# Exceptionalism DA

#### (A) The lesson for radical politics to be learned from the detention of “Unlawful Combatants” isn’t the uniqueness of their form of exclusion but its similarity with other forms of exclusion that always inherent in the current political order.

Zizek, 02

(http://www.lacan.com/zizek-are.htm)

When Donald Rumsfeld designated the imprisoned Taliban fighters 'unlawful combatants' (as opposed to 'regular' prisoners of war), he did not simply mean that their criminal terrorist activity placed them outside the law: when an American citizen commits a crime, even one as serious as murder, he remains a 'lawful criminal'. The distinction between criminals and non-criminals has no relation to that between "lawful" citizens and the people referred to in France as the Sans Papiers. Perhaps the category of homo sacer, brought back into use by Giorgio Agamben in Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life (1998), is more useful here. It designated, in ancient Roman law, someone who could be killed with impunity and whose death had, for the same reason, no sacrificial value. Today, as a term denoting exclusion, it can be seen to apply **not only to terrorists,** but also to those who are on the receiving end of humanitarian aid (Rwandans, Bosnians, Afghans), as well as to the Sans Papiers in France and the inhabitants of the favelas in Brazil or the African American ghettoes in the US.

#### (B) The Aff’s exclusive focus on the status of detainees and the War on Terror returns us to a politics-as-usual that denies the questions of exclusion that are formed by the dominant social order that predated 9/11. Only a politics that seeks to universalize all points of exclusion is key to solve.

Cho, 05

(English Ph.D. – Berkeley, June, Teaching Education)

Another case of this willful forgetting is, of course, the US’s own president, George W. Bush, who did not hesitate for one moment to capitalize on this event, quickly incorporating it into his presidential campaign. Bush took the opportunity to reemphasize that the “War on Terror” has named a new enemy, and with that naming, a more pressing, antagonism. What Bush forgets is how those who are answering his call to meet this new enemy by joining the military and his “War on Terror” are doing so, in many cases, **to escape the economic wasteland in which they live**, which is something that was most recently highlighted by Michael Moore in his film. Similar to, though more subtle than, Bush’s co-opting of the events from 9/11 to Beslan, **has been the way many critics have demanded that we take issue with how Bush’s own policies have inflicted many blows to civility, and the correlative stance that the true enemy is not so-called terrorists, but Bush’s regime** and Bush himself. Kerry, the Democrats, and hysterical protestors who were acting out in the past election were not the only ones to express such ideas; rather, unfortunately, many on the critical left have also espoused, and still do, this same notion and have, therefore, set their sights on continually criticizing Bush himself. Keeping with Benjamin’s challenge, how, then, can we resist the temptation to think about Bush, so to speak, as the embodiment of evil, and how can we refrain from conceptualizing the events that define his presidency as a true era of oppression? The first lesson we must take away from the various methods of sensationalizing and spectacularizing these tragedies would be to understand how these events fall within a long history, indeed, a tradition, **of oppression on which our Global Order is founded**—the structural and material inequalities produced by capitalist globalization which oppresses many around the globe is not an invention of Bush, but rather, **is something that was already set in motion before Bush ever arrived on the scene.** But more should be said on this topic. Let us begin by returning to the binary logic upon which the US educational apparatus is constituted—namely, the academic/other binary: by addressing our criticisms to Bush, what has been transformed is not this exclusionary binary logic but rather a simple exchange of the terms involved. This is to say, by placing responses to the “War on Terror” and its effect on our lives at the top of the agenda, we have put in place of the old academic/other binary, a new binary opposition, this time with Cheney/Bush/Rumsfeld (CBR) on one side, and with all who are affected globally by their policies on the other. Since, as I am arguing, the frame of exclusion itself has not been affected, what is no longer registered because of this reshuffling **is none other than oppression itself**. In other words, heavy emphasis on how our lives **are so irreparably changed after 9/11 obfuscates the truth that oppression** in the US and because of the US has existed prior to 9/11 or Bush’s reign. We only need to call up the US’s history of violence with which it created itself, which is ominously reframed in the state standards as “the rise of the US to its role as a world power” (standard 11.4). But to further illustrate this forgetting of oppression, let us return to how the targeting of schools for violence was traced only as far back as Columbine, which fell out of the exploitative spectacularization of the Beslan tragedy. What is immediately lost in making Columbine the “first” Beslan is the long history of violence that has taken place in and around the area of many California schools, mostly in its large urban centers, at the hands of the state. In fact, is this not the very point of the Williams case—that the state has failed to make its urban schools safe? Are not the plaintiffs suing for the very reason that the condition in which they attend school is so decrepit that it is a criminal act of state violence? Furthermore, it is unfortunate that as little attention as the Williams case is getting nationally here in the US, it is simply the only attention these students and schools are even getting at all, and as such, there goes unnoticed an even larger number of similar cases of state oppression in these schools, of which, I attempted to argue, originates in the very constitutive logic of the state’s educational agenda. It is Julia Kristeva (1982) who developed the concept that we can use to formalize the kind of disavowal that has characterized the destiny of the oppressed in our new times of war; in Powers of Horror, she writes: There looms, within abjection, one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there, quite close, **but it cannot be assimilated**. (p. 1) This abject, then, is what is expunged from the very terms of intelligibility. That is to say, the abject is not simply made “the other”, but it is an other that undergoes a second order exclusion—the abject is, if you will, an other that is othered once again. Take, for example, the new binary of CBR/other that we have been discussing: it is clear that in order to make the “War on Terror”, and its surrounding events, the new terrain for debate and contestation, what must be negativized for a second time and disavowed from the negative place itself is the “old” antagonism of oppression for which the Williams case is a witness. In other words, in order for the intellectual elite to consider itself the next oppressed as a result of the Patriot Act, the oppressed themselves must be turned into an abject body and forgotten to the nether regions of political debate. The necessity for this abjection is clear: if we re-center the educational debates on the oppressive material conditions in which many students attend school (as the Williams case is attempting to do), then we risk sacrificing the opportunity to make central the tears in the social fabric that primarily affect us academics—that is, much is invested in sustaining Bush, the “War on Terror”, and their precipitating events, as the terrain of struggle; namely, our interests as academics. The danger in sustaining this abject is insidious as it is pressing: the radically negative turn that has taken place for the oppressed is nothing overt nor is it apparent in any obvious way; rather, it **is a silent abjection, a quiet forgetting, whose real damage resides in the further obfuscation of the real issue at stake in our current times.** To be clear, what this issue is, and this is the point to emphasize, is the struggle of the oppressed—a struggle that has been fought long before Bush and his “War on Terror”, and an oppressed with whom Paulo Freire (1970) first challenged us to stand with in solidarity. In order to illustrate just how immediate yet stealthy this danger actually is we need only return to the last presidential election and recall specifically the hope (no matter how minute that hope might have been) that was pinned to a Kerry victory over Bush. For sure, Kerry was for some people simply someone who was not Bush. Nonetheless, there existed a significant number of those who placed their collective hope for a better future on the prospect of a Kerry presidency (after all, “Keep hope alive”, “Hope is on the way”, and every other variation of this phrase, were the mottos of the Democratic National Convention). For these hopeful people, with Kerry came the prospect that the damage done by Bush both could and would be rolled back. In a timely essay, Susan Watkins keenly debunked that blind faith; she wrote: Kerry backed the invasion [of Iraq], will retain the Patriot Act, supports Sharon’s security policies and is calling for an extra 40,000 active-duty U.S. troops and a doubling of special forces capability. On present showing, a vote for him is little more than another bullet for Iraq. In this sense, the Bush revolution has succeeded; it has produced its heir. (Watkins, p. 16) To add to Watkins’s analysis: the educational solution Kerry offered as an alternative to the standardization that now exists in full force with Bush’s No Child Left Behind was more standardization. In fact, Kerry proposed only to enforce Bush’s NCLB. But, perhaps, we can grant these hopeful people their wish and imagine that Kerry would, in fact, have turned back Bush’s acts, but, even so, the question that still must be asked is this: even if Kerry did return things to a pre-Bush state, what change would actually have been accomplished, and, more importantly, for whom? Granted, things may have improved for us academics (of course, even this remains to be seen), but as for oppressed students, imagining a move to a Kerry regime does not necessarily translate into the structural changes needed to transform their social conditions, which would take nothing short of radically altering the political economy itself. In fact, if we continue to press the issue of the “War on Terror”, oppression itself is not even the problematic that was at stake in the Kerry/Bush choice. As Zizek might put it, **this is a case of changing things around so that nothing really changes, which is a bleak reality for those abject bodies.** Perhaps we educators should learn from the lesson of the recent electoral disaster and now heed the necessity to listen intently to what oppressed people, many of whom are our students, believe is necessary to change their situation. The cost for exceptionalizing our current historical moment is paid for by none other than the oppressed themselves. It is a cost that demands their moving from an already oppressive position as the other to an even more unintelligible and oppressive location of the abject. In so doing, the danger that we are presented with is the danger of forgetting that the rectification of structural oppression and class antagonism **is what is really at issue in phrases such as “social justice” and “freedom”.** What the plaintiffs accomplished is nothing less than what Alain Badiou (2003) would describe as an Event (written with a capital “E” in order to differentiate it from the other events that have cluttered our historical moment). An Event is, for Badiou, addressed universally, and as such, the egalitarian demand for which the plaintiffs stand is not simply their own possession but is addressed universally and therefore open to all, even to us academics. Or, to place this within Ranciere’s language, the egalitarian demand of the part of no-part, or what I am calling the abject, which in the case of the plaintiffs is the egalitarian demand for an equal education for all, is not a representation of the interests of a particular part of society but of the entire social body as such. All are entitled to an equal education. The turn that is suggested by placing this Event within Badiou’s and Ranciere’s terms is this: the question, “What must be done?” which we asked above has already been answered by the abject themselves, and that answer is this: **we must make the radical decision to stand in solidarity with the oppressed as they make their egalitarian demands and fight through the precipitant struggle**. Against the old worries of acting as vanguards and imposing our interests upon the abject, the abject have, themselves, turned the tables: it is not us who are attempting to “interpellate” the oppressed, but rather, they who are attempting to “interpellate” us. In order to make this stance with the abject, it is clear that **we must first abandon the tactics of forefronting how the Patriot Act has made life difficult for us and** **reassert**, instead, **how the issues at stake, which is the very issue that gives shape to the social terrain which we inhabit, is oppression itself.**

# off

#### We are all enemy and unlawful combatants! My partner and I believe that we should identify with the position of exclusion that exists in those that are indefinitely detained.

#### The utterance of these words has a performative force that changes the way we approach about politics. Our advocacy is a paradoxical empty universal that identifies the entire social order with the part of the social body that is constitutively excluded—the part which has no part.

Stavrakakis, ‘99

(Government Teaching Fellow – Essex, Lacan & the Political, pp. 133-4)

By saying ‘We are all Jews!’, ‘We all live in Chernobyl!’ or ‘We are all boat people!’ – all paradigms used by Zizek in Looking Awry (Zizek, 1991b:140) – **we elevate the symptom, the excluded truth of the social field** (which has been stimatised as an alien particularly) **to the place of the universal,** to the point of our common identification which was, up to now, sustained by its exclusion or elimination. The same happens when we say “We are all gypsies!” – the central slogan in a recent anti-racist protest in Athens – or when it is argued that we will be in a stronger position to fight anti-Semitism only when the Holocaust is recognized as a true part of all and not only of Jewish history, this localization silencing its significance: only when ‘on finding out what happened, everyone, and not just the Jews, thinks: “it could have been me – the victim that is.”’ (Monchi, 1997: 80). What is promoted here is an attitude consistent with identifying with the symptom of the social and traversing social fantasy. It is only by accepting such an impossible representation, by making this declaration of impossibility that it is possible to ‘represent’ the impossible or **rather to identify with the impossibility of its representation**. Identification with the symptom is thus related to the traversing of fantasy. Going through fantasy entails the realization of the lack or inconsistency in the Other which is masked by fantasy, the separation between objet petit a and the Other, a separation which is **not only ethically sound but also ‘liberating’ for our political imagination:**

it is precisely this lack in the Other which enables the subject to achieve a kind of ‘de-alienation’ called by Lacan separation…[in the sense that it is realized] that the Other itself ‘hasn’t got it’, hasn’t got the final answer….This lack in the Other gives the subject—so to speak—a breathing space: it enables him to avoid the total alienation in the signifier not by filling out his lack but by allowing him to identify himself, his own lack, with the lack of the Other. (Zizek, 1989: 122)

What is clearly at stake here is the possibility of enacting symbolic gestures that institutionalize social lack, that is to say incorporate **the ethical recognition of the impossibility of social closure.**

#### Our advocacy is a metaphoric elevation of a universal wrong – the elevation of a particular depoliticization of bare life to the level of universality. This creates a break with the current political order that structures all political reality and enables all sovereign-based violence.

Husanovic, 04

(International Politics Lecturer – University of Tulza ,Sovereign Lives, Ed. Edkiins, Pin-Fat & Shapiro, p.216-7)

It is the limits of human experience that foster such gestures of political subjectivization, action, and thought, and in which to search for the agency of emancipatory politics. The liminal experiences of all the horrors of life’s politicization and inscription into the sovereign order are particularly profound in war as a simultaneity between the state of exception, the liminal experiential situation, and the zone of indistinction. This is one of the reasons why in such turbulent spaces/times, radically new political gestures and subjectivities emerge. The first subjectivizing gesture is to act negatively by **wiping the slate clean**, and the second involves initiating such a political subjectivization **that seeks positivity in alternative metaphoric spaces and visions**. This, for instance, **may be a metaphoric elevation of a universal wrong** (for example, a particular (de)politicization of bare life) **shared by all subjects/objects of the symbolic and political order**. Žižek thinks of this longing for community, even if ‘only’ metaphoric, as the non-ideological utopian kernel upon which to subvert ideological domination in a radical democratic way: for Agamben, such a non-statist community is based on whatever singularity is the core of the forthcoming politics.

Political subjectivizations and gestures inspired by the metaphoric Universal (such as this universal ideal of non-statist singular community), by the unconditional demands for égaliberté, by the identification with the fate of the excluded, **are the very grounds for emancipatory projects**. In these projects, one must continually conduct a voluntary exodus from the sovereign order and find a refugium away from the logic/fantasy of the nation-state (even if these exits and refuges are ‘merely’ symbolic and/or metaphoric). This requires further gestures: identifying with the non-part of the instituted ideological order, assuming a form-of-life (political existence) that **problematizes the politicization of bare life through sovereign biopolitics,** resisting being gentrified by the instituted symbolic or biopolitical orders, and so forth. These traits, frequently displayed by (some) grassroots engagements of (some) Bosnian NGOs, point to the traversal of fantasies implied by the nation-state and underpinning sovereign and symbolic/ideological orders. This traversal being the truly utopian moment that unsettles the contingent ideological order, explores the (im)possible and retains hope and belief in the very exercise of political practice.

#### We have “specific” solvency evidence – identifying with those that have no part in the current global order creates the conditions for articulating alternatives to the war on terror.

Pease, 03

(Avalon Foundation Chair of the Humanities – Dartmouth, Boundary 2, 30:3)

Overall, 9/11 brought to the light of day the Other to the normative representation of the United States. It positioned unheimlich dislocatees within the Homeland in place of the citizens who exercised rights and liberties on the basis of these normalizations. When the signifier of the Homeland substituted for the Virgin Land, the national security state was supplanted by the global state of emergency. Whereas Virgin Land enforced the disavowal of the state's destruction of indigenous populations' homelands, Ground Zero demanded that spectacle of the destruction of a homeland as compensation for the loss of the land's "virginity."

In tracking this radical shift in the governing frames of reference, I have indicated the ways in which the state coordinated the siginifiers 9/11, Ground Zero, Homeland, **and Detainee into a relay of significations undergirding the biopolitical settlement of the Global Homeland State**. I have also alluded to the inherent instability of the nodal points that have been constructed to coordinate these newly invented governing representations.

When he inaugurated the prerogatives of the emergency state at Ground Zero, Bush conscripted the traumatic power of the events that took place there to offer preemptive strikes as compensation for the loss. But the events that took place on September 11, 2001, fractured the nation-state's continuist time. As the locus for events lacking a preexisting signification in the social order, 9/11 exists as a sign of what cannot take place within the [End Page 17] order of signification. But if it marks the rupture of the time kept by the nation-state, 9/11 is no less discordant with the mode eventuation the Bush administration has inaugurated in its name. Inherently nonsynchronous, 9/11 calls for a time to come.

The Bush administration has attempted to supplant the loss of the belief in Virgin Land that underwrote U.S. exceptionalism with the arrogation of the power to occupy the position of the exception to the laws of the World of Nations. But insofar as the Homeland State's exceptions to the rules of law and war are themselves instantiations of force that lack the grounding support of norms or rules, they resemble the traumatic events on which they depend for their power to rule. As such, these exceptions will maintain their power to rule only as long as U.S. publics remain captivated by the spectacles of violence the state has erected at the site of Ground Zero.

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If the Global Homeland has erected an order in which the peoples of the world have no part, that order has also positioned the people in a place that lacks a part in the Global Order. As the surplus element in the Global Homeland, the globe's peoples **might be described as occupying the place of an empty universal**. This space is emptied of **any part to play in the Homeland's Global Order.** But the very emptiness of that space, the fact that it demarcates the people's part as what is included with no part to play in the new Global Order, **simultaneously empowers the globe's peoples to play the part of articulating alternatives to that order.** 11 It is because the peoples of the world are without a part in the order in which these peoples are included that they also constitute a part in the construction of potential alternatives to that order. The part without a part in the given Global Order **constitutes an empty universal in an order to come that the global peoples can particularize differently**. 12

But that order to come will not emerge until the global state of emergency state is itself exposed as the cause of the traumas it purports to oppose. Its **exceptions will then be recognized as the criminal violence of a terrorizing state**. At that time (alas, **only at that time**), the Global Emergency State will itself disappear into the singularity of the Ground Zero out of which it has emerged.

# LAW DA

#### (A) The Aff’s reliance on legal rights re-deploys the very logic that gives rise to Gitmo– the entire Bush Administration’s war on terror relies on the language of universal rights and will co-opt the Aff discourse to perpetuate American imperialism.

Brown, 04

(Poli Sci Professor – Berkeley, Spring/Summer, South Atlantic Quarterly, 103:2/3)

We return to the question with which we began: If human rights activism is an antipolitical politics of suffering reduction that configures a particular kind of subject and limns a particular political future, is the yield of this international justice project the "most we can hope for"? Especially given the extent to which a recently renewed vigor in American imperialism has been the agent of such suffering (from its Guantánamo Bay gulag to its invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan to its continued support for increasingly brutal Israeli practices of occupation) **while draping itself in the mantle of human rights, one wonders whether the project of more directly challenging such imperialism and supporting indigenous efforts to transform authoritarian, despotic, and corrupt postcolonial regimes might be at least as critical**. When Donald Rumsfeld declares that "the War on Terrorism is a war for human rights," as he did in spring 2002, preparing Americans for war on Iraq while turning their attention away from both the postwar chaos in Afghanistan and the steady dismantling of their own civil liberties, we are reminded of the difficulty of trying to engage in both kinds of projects simultaneously.9 It is not only that Rumsfeld has co-opted the language of human rights for imperialist aims abroad and antidemocratic ones at home, but that insofar as the "liberation" of Afghanistan and Iraq promised to deliver human rights to those oppressed populations it is hard both to parse cynical from sincere deployments of human rights discourse **and to separate human rights campaigns from legitimating liberal imperialism**.10 Here, the disingenuousness of Ignatieff's insistence, that human [End Page 460] rights campaigns are not equivalent to installing liberalism and the conditions of free trade for the regimes they aim at, materializes as more than a problem of intellectual dishonesty.

#### (B) The Aff asks the wrong questions about the politics surrounding detention – their advocacy of legal reform merely props up the very political order that makes detention possible in the first place. Only radical acts that target the very foundation of politics can disrupt Bush’s war on terror.

Dochterman, 03

(UC Santa Cruz Doctoral Student, November, http://www.ainfos.ca/03/nov/ainfos00224.html)

The question anarchists and other radicals **should be asking is not**: “What’s happening to our civil liberties?”. This **implies that we once had them and only want a nicer administration to restore them**. Rather we should be asking how state-monopolised force is deployed and for whose protection. “Our” civil liberties or “our” human rights already implies that there are those who lack them, who can be stripped of them and only lent such rights through a certain type of government. To demand the restoration of civil liberties and of human rights as self-evident is an inevitable struggle that I have no doubt will benefit those most hurt by the current order. However, such reformism does nothing **to undermine the order that can decide whose civil liberties to protect**. In fact, it must be argued that it is only by stripping a great number of people of such rights that the political rights of others (citizens) **can be ensured**. Thus, **operating within the discourse of civil liberties or human rights is a necessarily self-defeating project. Change must be more all-pervasive**.  
Agamben differentiates between the two ancient Greek words used to describe life, *bios*, in the sense of one’s political/legal existence, and *zoe*, the pure biological being, or “bare life”. The detention of hundreds of immigrants in detention centers around the country, the indefinite imprisonment of “enemy combatants” and terrorist suspects at Guantanamo Bay demonstrate the racial character of this body without civil liberties or political rights, this bare life. Agamben argues that “[t]he camp is the space opened up when the state of exception begins to become the rule” (168-9). The camp, such as that at Guantanamo Bay, can “protect” the public by removing potential threats from the social realm, in a space beyond legality**. It is precisely this extra-legal space in which sovereign force operates and it is the body of the immigrant on which it acts**. 9/11 has provided a convenient excuse for the State to refine its demographic controls and shatter every guideline for the treatment of refugees outlined in the Geneva Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (see the July 8th, 2002 letter from Guenet Guebre-Christos of the UNHCR to Edward Kennedy regarding the illegalities of the Department of Homeland Security or the April 15th letter to Rebecca Sharpless of the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center regarding selective detainment and detainment as an immigration deterrent).

# Off

#### Syria deal saved Obama’s capital- foreign policy issues trade off with Obama’s negotiating clout and push the debt ceiling out of priority position- undermines market confidence

Bohan 9-11 [Caren, Writer for Reuters, “Delay in Syria vote frees Obama to shift to hefty domestic agenda” http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/09/11/us-usa-obama-agenda-idUSBRE98A0Z920130911]

Putting off a decision on military strikes on Syria allows President Barack Obama to shift his attention back to a weighty domestic agenda for the fall that includes budget fights, immigration and selecting a new chairman of the Federal Reserve. Obama and his aides have immersed themselves for a week and a half in an intensive effort to win support in Congress for U.S. military action in Syria after a suspected chemical weapons attack last month killed more than 1,400 people. But the effort, which included meetings by Obama on Capitol Hill on Tuesday followed by his televised speech to Americans, seemed headed for an embarrassing defeat, with large numbers of both Democrats and Republicans expressing opposition. The push for a vote on Syria - which has now been delayed - had threatened to crowd out the busy legislative agenda for the final three months of 2013 and drain Obama's political clout, making it harder for him to press his priorities. But analysts said a proposal floated by Russia, which the Obama administration is now exploring, to place Syria's weapons under international control may allow Obama to emerge from a difficult dilemma with minimal political damage. "He dodges a tough political situation this way," said John Pitney, professor of politics at Claremont McKenna College in California. Pitney said the delay in the Syria vote removes a big burden for Obama, given that Americans, who overwhelmingly opposed military intervention in Syria, will now be able to shift their attention to other matters. He said Obama could suffer some weakening of his leverage with Congress. The administration's "full court press" to try to persuade lawmakers to approve military force on Syria was heavily criticized and did not yield much success. "He probably has suffered some damage in Congress because there are probably many people on (Capitol Hill) who have increasing doubts about the basic competence of the administration and that's a disadvantage in any kind of negotiation," Pitney said. BUDGET BATTLES Among Obama's most immediate challenges are two looming budget fights. By September 30, Congress and the president must agree on legislation to keep federal agencies funded or face a government shutdown. Two weeks later, Congress must raise the limit on the country's ability to borrow or risk a possible debt default that could cause chaos in financial markets. On the first budget showdown, Obama may be at a strategic advantage because of divisions among opposition Republicans about whether to use the spending bill to provoke a fight over Obama's signature health care law, known as Obamacare. House Republican leaders are trying to rally the party around a temporary spending measure that would keep the government funded until December 15 but are facing resistance within their own caucus from some conservatives who want to cut off funding for Obamacare, even if it means a government shutdown. The debt limit fight could end up going down to the wire and unnerving financial markets. Republicans want to use that standoff to extract concessions from the Democratic president, such as spending cuts and a delay in the health law. But Obama has said he has no intention of negotiating over the borrowing limit.

#### Reducing Obama’s war powers causes a crippling loss of credibility- causes republicans to put up a more concerted fight on the debt ceiling which would wreck the markets

Seeking Alpha 9-10

[“Syria Could Upend Debt Ceiling Fight” http://seekingalpha.com/article/1684082-syria-could-upend-debt-ceiling-fight]

Unless President Obama can totally change a reluctant public's perception of another Middle-Eastern conflict, it seems unlikely that he can get 218 votes in the House, though he can probably still squeak out 60 votes in the Senate. This defeat would be totally unprecedented as a President has never lost a military authorization vote in American history. To forbid the Commander-in-Chief of ~~his~~ primary power renders him all but impotent. At this point, a rebuff from the House is a 67%-75% probability. I reach this probability by looking within the whip count. I assume the 164 declared "no" votes will stay in the "no" column. To get to 218, Obama needs to win over 193 of the 244 undecided, a gargantuan task. Within the "no" column, there are 137 Republicans. Under a best case scenario, Boehner could corral 50 "yes" votes, which would require Obama to pick up 168 of the 200 Democrats, 84%. Many of these Democrats rode to power because of their opposition to Iraq, which makes it difficult for them to support military conflict. The only way to generate near unanimity among the undecided Democrats is if they choose to support the President (recognizing the political ramifications of a defeat) despite personal misgivings. The idea that all undecided Democrats can be convinced of this argument is relatively slim, especially as there are few votes to lose. In the best case scenario, the House could reach 223-225 votes, barely enough to get it through. Under the worst case, there are only 150 votes. Given the lopsided nature of the breakdown, the chance of House passage is about one in four. While a failure in the House would put action against Syria in limbo, I have felt that the market has overstated the impact of a strike there, which would be limited in nature. Rather, investors should focus on the profound ripple through the power structure in Washington, which would greatly impact impending battles over spending and the debt ceiling. Currently, the government loses spending authority on September 30 while it hits the debt ceiling by the middle of October. Markets have generally felt that Washington will once again strike a last-minute deal and avert total catastrophe. Failure in the Syrian vote could change this. For the Republicans to beat Obama on a President's strength (foreign military action), they will likely be emboldened that they can beat him on domestic spending issues. Until now, consensus has been that the two sides would compromise to fund the government at sequester levels while passing a $1 trillion stand-alone debt ceiling increase. However, the right wing of Boehner's caucus has been pushing for more, including another $1 trillion in spending cuts, defunding of Obamacare, and a one year delay of the individual mandate. Already, Conservative PACs have begun airing advertisements, urging a debt ceiling fight over Obamacare. With the President rendered hapless on Syria, they will become even more vocal about their hardline resolution, setting us up for a showdown that will rival 2011's debt ceiling fight. I currently believe the two sides will pass a short-term continuing resolution to keep the government open, and then the GOP will wage a massive fight over the debt ceiling. While Obama will be weakened, he will be unwilling to undermine his major achievement, his healthcare law. In all likelihood, both sides will dig in their respective trenches, unwilling to strike a deal, essentially in a game of chicken. If the House blocks Syrian action, it will take America as close to a default as it did in 2011. Based on the market action then, we can expect massive volatility in the final days of the showdown with the Dow falling 500 points in one session in 2011. As markets panicked over the potential for a U.S. default, we saw a massive risk-off trade, moving from equities into Treasuries. I think there is a significant chance we see something similar this late September into October. The Syrian vote has major implications on the power of Obama and the far-right when it comes to their willingness to fight over the debt ceiling. If the Syrian resolution fails, the debt ceiling fight will be even worse, which will send equities lower by upwards of 10%. Investors must be prepared for this "black swan" event. Looking back to August 2011, stocks that performed the best were dividend paying, less-cyclical companies like Verizon (VZ), Wal-Mart (WMT), Coca-Cola (KO) and McDonald's (MCD) while high beta names like Netflix (NFLX) and Boeing (BA) were crushed. Investors also flocked into treasuries despite default risk while dumping lower quality bonds as spreads widened. The flight to safety helped treasuries despite U.S. government issues. I think we are likely to see a similar move this time. Assuming there is a Syrian "no" vote, I would begin to roll back my long exposure in the stock market and reallocate funds into treasuries as I believe yields could drop back towards 2.50%. Within the stock market, I think the less-cyclical names should outperform, making utilities and consumer staples more attractive. For more tactical traders, I would consider buying puts against the S&P 500 and look toward shorting higher-beta and defense stocks like Boeing and Lockheed Martin (LMT). I also think lower quality bonds would suffer as spreads widen, making funds like JNK vulnerable. Conversely, gold (GLD) should benefit from the fear trade. I would also like to address the potential that Congress does not vote down the Syrian resolution. First, news has broken that Russia has proposed Syria turn over its chemical stockpile. If Syria were to agree (Syria said it was willing to consider), the U.S. would not have to strike, canceling the congressional vote. The proposal can be found here. I strongly believe this is a delaying tactic rather than a serious effort. In 2005, Libya began to turn over chemical weapons; it has yet to complete the hand-off. Removing and destroying chemical weapons is an exceptionally challenging and dangerous task that would take years, not weeks, making this deal seem unrealistic, especially because a cease-fire would be required around all chemical facilities. The idea that a cease-fire could be maintained for months, essentially allowing Assad to stay in office, is hard to take seriously. I believe this is a delaying tactic, and Congress will have to vote within the next two weeks. The final possibility is that Democrats back their President and barely ram the Syria resolution through. I think the extreme risk of a full-blown debt stand-off to dissipate. However, Boehner has promised a strong fight over the debt limit that the market has largely ignored. I do believe the fight would still be worse than the market anticipates but not outright disastrous. As such, I would not initiate short positions, but I would trim some longs and move into less cyclical stocks as the risk would still be the debt ceiling fight leading to some drama not no drama. Remember, in politics everything is connected. Syria is not a stand-alone issue. Its resolution will impact the power structure in Washington. A failed vote in Congress is likely to make the debt ceiling fight even worse, spooking markets, and threatening default on U.S. obligations unless another last minute deal can be struck.

#### Destroys the global economy.

Milstead 9-12 [David, Writer for the Globe and Mail, “The under-the-radar threat to U.S. stocks” Factiva]

Conventional wisdom holds that the chief risk to the high-flying U.S. stock market is “tapering,” the potential cutback of the Federal Reserve's bond-buying program. It's an understandable view, given how the Fed's monetary policy has propped up the country's economy for years by helping to keep long-term interest rates at ultra-low levels. But it's also wrong. The greatest immediate hazard to stocks isn't the direction the six governors of the Federal Reserve will take. It's what the 535 members of Congress will do in the coming weeks when faced with two budgetary issues that ought to be routine – but will likely be anything but. The first issue is approving a federal budget for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1, or at least a resolution that will keep the government open in its absence. The second is authorizing a new, higher number for the U.S. government's borrowing before Washington hits its debt ceiling, once again, possibly by mid-October. In the absence of such a vote, the U.S. must simply stop spending – and, in essence, default on its debt. If this sounds familiar, it's because we went through a similar showdown two years ago, in the summer of 2011. Yet it's easy to forget now how that fiscal gridlock roiled the markets. In the first day of trading after Standard & Poor's downgraded U.S. debt in early August, the S&P 500 fell nearly 7 per cent. The day after, the index was nearly 19 per cent below the level of early July. The rhetoric suggests this fiscal showdown could inflict similar damage. Eighty House Republicans recently signed a letter urging their leadership to use any new government-funding bill to cut all necessary money for President Barack Obama's signature accomplishment, the Affordable Care Act, more popularly known as Obamacare. The Republican House leadership, it is said, does not support such a move. That's apparently because they prefer to make it part of the showdown over the debt ceiling. (The National Review, one of the U.S.'s leading conservative publications, reported Tuesday that Eric Cantor, the House Majority Leader, told Republicans they will be demanding a one-year delay of Obamacare in exchange for an increase in the debt ceiling.) Failing to raise the debt ceiling doesn't mean default, its opponents argue. The Treasury can just do a better job of “prioritizing,” paying the creditors while axing other expenses. In the absence of a higher debt ceiling, the U.S. could pay the interest on Treasury securities, and keep on footing the tab for Medicare and Medicaid, Social Security, national defence and a handful of aid programs, according to the Bipartisan Policy Centre. But, starting Oct. 15, it won't be able to afford the salaries of other federal workers, or perform functions like road construction and air traffic control, or run the federal court system. Ted Yoho, the improbably named Republican representative from Florida, said this about a failure to raise the debt ceiling, according to a recording of one of his summertime town hall meetings leaked to the Huffington Post: “So they say that would rock the market, capital would leave, the stock market would crash … I think our credit rating would do better.” Better, I think, to take the U.S. Treasury's position that the markets will view the U.S. picking and choosing which bills to pay as an admission it simply can't pay them all. Deputy secretary Neil Wolin said during the last debt-ceiling showdown, in 2011, that it “would merely be default by another name.” That, however, is the view from the reality-based community, rather than the deeply irrational, anti-intellectual element that has hijacked the Republican Party and turned ordinary budgetary procedure into a partisan brawl. The liberal economic writer Jonathan Chait recently wrote “the chaos and dysfunction have set in so deeply that Washington now lurches from crisis to crisis, and once-dull, keep-the-lights-on rituals of government procedure are transformed into white-knuckle dramas that threaten national or even global catastrophe.” And yet stocks seem to be priced as if Democrats, Republicans and President Obama will come together to work something out. There is great faith that the United States will overcome its challenges and take the right path in the end. Investors could suffer double-digit losses in the coming weeks if that faith is misplaced.

#### Economic collapse leads to massive amounts of poverty and cutting of the social net

Messmore 5/23/11 the William E. Simon fellow in Religion and a Free Society at The Heritage Foundation Ryan Messmore, Moral Principles and the Budget Debate, <http://blog.heritage.org/2011/05/23/moral-principles-and-the-budget-debate/>

For example, Ryan noted that if the U.S. government continues to drive up the deficit through reckless spending, “the weakest will be hit three times over: by rising costs, by drastic cuts to programs they rely on, and by the collapse of individual support for charities that help the hungry, the homeless, the sick, refugees and others in need.” The failure of many European nations to address their financial crises has led to “drastic cuts in benefits to the retired, the sick, the poor, and millions of public employees.”

# off

#### Text: The United States Congress should substantially increase statutory restrictions on the war powers authority of the President of the United States by prohibiting indefinite detention without either an Article III trial or release.

#### The 1ACs reliance on terms like “persons” and “civilian” is directly bound with the language of legalism that always excludes the non-human other. Your quest for legal protections for the human is founded upon a species war.

Kochi 2009 Tarik Lecturer in Law and International Security at the University of Sussex “Species War: Law, Violence and Animals” Law, Culture and the Humanities Oct 5: 353-369

In everyday speech, in the words of the media, politicians, protestors, soldiers and dissidents, the language of war is linked to and intimately bound up with the language of law. That a war might be said to be legal or illegal, just or unjust, or that an act might be called "war" rather than terror or crime, displays aspects of reference, connection, and constitution in which the social meaning of the concepts we use to talk about and understand war and law are organised in particular ways. The manner in which specific terms (i.e. war, terror, murder, slaughter, and genocide) are defined and their meanings ordered has powerful and bloody consequences for those who feel the force and brunt of these words in the realm of human action. In this paper I argue that the juridical language of war contains a hidden foundation - species war. That is, at the foundation of the Law of war resides a species war carried out by humans against non-human animals. At first glance such a claim may sound like it has little to do with law and war. In contemporary public debates the "laws of war" are typically understood as referring to the rules set out by the conventions and customs that define the legality of a state's right to go to war under international law. However, such a perspective is only a narrow and limited view of what constitutes the Law of war and of the relationship between law and war more generally. Here the "Law" of the "Law of war" needs to be understood as involving something more than the limited sense of positive law. The Law of war denotes a broader category that includes differing historical senses of positive law as well as various ethical conceptions of justice, right and rights. This distinction is clearer in German than it is in English whereby the term Recht denotes a broader ethical and juristic category than that of Gesetz which refers more closely to positive or black letter laws. l To focus upon the broader category of the Law of war is to put specific (positive law) formulations of the laws of war into a historical, conceptual context. The Law of war contains at its heart arguments about and mechanisms for determining what constitutes legitimate violence. The question of what constitutes legitimate violence lies at the centre of the relationship between war and law, and, the specific historical laws of war are merely different juridical ways of setting-out (positing) a particular answer to this question. In this respect the Law of war (and thus its particular laws of war) involves a practice of normative thinking and rule making concerned with determining answers to such questions as: what types of coercion, violence and killing may be included within the definition of "war," who may legitimately use coercion, violence and killing, and for what reasons, under what circumstances and to what extent may particular actors use coercion, violence and killing understood as war? When we consider the relationship between war and law in this broader sense then it is not unreasonable to entertain the suggestion that at the foundation of the Law of war resides species war.

#### That allows for all forms of violence. If we win that violence for the non-human other is foundational to political violence only the counterplan has a chance to solve your impacts

**Rossini 2006** Manuela, Project Manager at the td-net for Transdisciplinary Research of the Swiss Academies of the Arts and Sciences in Berne “To the Dogs: Companion speciesism and the new feminist materialism” *Kritikos* 3: Sept http://intertheory.org/rossini

What is equally sobering, however, is the fact that the most radical metaposthumanists (and the humanities more broadly) do not quite manage to make an epistemological break with liberal humanism, insofar as their writing is also marked by an unquestioned “speciesism”; i.e., in the definition of ethicist Peter Singer who popularised the term three decades ago in his book Animal Liberation, “a prejudice or attitude of bias in favour of the interests of members of one’s own species and against those of members of other species.”[17] Both postcolonial, feminist and queer theories and discussion of subjectivity, identity, and difference as well as the claims on the right to freedom by new social movements have recourse to an Enlightenment concept of the subject whose conditio sine qua non is the absolute control of that subject over the life of nonhuman others/objects. The rhetorical strategy of radically separating non-white, non-male and non-heterosexual human beings from animals in order to have the subject status of these members of the human species recognised was and is successful and also legitimate – given that the racist, sexist and homophobic discourse of animality or an animalistic „nature“ has hitherto served to exclude most individuals of those groups of people from many privileges – but the speciesist logic of the dominance of human animals over nonhuman animals has remained in place. If we fight racism and (hetero)sexism because we declare discrimination on the basis of specific and identifiable characteristics – such as “black“, “woman” or “lesbian“ to be wrong and unjust, then we should also vehemently oppose the exploitation, imprisoning, killing and eating of nonhuman animals on the basis of their species identity. *Moreover, if our research and teaching as cultural critics endeavours to do justice to the diversity of human experience and life styles and feel responsible towards marginalised others, should we then not seriously think about Cary Wolfe’s question „how must our work itself change when the other to which it tries to do justice is no longer human?“[18] Wolfe is not making a claim for animal rights here – at least not primarily. This is also why his book puns on “rites/rights“: Animal Rites is the intervention of the anti-speciesist cultural critic who scrutinizes the rituals that human beings form around the figures of animals, including the literary and cinematic enactments of cannibalism, monstrosity and normativity. Wolfe subsumes all of these stagings under the heading the discourse of species, with “discourse“ understood in the sense of Michel Foucault as not only a rhetoric but above all as the condition for the production and ordering of meaning and knowledge in institutions like medicine, the law, the church, the family or universities. In addition, Wolfe wants to sharpen our awareness that a speciesist metaphysics has also a deadly impact on human animals, especially because speciesism is grounded in the juridical state apparatus: “the full transcendence of the ‘human‘ requires the sacrifice of the ‘animal‘ and the animalistic, which in turn makes possible a symbolic economy in which we engage in what Derrida [calls] a ‚non-criminal putting to death‘ of other humans as well by marking them as animal.“[19] The dog lies buried in the singular: “The animal – what a word!”, Derrida exclaims: “[t]he animal is a word, it is an appellation that men have instituted, a name they have given themselves the right and authority to give to another living creature [à l'autre vivant].” [20] In order to problematise this naming, Derrida has created the neologism l'animot: I would like to have the plural of animals heard in the singular. […] We have to envisage the existence of ‘living creatures’ whose plurality cannot be assembled within the single figure of an animality that is simply opposed to humanity. […] The suffix mot in l’animot should bring us back to the word […]. It opens onto the referential experience of the thing as such, as what it is in its being, and therefore to the reference point by means of which one has always sought to draw the limit, the unique and indivisible limit held to separate man from animal. As I propose in what follows, this clearly defined caesura of the „anthropological machine”,[21] which according to Giorgio Agamben was already set in motion by the old Greeks and the messianic thinkers and then accelerated by scientific taxonomies and the birth of anthropology, can be bridged with the help of a zoontological approach and companion speciesism. Posthumanist zoontologies The desperate cry of the historical person Joseph Carey Merrick (in the movie The Elephant Man of 1980), “I am not an animal! I am a human being! I...am...a man!” – for recognition of his human identity through which he claims his right to social integration and personal integrity, is very understandable and hurts. But his words nevertheless reflect the poverty of the humanist stance, insofar as traditional humanism can only secure the “proper” essence of humanitas via a rigid separation from animalitas. If one reads the reports by the victims and witnesses of the tortures in the military prison of Abu Ghraib, it seems to me that it is precisely the continued insistence and reinforcement of the animal-human boundary that legitimises the committed atrocities: Some of the things they did was make me sit down like a dog, … and … bark like a dog and they were laughing at me … One of the police was telling me to crawl … A few days before [this], … the guy who wears glasses, he put red woman's underwear over my head … pissing on me and laughing on me … he put a part of his stick … inside my ass … she was playing with my dick … And they were taking pictures of me during all these instances. … [Another prisoner] was forced to insert a finger into his anus and lick it. He was also forced to lick and chew a shoe. … He was then told to insert his finger in his nose during questioning … his other arm in the air. The Arab interpreter told him he looked like an elephant. [They were] given badges with the letter ‘C’ on it.[22] The US soldiers reduce their prisoners to their corporeal being, to animal being, and then make fun of this “bare life“[23] Instead of accepting their own vulnerability and mortality that they share with their victims as well as with other living beings, the torturers use the “systematic bestialization“[24] of the prisoners to strengthen their own sense of freedom and autonomy and to concomitantly withdraw the right to protection guaranteed by the humanitarian rights of the Geneva Conventions; after all, as barking dogs, crawling insects and ‘elephant men’, these ‘creatures’ cannot respond to the name, the word, the interpellation “human.“ The implicit and explicit analogies between racism, sexism, homophobia that accompany the above description of the torture methods, confirm that the power of the “discourse of species” to affect human others depends on the* ***prior acceptance*** *of the institution “speciesism;” i.e. on taking for granted that the inflicting of pain and the killing of nonhuman animals by human animals does not constitute a criminal act but, on the contrary, is legal. This is why Derrida speaks of the “carnophallogocentrism“[25] of Western metaphysics. And here Wolfe’s argument comes full circle: [Since] the humanist discourse of species will always be available for use by some humans against other humans as well, to countenance violence against the social other of whatever species – or gender, or race, or class, or sexual difference. . . we need to understand that the ethical and* ***philosophical urgency of confronting the institution of speciesism*** *and crafting a posthumanist theory of the subject has nothing to do with whether you like animals. We all, human and nonhuman alike, have a stake in the discourse and institution of speciesism; it is by no means limited to its overwhelmingly direct and disproportionate effects on animals.[26]*

# Case

#### (A) They invoke a very particular notion of subjectivity when they describe the form of life that detainees occupy. This contingent view on life precludes a focus on the ways that Capital and the dominant social order specifically renders life excluded.

Smith, ‘04

(Cultural Studies Teacher – George Mason University, Symploke, 1.2)

This rather breathtaking alignment has perhaps the opposite effect to that intended. Here and elsewhere Butler is at pains to say that she's not calling for simply some warm and fuzzy inclusion of excluded subjective into the faulty normative schemes that she sees all around her. Instead, she is calling for what she calls "an insurrection at the level of ontology" (33). (If that's to be the new slogan of radicalism, Bush, Ashcroft, Rumsfeld and their ilk probably aren't going to be losing a lot of sleep!) But rather than offering ways to reconceive relational subjectivity, or even simply highlighting the specific struggles of different subjects, Butler in effect produces nothing more than some rough equivalency amongst all those who somehow don't fit neatly into the "culturally [End Page 256]viable notions of the human." To conceive of such an equivalency **you have to do a lot of stripping away of materiality and you have to be virtually impervious to levels of specificity.**

At best, what Butler is pointing to here is a purely discursive or ideological homology, and it turns out to be a very incomplete homology even in its own terms. That is, there's something analytically wrong when Butler's highlighting of the "vanished lives" from the WTC can't include the laborers, janitors, food workers, homeless people and undocumented immigrants who died there, **and whose struggles for recognition were not just about their access to "culturally viable notions of humanity" but equally about their economic value**. In mostly unpublicized struggles to gain compensation and benefits, the relatives of many of these people, as well as attack survivors themselves, confronted the simple fact that their lives were simply not valued. The struggles of many of these people continue, three years after the attacks.

These kinds of people don't appear in Butler's pantheon of victims—and nor do her victims themselves appear as labor, or as subjects whose identity is in any way at all constituted by their relation to capitalism (even though this might well be why they were attacked, as representatives of a predatory capitalist imperium). This elision, executed during Butler's cheerleading for the principles of inculsivity and relationality, is more than simply symptomatic of Butler's approach; **it is a reminder of the weakness of any consideration of identity that cannot or will not entertain the historical and material conditions under which such identities are formed**. In the end, what divides and differentiates subjects is not some factitious, contingent and unsatisfactory use of the category "human;" **rather more it is the continual and relentless depredations of capital**. So it's not really "conditions" that Butler investigates in this book; she isn't asking about American imperialism, or media power, or any of the material factors that inflect contemporary ideologies. Rather, she is simply pointing to some of the discursive structures and attitudinal habits that express those conditions.

Butler will no doubt be familiar with the criticism that she is unable or unwilling to investigate those conditions or to see subjects as in any significant part produced by them. Similar issues are notably at stake in her exchanges with Nancy Fraser (in New Left Review) or with Gayle Rubin (in differences) in the last decade; and they arise again in her conversations with Laclau and iek in Contingency, Hegemony, Universality (2000). In my view, in all of these exchanges Butler comes across as more obstinate than correct in dealing with the challenge to her thinking that political-economic factors pose. Indeed, in the last named text, when called to account for these lapses, she comes out with one of the most perverse formulations in all of her writing: "It's unclear that the [End Page 257]subject is not, for instance, from the start structured by certain general features of capitalism, or that capitalism does not produce certain quandaries for the unconscious and, indeed, for the psychic subject more generally" (277). Such circumphrasis (a spectacular double negative and a vagueness masquerading through the repeated word "certain") can only confirm the suspicion that, if an examination of "conditions" entails thinking in terms of political economy, **Butler doesn't in fact want anything to do with it.**

The limitations of that reluctance are in full view all across this book, but perhaps nowhere so overtly as in Butler's repeated insistence that the media are to blame for the parlous state of "contemporary conditions of representation." While that may well be the case in some limited sense, the assertion should surely mark the beginning of an investigation rather than establish the media as a kind of untranscendable horizon; but this underlying assumption about the conditions of representation is never granted explication or elaboration. It seems to me that, even in Butler's own terms, little progress could be made in the "revolution at the level of ontology" **without at the same time rethinking those conditions of representation and the role of capitalist media in enforcing them**. Indeed, to reformulate a sentence I quoted above: It's in fact perfectly clear that the conditions of representation are from the start structured **by very specific historical features of capitalism**.

#### (B) This is a liberalism dressed up in post-structuralism – it situates politics against radical political action and denies the real conditions suffered by those excluded by the social order.

Smith, ‘04

(Cultural Studies Teacher – George Mason University, Symploke, 1.2)

Butler's way of circumnavigating the material emerges in many other places in these essays. For example, in her chapter on the policy of indefinite detention she spends several pages explaining Foucault's distinction between governmentalityand sovereignty (tapping into a debate that takes many forms and different vocabularies in different disciplines and discourses—though you wouldn't know that from her account). Essentially, she tries to establish a kind of dialectical description of the Bush administration's actions: increases in the bureaucratic processes of governmentality give rise to gestures of authoritarian sovereignty, and sovereignty thence gives itself back over to the mechanisms of governmentality to secure itself. There might be simpler ways of describing the rise of authoritarianism in the post-9/11 administration, and certainly there are alternative ways of describing the same thing. But Butler's chosen mode sets the tone and intent, which is in the end to disembody the political processes involved. That is—and even despite her naming of names (Rumsfeld and Ashcroft in particular)—those processes come to seem unmotivated, untouched by human hand. It's almost as if the administration's sovereign behavior can have no material explanation; it's simply what's happening and its monstrous agents are simply ciphers. Butler's thinking, especially on political issues, often seems to operate in a similar fashion such that materiality is invoked but evacuated in the same gesture, and where [End Page 258] cultural and social processes are regarded more as a structural machine than as motivated forms and processes.

What all this amounts to, as I'm sure many other commentators have seen and remarked, is that Butler's thinking is essentially that of good old American liberalism leavened with a **measure of imperfectly digested French structuralism and post-structuralism**. The first casualty in that American tradition has always been political economy and history; they disappear even if they are ritually invoked in some polite way. The problem there, as I've suggested, **is that real conditions and conjunctures cannot be fully understood**. A second traditional characteristic is what might be called a creeping universalism, where the very fact of speaking from within the American context soon persuades the speaker that there is a "we" out there that shares assumptions and perceptions. An attentive reader of Butler's essays here will be easily able to track the mutations of the referent when she uses the pronoun "we." Even where her point is to argue for inclusivity, or for the extension of the boundaries of the human, **it's clear that the initial vantage point is the American human**.

A third characteristic of America liberal discourse is its strain of religiosity. Butler's final chapter here, the only previously unpublished essay in the book, concentrates on Emmanuel Lévinas, and it exhibits that trait. The essay is intended to underline the philosophical basis of the book's general discussion of the human and it is from Lévinas that Butler gets her title, Precarious Life. For Lévinas the word précaire fully implicates its etymology in the Latin word precari, an interestingly intransitive verb meaning to pray. The suggestion in Lévinas is that the Other is finally the divinity to whom we must pray and upon whom our existence depends in a supplicatory way. Butler's text doesn't explicitly take on this thicker meaning of "precarious," but the pressure that the word exerts on her text produces a glimpse of the religiosity that lurks behind all her schemas of interrelational identity, or of mourning and melancholia, and of course of "the human."

Like all liberal discourse Butler's essays have power and here they identify and assault some of the worst symptoms of post-9/11 America. Their tone is largely outraged and militant, and the essays are occasionally courageous and biting. But it would be a mistake, I think, **to take them as much more than a kind of bien pensant liberalism**. It's clear that liberalism has always acted as the loyal opposition, pressing for its right to dissent and question, but **never finally questioning or dissenting from the very system that has produced both it and its master**. Indeed, the condition of liberalism could be the dictionary definition of **precariousness itself: utterly dependent on the system and its rules, always in a supplicatory or petitioning relation to it, wanting to have its voice heard but certainly never willing to overthrow it.** Liberalism is, in [End Page 259] that sense, not unlike the "embedded" journalists working hand in hand with the military in Iraq.

All of which brings up the question that Butler's final chapter opens and closes with: what is the role and the use of cultural criticism in these times? Butler's answer is modest and limited. What we need, she claims, is to sustain the project of the humanities and cultural criticism by trying to ensure that dissenting voices are heard within American democracy; those voices will bring "us" back to find "the human where we do not expect to find it, in its frailty and at the limits of its capacity to make sense" (151). In my view, it's crucial to resist this strain of "cultural criticism." That's not because it's unnecessary to attack the same targets as Butler attacks—we cannot not attack those targets. But rather it's because the way of thinking—the philosophical tradition, indeed—**that underpins her assaults is ultimately anything but radical.** Cultural criticism **would indeed be in a precarious state** if this liberalism were its proper and uncontested location.

## \*\*Impact Framing\*\*

### 1NC- Impact Framing

#### Consequentialism best—

#### A. Political responsibility – Aff’s framework ensures injustice.

Isaacs, ‘2 (Indiana Political Science Professor, Spring, Dissent, Vol. 49, no. 2)

Politics, in large part, involves contests over the distribution and use of power. To accomplish anything in the political world, one must attend to the means that are necessary to bring it about. And to develop such means is to develop, and to exercise, power. To say this is not to say that power is beyond morality. It is to say that power is not reducible to morality. As writers such as Niccolo Machiavelli, Max Weber, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Hannah Arendt have taught, an unyielding concern with moral goodness **undercuts political responsibility**. The concern may be morally laudable, reflecting a kind of personal integrity, but it suffers from three fatal flaws: (1) It fails to see that the purity of one’s intention does not ensure the achievement of what one intends. Abjuring violence or refusing to make common cause with morally compromised parties may seem like the right thing; but if such tactics entail impotence, then it is hard to view them as serving any moral good beyond the clean conscience of their supporters; (2) it fails to see that in a world of real violence and injustice, moral purity is not simply a form of powerlessness; **it is often a form of complicity in injustice**. This is why, from the standpoint of politics—as opposed to religion—pacifism is always a potentially immoral stand. In categorically repudiating violence, it refuses in principle to oppose certain violent injustices with any effect; and (3) it fails to see that politics is as much about unintended consequences as it is about intentions; it is the effects of action, rather than the motives of action, that is most significant. Just as the alignment with “good” may engender impotence, it is often the pursuit of “good” that generates evil. This is the lesson of communism in the twentieth century: it is not enough that one’s goals be sincere or idealistic; **it is equally important**, always, to ask about the effects of pursuing these goals and to judge these effects in pragmatic and historically contextualized ways. Moral absolutism **inhibits this judgment**. It alienates those who are not true believers. It **promotes arrogance. And it undermines political effectiveness.**

#### B. Democracy – a meaningful democracy requires consequentialism.

Woller, ’97 Brigham Young University, http://apsapolicysection.org/vol7\_2/72.pdf

At the same time, deontologically based ethical systems have severe practical limitations as a basis for public policy. At best, a priori moral principles provide only general guidance to ethical dilemmas in public affairs and do not themselves suggest appropriate public policies, and at worst, they create a regimen of regulatory unreasonableness while failing to adequately address the problem or actually making it worse. For example, a moral obligation to preserve the environment by no means implies the best way, or any way for that matter, to do so, just as there is no a priori reason to believe that any policy that claims to preserve the environment will actually do so. Any number of policies might work, and others, although seemingly consistent with the moral principle, will fail utterly. That deontological principles are an inadequate basis for environmental policy is evident in the rather significant irony that most forms of deontologically based environmental laws and regulations tend to be implemented in a very utilitarian manner by street-level enforcement officials. Moreover, ignoring the relevant costs and benefits of environmental policy and their attendant incentive structures can, as alluded to above, actually work at cross purposes to environmental preservation. (There exists an extensive literature on this aspect of regulatory enforcement and the often perverse outcomes of regulatory policy. See, for example, Ackerman, 1981; Bartrip and Fenn, 1983; Hawkins, 1983, 1984; Hawkins and Thomas, 1984.) Even the most die-hard preservationist/deontologist would, I believe, be troubled by this outcome. The above points are perhaps best expressed by Richard Flathman, The number of values typically involved in public policy decisions, the broad categories which must be employed and above all, the scope and complexity of the consequences to be anticipated militate against reasoning so conclusively that they generate an imperative to institute a specific policy. It is seldom the case that only one policy will met the criteria of the public interest (1958, p. 12). It therefore follows that in a democracy, policymakers have an ethical duty to establish a plausible link between policy alternatives and the problems they address, and the public must be reasonably assured that a policy will actually do something about an existing problem; this requires the means-end language and methodology of utilitarian ethics. Good intentions, lofty rhetoric, and moral piety are an insufficient, though perhaps at times a necessary, basis for public policy in a democracy.

#### C. In the context of energy decisions, consequentialism is needed – only way to produce transformative social change.

Manuel Arias-Maldonado, University of Malaga, March 12 (Environmental Politics Vol. 21, No. 2)

On the other hand, it seems more realistic to accept that individuals are not going to lead a social shift by themselves; rather they have to be nudged by policies that stimulate a gradual change in collective behaviour. Both Sinnot-Armstrong and Jamieson recognise that it is the governments’ task to implement realistic solutions and enable civic virtue (CE, pp. 344, 325). Ultimately, states are the key actors in the path to sustainability, especially when considering the global dimension of climate change and the subsequent need for international cooperation. Yet states cannot rely on the old habit of planning, as Held et al. underline, but rather on the clever use of flexible regulation that promotes mitigation and adaptation through multiple policy instruments and cooperation between the public and the private sector (CG, p.105). The outcomes of this strategy are intrinsically open, thus calling for anoptimistic narrative. As David King writes: ‘I believe that the necessity for technological change will drive through these new technologies to meet necessary changes imposed by our circumstances. Such changes will arrive, and effective solutions will emerge’ (CG, p. 27). Admittedly, this path will be resisted by a good number of environmentalists, since it does not predetermine a given, morally acceptable shape for the future sustainable society. But then again, as Robert Goodin (CE, p. 242) is happy to conclude, *environmentalists ought to be realists.* Soltau’s (2009) preference for a rough instead of a perfect climatic justice comes to mind as well. Those who approach climate change from an ethical perspective will also reject this conclusion. This is understandable. The case for ethics is a strong one. Yet it is also important to go beyond ethics in order to devise strategies that *may be effective in the world as it actually is*. In this regard, it might be advisable to replace the rhetoric of ecological collapse with a more attractive, enticing one. Significant sections of society have been alienated by the way in which the issue has been framed so far: either a romantic return to pre-industrial activities or a too negative view of the problems at hand (CG, p. 4). By doing this, whether we like it or not, climate change will remain a ghost in the social machine. A more positive view of the climate challenge, and hence of sustainability, is sorely needed. Otherwise it may turn out that *we get the ethics right but the politics wrong.*

#### Aff’s ethics bad – Aff’s ethics justifies violence against those that disagree with it.

John C. Mohawk, ‘2k associate professor of history at SUNY-Buffalo, member of the Seneca Nation, Utopian Legacies: A History of Conquest and Oppression in the Western World, p. 4-5

People who believe that they are acting on a plan to solve all of the humankind’s problems think they are on a kind of sacred mission, even when the origin of their inspiration is secular in nature and makes no claim to intervention by a higher power. Although adherents may have only a vague idea about how the utopia will come about or what it will be like when it arrives, utopian movements often stimulate high levels of enthusiasm and a widely shared sense of being a “chosen people” with a special destiny. People caught up in such movements tend to be intolerant of others who are not part of this projected destiny, who do not believe in the same things, and are not expected to share in the future benefits. One reason for the popularity of these movements is that they exalt the importance of the group, praise their imagined superior qualities and future prospects, and urge that, relative to other peoples, they are special and more deserving. This pattern of self-aggrandizement has often proven popular and energizing. It contains a message that others who are not special or chosen are without significant value and may be treated accordingly. This kind of intolerance can result in the denial of rights, including the right to live, to hold property, to vote, or to hold professional licenses, if the inspired group has the power to do these things. A scornful indifference to these unbelieving and unentitled others can manifest as racism and/or ethnocentrism. Such intolerance has been known to lead to crimes against humanity, including systematic acts of genocide.