your own facts, but you have to do so, because its a debate based on things really happening.¶ This is just an example, to show the method by which a political claim needs to be backed up.¶ The same method, the same standard of proof, needs to apply if you want to blame "queer transgressions" in the metropole for the horrors of Abu Ghraib. Show me how. Because my gut feeling is that the "transgressiveness" which results from traditions of being queer, or from myriad other traditions and ontologies (hey look, i can use those silly words too!), creates a space that makes people approachable by our side more than the system.¶ Sure, the ways people feel they don't belong or don't fit in can be - and are - exploited by the system to create insecurity, market niches and capitalist cures; but these same disatisfactions can be bound to liberation movements by theories which link one's unhappiness to the unhappiness of others.¶ More to the point, the desire to offend - which can definitely be oppressive - has to be judged in terms of who is being offended and who is doing the offending. When Salman Rushdie offended a generation of Muslim conservatives with his book The Satanic Verses, he did something - as a Muslim man, as a leftist, as a freethinker - incredibly dangerous and also fundamentally legitimate. As a "cultural worker", as an author, he was operating within a tradition of making the world a better place. When Bill Maher made his movie Religulous, clearly hoping to offend Protestants and Muslims around the world, he simply reinforced racist ideas about Muslims and urban liberal snobbery about those funny backwards born agains. As a "cultural worker", as a comedian, he was operating within a tradition of flattering the oppressor and legitimizing his violence. You don't need a degree in discursive analysis to see the difference in their intent and general orientation.¶ So why is it sometimes liberatory to offend people?¶ Being offended means being shocked, in an unpleasant way. We all internalize a lot of oppressive attitudes, not least amongst them being complacency towards what is happening in the world. We incorporate attitudes and beliefs bit by bit, without being aware of it. We are offended when we are confronted with a position or argument framed in a way that we can't ignore, and also can't assimilate without doing violence to previously held beliefs or identities. It's like a slap in the face.¶ Offending people can be oppressive, and being constantly offended is a way in which someone may be oppressed. But, for better or for worse, on a case-by-case basis it needs to be proven, not just stated, that this is oppression, and not just discomfort. Because when previously held beliefs are unexamined, when we adopted them unthinkingly, being offended is sometimes a necessary first step to force us to re-examine them. It may be unpleasant, but that doesn't mean it's always unwarranted.¶ Why is there such a connection between certain cultural traditions - not only the queer tradition, but so many others, from the blues to punk rock, from the dadaists to the women's liberation movement - and the penchant to offend?¶ Well, there's two parts of it.¶ On the one hand, it's undeniable that offending people can constitute a kind of acting out, an attention-getting mechanism, which may seem cathartic for the person doing it but really just amounts to an immature attempt to get the father-figure to notice you. So it can be dumb.¶ But more positively, many of us are oppressed by invisible conventions and codes which rely on their very invisibility for their strength. This way they seem natural - boys do this girls do that, such and such a part of the body is "private" and should remain covered, children are to be seen and not heard. Furthermore, many forms of abuse and oppression come with a smile - the steady psychic assault is accompanied by soothing words that there's nothing to worry about, it's all being done in the name of "love" (or community, or morals, or whatever). There is no polite way to effectively challenge this sick mindfuck, because the very form of being polite legitimizes these assumptions as being natural. Being offensive then acts as a declaration of war, getting the real relationship out in the open, forcing things off the terrain of politeness the oppressor sometimes depends upon. Because there is no protocol or etiquette that can contain liberation.¶ When oppression does not merely occur within the private sphere, but depends on the fact of privacy to draw its strength, being loud will always mean being offensive. And it will also be the best weapon in the psychological arsenal of the oppressed.¶ Certainly, in the case of queers, we have that tradition of transgression - think Robert Mapplethorpe and Andres Serrano, sure, but don't forget Kuwasi Balagoon, Valerie Solanas or Windi Earthworm - and it formed a constitutive part of queer revolt. That this tradition is a lot less loud than it was twenty years ago, and that it has been replaced by popular culture sensations like Will and Grace and Brokeback Mountain, is plain for all to see. As is the fact that the acceptance of LBGTIAetc. themes in popular culture is part of a broader cultural dynamic that includes the rise of Islamophobia. But the fact that both these things have happened at the same time and are clearly connected is not enough to show cause and effect.

#### **Queer assemblages are politically ineffective**

Goldie 10 Terry, Professor of English, York University; “Queering the Problem” *Reviews in Cultural Theory* vol. 1 no. 2; December 26, 2010; http://www.reviewsinculture.com/?r=50

The intention of this book is obvious and quite simple. Terrorist Assemblages confronts the American tendency post-9/11 to see terrorists under every bed and often in every bed. Jasbir Puar attacks the racist underpinnings of counter-terrorism, the heteronormativity of American “ethnic” groups who try to assert that they are not terrorists, and the homonormativity of gay and lesbian groups who try to assert that they are just as proudly American as anyone else who hates terrorists.¶ The intention is simple and yet the book itself is extremely complex. One reason for this is suggested by the title. The idea of the assemblage comes from Deleuze. Arguably, the politics of the book are more informed by Foucault’s theories of power and knowledge, but the mode of the book is Deleuzian. A good example is the following section of the preface:¶ The strategy of encouraging subjects of study to appear in all their queernesses, rather than primarily to queer the subjects of study, provides a subject-driven temporality in tandem with a method-driven temporality. Playing on this difference, between the subject being queered and queerness already existing within the subject (and thus dissipating the subject as such), allows for both the temporality of being (ontological essence of the subject) and the temporality of always-becoming (continual ontological emergence, a Deleuzian becoming without being) (xxiv).¶ Many queer theorists are enamored of Deleuze. They enjoy the constant indeterminacy, the determinate inconstancy. As in my last sentence, it leads to an incessant wordplay, a devotion to rhetorical flourish. Note that in the quotation above there are queernesses and things are being queered but there are no queers, much less homosexuals. Deleuzian analyses disintegrate oppression because they destabilize the identities that justify oppression but they also disintegrate identities that provide psychic support. Could anyone use Deleuze to justify a statement such as “I am gay”?¶ Of course in Puar there is no acceptance of such a simple identity. She instead dismisses those who find comfort in it. She disdainfully notes at the beginning of the book that gay pride is now accepted as a part of life by even the most conservative of American writers. She says “the resounding silence of national and mainstream LGBTIQ organizations” on Abu Ghraib resulted because they are “currently obsessed by the gay marriage agenda”(96). Many such organizations just said that Abu Ghraib was not a gay issue, but Puar assumes that gay=queer=opposed to the hegemony of the American state. If sexual diversities are not inherently progressivist then there is something wrong with them.¶ The dismissals in this book are legion, often in a tone such as that with which she confronts “the self-proclaimed political left.” In opposition she asks:¶ What is at stake in defusing queer liberal binaries of assimilation and transgression, secularity and religiosity? If we are to resist resistance, reading against these binaries to foreground a broader array of power affiliations and disaffiliations that are often rife with contradiction should not provide ammunition to chastise, but rather generate greater room for self-reflection, autocritique, and making mistakes (24).¶ The desire to resist resistance is a typical Deleuzian tangle. The call for autocritique implies the kind of navel-gazing that has always plagued the unaligned left. But of course, it is all too seldom one’s own navel that is being critiqued but rather that alarmingly unthinking belly-button on the leftist next to you. I don’t want to be unfair, but in this book Puar seems more self-satisfied than self-reflective. ¶ There are certainly ways in which she has a right to be satisfied. This is an extraordinarily intelligent and well-researched book. She makes splendid use of other thinkers in the field, particularly Sara Ahmed. One of the latter’s observations that Puar explores is the way in which the assurance of the openness of liberal democracy and the closedness of theocracies deny that many experience exactly the opposite. Thus, the theocrat wishes to live openly in a society that does not require him or her to hide from state-sanctioned sin, while the liberal democrat believes that openness requires, if not secularity, at least the acceptance of behaviour that offends religions.¶ Puar offers an extensive consideration of the Texas sodomy ruling. She sees the self-congratulatory gay response as part of homonormativity and notes that few have commented on the fact that Lawrence was white and Garner African-American. She turns to Marion Riggs and others for African-American responses to claims about black homophobia. In the end Puar concludes, “sodomy is and always has been perceived as a ‘racialized act,’ and in the United States it has been adjudicated as such. By racialized act, I mean that the act itself is already read through the raciality of the actors even as it accords raciality to those actors” (132). She justifies this claim by referring to studies that show “differentials of class, age and race as well as migrant sociability in public and private space…shape the policing that leads to sodomy and public morals arrests” (132). Well, yes. But this is true of criminal prosecution in general. One might add that any victimless crime that can take place in privacy is unlikely to be prosecuted. Criminal surveillance tends to note only those “criminals” who are compelled to perform much of their life in public. This does not make sodomy a particularly racialized act any more than any other act that the state perceives to be a crime. Crime is racialized as poverty is racialized.¶ Puar’s easy opposition to all aspects of the hegemonic order is unlikely to increase readers’ agreement with Puar’s book and often will offend those who otherwise might be convinced. Thus she dismisses “public and governmental rage” at the sexual torture at Abu Ghraib because there was no rage “at the slow starvation of millions due to UN sanctions…” (79). Am I just too much of a liberal if I say that this distinction seems to me inevitable? Puar is certainly correct in assuming that the homophobia of the American administration is visible in both the homophobic torture at Abu Ghraib and the apologies that claimed that Muslims are particularly offended by homosexuality. But what does it say about culture that makes homophobia an inevitable tool of the military? Is this just American power or rather homophobic vandalism asserted by the powerless working class, here operating as the military? Puar doesn’t like the adulation of Mathew Shepard as “the quintessential poster boy” (46), but she doesn’t mention the role that class played in the murder of this college kid. The values Puar displays as a queer anti-racist might seem inevitably leftist, but they seldom offer more than a feint towards class.¶ I doubt that there is anyone reading this who disagrees with Puar. She is attacking the things that need to be attacked and supporting those who are wrongly being attacked. If I might introduce a personal note, she is pursuing the same argument I have been presenting for the last few years, in a series of lectures on the uncomfortable connection between “Western” gay cultures and Islamophobia. As both of us note, it seems to be all too easy for gay groups to claim anti-racist philosophies and yet flirt with racism in assertions of pro-Americanism or attacks on Islamic homophobia.¶ But why Islam? Why not fundamentalist Christians, why not those Orthodox rabbis who have spit venom at gay rights? One answer is simple: there are few, if any, states that are considered to be Jewish or Christian that have punitive legislation against homosexuals. Various Islamic states have exactly this. But the more complex explanation is in a sense homonormative. In other words, every time gay culture can find a way in which its purpose is the same as the hegemonic culture, it gains power. Thus if the United States has become an Islamophobic state—and I would argue that under George W. Bush it was exactly that—then it is in the interests of “the gay community” to target those aspects of homophobia that might be associated with Islam.¶ But what if one takes a progressivist approach and suggests that religious homophobia is a pre-modern view that changes as more liberal attitudes triumph? Thus those gay Muslims who can accommodate their sexuality within a certain view of their religion will become the norm, in the same way that gay Christians can now see homophobic Christian states as part of the past. That presumably would be the end of the gay justification of Islamophobia.¶ Perhaps. There is another aspect of this, however, that has to do with individual psychology and the particular psychology of the United States. The first part is that any person tends to accept the local more than the foreign, even when the local is antagonistic. The particular American version is a part of American exceptionalism. More than other nations, the United States looks at itself as unique and accommodates anything that can be labeled American in a way that refuses to accommodate anything that seems inherently outside. Thus the strangeness of the southern American Christians who test their faith by handling poisonous snakes is yet American. Buying toothpaste in Tehran is not American. That last observation is just one inkling, however, that in the end there is no answer. If all must wait until Islam is as American as apple pie or until every imam performs gay marriages, then there will be a long wait.¶ So it is tempting to come back to Puar’s explanations: Islamophobia is just another version of American white racism. Puar argues that the “gay community” is just a part of that white racism. Every aspect of the various angers reflects heteronormativity, whether it is white gays waving flags of patriotism or racialized minorities exhibiting the family values of all good Americans.¶ These explanations, however, avoid many of the more troubling questions. First, what if Islamophobia in 2010 includes many who are not white? Puar’s book mentions anti-Muslim acts performed by an African-American soldier and a Hispanic man, but offers no suggestion of why they fit white racism. When the latter killed a Sikh man he said “I’m an American.” Does this mean he was trying to be a white Anglo-American, that he was making up for some perceived Hispanic deficiency? Or might it mean that Islamophobia has become a marker of Americanism that is beyond race? One need not watch much television to perceive a rainbow of Americans who find comfort in hating Muslims.¶ And what about religion? Somehow, Puar can devote 250 pages to attacking Islamophobia with almost no consideration of Islam as a religion. She mentions the assertions that Islam is homophobic, but rather than exploring this possibility she just attacks the racism of those who assert it. When she introduces a gay Arab voice it is not to discuss the more liberal versions of Islam, but rather to attack the way Abu Ghraib was both homophobic and anti-Arab. She seems to accept Joseph Massad’s definition of the “Gay International” (57), an American-led gay liberation movement void of sensitivity to other cultures. Massad, and presumably Puar, believes homosexuals in Arab countries have found ways to function under the radar, but when the “Gay International” makes great noise about Arab homophobia, it just causes trouble for Arab homosexuals. This might be the case, but does this mean that the need for gay liberation is not international? If a person of Arab ancestry who lives in the United States can write about Arab issues elsewhere, why can a gay person not write about gay issues? Do race, geography and religion inevitably trump sexual orientation?¶ But of course in Puar, there is little concern for sexual orientation as everyone and everything is being queered, as in this comment on the way Sikhs have been drawn into Islamophobia:¶ As a figure that deeply troubles the nation’s security, the turbaned body can be most fruitfully rearticulated, not solely as a body encased in tradition and backwardness, attempting to endow itself with modernity, nor as a dissident queer body, but as an assemblage, a move I make to both expand the expectations and assumptions of queer reading practices (descriptive and prescriptive) and to unsettle the longstanding theorizations of heteronormative frames of reference for the nation and the female body as the primary or sole bearer of cultural honor and respect (174).¶ I can see why this assemblage contributes to her own theorizations, but I find little here that will help anyone who experiences the effects of both homophobia and Islamophobia.¶ I mentioned above that Puar’s research is amazing. Her secondary sources marshal a myriad of relevant resources, from the obvious, such as Rey Chow and Michael Warner, to grad student art projects. For her primary targets, such as Lawrence v. Texas or the way the 9/11 furor has affected Sikhs, her research extends through government records and a variety of popular media. Much of this doesn’t appear in the body of her text, but the notes are extensive and fascinating.¶ I just wish more of that fascination appeared in the book. I think the argument of the book is too strong, but that might just be me the old white guy reacting. Still, any such blanket dismissal of American racism and Islamophobia seems especially simplistic in the Obama era. If his attempts to reach out to Islamic countries and the simple fact of his black body in the “highest office” change things, then Puar is out of date. If, as I must admit my cynical self fears, the result of the Obama earthquake turns out to be the same old United States, then Puar’s analysis needs more awareness of the slippages in race, class and sexual orientation.¶ In this book I find less awareness of slippages and more Deleuzian slipperiness. Puar is very aware that people have died and that people are being oppressed. The notes provide detail after detail of how that works. But I fear all of her Deleuzian ideas will do nothing to change that.

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#### Queer theory erases the lesbian

Walter 96 [Suzanna Danuta Walter, Sociology Professor, Georgetown University, Summer 96, From Here to Queer: Radical Feminism, Postmodernism, and the Lesbian Menace (Or, Why Can't a Woman Be More like a Fag?), Signs, Vol. 21, No. 4, Feminist Theory and Practice pp. 830-869, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3175026]

There is great insight and merit in understanding gender and sexual identity as processes, acquisitions, enactments, creations, processes (and Butler is right to credit Simone de Beauvoir with this profound insight), and Butler and others have done us a great service in elaborating the dissimulating possibilities of simulation. But this insight gets lost if it is not theorized with a deep understanding of the limitations and constraints within which we "perform" gender. And without some elaborated social and cultural context, this theory of performance is deeply ahistorical and, therefore, ironically (because postmodernism fashions it- self as particularism par excellence) universalistic, avoiding a discussion of the contexts (race, class, ethnicity, etc.) that make particular "performances" more or less likely to be possible in the first place. It is not enough to assert that all performance of gender takes place within complex and specific regimes of power and domination; those regimes must be explicitly part of the analytic structure of the performance trope, rather than asides to be tossed around and then ignored.15