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#### The aff foreclosed any grounds for discussion on Presidential war powers. This isn't a normal framework argument—it’s a rhetorical criticism of their utter disconnect from the topic. Debating a time sensitive controversy like war powers is key to challenge conventional wisdom on the subject which is good for education

**Kurr 2013** – Ph.D. student in the Communication Arts & Sciences program at Pennsylvania State University and a coach for the Penn State Debate Society (9/5, UVA Miller Center & CEDA Public Debate Series, “Bridging Competitive Debate and Public Deliberation on Presidential War Powers”, http://public.cedadebate.org/node/14)

Taken together, the connection between tournament competition and a public collaboration reorients the pedagogical function of debate. Gordon Mitchell and his colleagues comment on this possibility, “The debate tournament site’s potential to work as a translational pipeline for scholarly research presents unique opportunities for colleges and universities seeking to bolster their institutional infrastructure for undergraduate research” (Mitchell et al, 2010, p. 15). Indeed, the debate series affords competitors the opportunity to become part of the discussion and inform policymakers about potential positions, as opposed to the traditional reactionary format of hosting public debates at the season’s end. Empirically, these events had the effect of “giv[ing] voice to previously buried arguments” that “subject matter experts felt reticent to elucidate because of their institutional affiliations” (Mitchell, 2010, p. 107). Given the timeliness of the topic, these debates provide a new voice into the ongoing deliberation over war powers and help make the fruits of competitive research have a public purpose.

The second major function concerns the specific nature of deliberation over war powers. Given the connectedness between presidential war powers and the preservation of national security, deliberation is often difficult. Mark Neocleous describes that when political issues become securitized; it “helps consolidate the power of the existing forms of social domination and justifies the short-circuiting of even the most democratic forms.” (2008, p. 71). Collegiate debaters, through research and competitive debate, serve as a bulwark against this “short-circuiting” and help preserve democratic deliberation. This is especially true when considering national security issues. Eric English contends, “The success … in challenging the dominant dialogue on homeland security politics points to efficacy of academic debate as a training ground.” Part of this training requires a “robust understanding of the switch-side technique” which “helps prevent misappropriation of the technique to bolster suspect homeland security policies” (English et. al, 2007, p. 224). Hence, competitive debate training provides foundation for interrogating these policies in public.

Alarmism on the issues of war powers is easily demonstrated by Obama’s repeated attempts to transfer detainees from Guantanamo Bay. Republicans were able to launch a campaign featuring the slogan, “not in my backyard” (Schor, 2009). By locating the nexus of insecurity as close as geographically possible, the GOP were able to instill a fear of national insecurity that made deliberation in the public sphere not possible. When collegiate debaters translate their knowledge of the policy wonkery on such issues into public deliberation, it serves to cut against the alarmist rhetoric purported by opponents.

In addition to combating misperceptions concerning detainee transfers, the investigative capacity of collegiate debate provides a constant check on governmental policies. A new trend concerning national security policies has been for the government to provide “status updates” to the public. On March 28, 2011, Obama gave a speech concerning Operation Odyssey Dawn in Libya and the purpose of the bombings. Jeremy Engels and William Saas describe this “post facto discourse” as a “new norm” where “Americans are called to acquiesce to decisions already made” (2013, p. 230). Contra to the alarmist strategy that made policy deliberation impossible, this rhetorical strategy posits that deliberation is not necessary. Collegiate debaters researching war powers are able to interrogate whether deliberation is actually needed. Given the technical knowledge base needed to comprehend the mechanism of how war powers operate, debate programs serve as a constant investigation into whether deliberation is necessary not only for prior action but also future action. By raising public awareness, there is a greater potential that “the public’s inquiry into potential illegal action abroad” could “create real incentives to enforce the WPR” (Druck, 2010, p. 236). While this line of interrogation could be fulfilled by another organization, collegiate debaters who translate their competitive knowledge into public awareness create a “space for talk” where the public has “previously been content to remain silent” (Engels & Saas, 2013, p. 231).

Given the importance of presidential war powers and the strategies used by both sides of the aisle to stifle deliberation, the import of competitive debate research into the public realm should provide an additional check of being subdued by alarmism or acquiescent rhetorics. After creating that space for deliberation, debaters are apt to influence the policies themselves. Mitchell furthers, “Intercollegiate debaters can play key roles in retrieving and amplifying positions that might otherwise remain sedimented in the policy process” (2010, p. 107). With the timeliness of the war powers controversy and the need for competitive debate to reorient publicly, the CEDA/Miller Center series represents a symbiotic relationship that ought to continue into the future. Not only will collegiate debaters become better public advocates by shifting from competition to collaboration, the public becomes more informed on a technical issue where deliberation was being stifled. As a result, debaters reinvigorate debate.

#### That's a prior question to any ethical stance on the topic itself—they cede the debate space to conventional wisdom and shut down the subject

Mucher, 12 [“Malaise in the Classroom: Teaching Secondary Students about the Presidency” [Stephen Mucher](http://www.bard.edu/academics/faculty/faculty.php?action=details&id=1969) is assistant professor of history education in the Master of Arts in Teaching Program at Bard College, <http://www.hannaharendtcenter.org/?p=7741>]

Contemporary observers of secondary education have appropriately decried the startling lack of understanding most students possess of the American presidency. This critique should not be surprising. In textbooks and classrooms across the country, curriculum writers and teachers offer an abundance of disconnected facts about the nation’s distinct presidencies—the personalities, idiosyncrasies, and unique time-bound crises that give character and a simple narrative arc to each individual president. Some of these descriptions contain vital historical knowledge. Students should learn, for example, how a conflicted Lyndon Johnson pushed Congress for sweeping domestic programs against the backdrop of Vietnam or how a charismatic and effective communicator like Ronald Reagan found Cold War collaboration with Margaret Thatcher and Mikhail Gorbachev. But what might it mean to ask high school students to look across these and other presidencies to encourage more sophisticated forms of historical thinking? More specifically, what might teachers begin to do to promote thoughtful writing and reflection that goes beyond the respective presidencies and questions the nature of the executive office itself? And how might one teach the presidency, in Arendtian fashion, encouraging open dialogue around common texts, acknowledging the necessary uncertainty in any evolving classroom interpretation of the past, and encouraging flexibility of thought for an unpredictable future? By provocatively asking whether the president “matters,” the [2012 Hannah Arendt Conference](http://www.bard.edu/hannaharendtcenter/conference9-12/) provided an ideal setting for New York secondary teachers to explore this central pedagogical challenge in teaching the presidency. Participants in this special writing workshop, scheduled concurrently with the conference, attended conference panels and also retreated to consider innovative and focused approaches to teaching the presidency. Conference panels promoted a broader examination of the presidency than typically found in secondary curricula. A diverse and notable group of scholars urged us to consider the events and historical trends, across multiple presidencies, constraining or empowering any particular chief executive. These ideas, explored more thoroughly in the intervening writing workshops, provoked productive argument on what characteristics might define the modern American presidency. In ways both explicit and implicit, sessions pointed participants to numerous and complicated ways Congress, the judiciary, mass media, U.S. citizens, and the president relate to one another. This sweeping view of the presidency contains pedagogical potency and has a place in secondary classrooms. Thoughtful history educators should ask big questions, encourage open student inquiry, and promote civic discourse around the nature of power and the purposes of human institutions. But as educators, we also know that the aim and value of our discipline resides in place-and time-bound particulars that beg for our interpretation and ultimately build an evolving understanding of the past. Good history teaching combines big ambitious questions with careful attention to events, people, and specific contingencies. Such specifics are the building blocks of storytelling and shape the analogies students need to think through an uncertain future. Jimmy Carter’s oval office speech on July 15, 1979, describing a national “crisis of confidence” presented a unique case study for thinking about the interaction between American presidents and the populations the office is constitutionally obliged to serve. Workshop participants prepared for the conference by watching the [video footage](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCOd-qWZB_g) from this address and reading parts of Kevin Mattson’s [history of the speech](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/15/books/excerpt-what-the-heck-mr-president.html). In what quickly became known as the “Malaise Speech,” Carter attempted a more direct and personal appeal to the American people, calling for personal sacrifice and soul searching, while warning of dire consequences if the nation did not own up to its energy dependencies. After Vietnam and Watergate, Carter believed, America needed a revival that went beyond policy recommendations. His television address, after a mysterious 10-day sequestration at Camp David, took viewers through Carter’s own spiritual journey and promoted the conclsions he drew from it. Today, the Malaise Speech has come to symbolize a failed Carter presidency. He has been lampooned, for example, on The Simpsons as our most sympathetically honest and humorously ineffectual former president. In one [episode](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D91IlKLtIH8), residents of Springfield cheer the unveiling of his presidential statue, emblazoned with “Malaise Forever” on the pedestal. Schools give the historical Carter even less respect. Standardized tests such as the NY Regents exam ask little if anything about his presidency. The Malaise speech is rarely mentioned in classrooms—at either the secondary or post-secondary levels. Similarly, few historians identify Carter as particularly influential, especially when compared to the leaders elected before and after him. Observers who mention his 1979 speeches are most likely footnoting a transitional narrative for an America still recovering from a turbulent Sixties and heading into a decisive conservative reaction. Indeed, workshop participants used writing to question and debate Carter’s place in history and the limited impact of the speech. But we also identified, through [primary sources](http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/1976) on the 1976 election and documents around the speech, ways for students to think expansively about the evolving relationship between a president and the people. A quick analysis of the [electoral map](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:1976prescountymap2.PNG) that brought Carter into office reminded us that Carter was attempting to convince a nation that looks and behaves quite differently than today. The vast swaths of blue throughout the South and red coastal counties in New York and California are striking. Carter’s victory map can resemble an electoral photo negative to what has now become a familiar and predictable image of specific [regional alignments](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/interactives/campaign08/election/uscounties.html) in the Bush/Obama era. The president who was elected in 1976, thanks in large part to an electorate still largely undefined by the later rise of the Christian Right, remains an historical enigma. As an Evangelical Democrat from Georgia, with roots in both farming and nuclear physics, comfortable admitting his sins in both Sunday School and Playboy, and neither energized by or defensive about abortion or school prayer, Carter is as difficult to image today as the audience he addressed in 1979. It is similarly difficult for us to imagine the Malaise Speech ever finding a positive reception. However, this is precisely what [Mattson](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/02/books/review/Bai-t.html) argues. Post-speech weekend polls gave Carter’s modest popularity rating a surprisingly respectable 11-point bump. Similarly, in a year when most of the president’s earlier speeches were ignored, the White House found itself flooded with phone calls and letters, almost universally positive. The national press was mixed and several prominent columnists praised the speech. This reaction to such an unconventional address, Mattson goes on to argue, suggests that the presidency can matter. Workshop participants who attended later sessions heard Walter Russell Mead reference the ways presidents can be seen as either transformative or transactional. In many ways, the “malaise moment” could be viewed as a late term attempt by a transactional president to forge a transformational presidency. In the days leading up to the speech, Carter went into self-imposed exile, summoning spiritual advisors to his side, and encouraging administration-wide soul searching. Such an approach to leadership, admirable to some and an act of desperation to others, defies conventions and presents an odd image of presidential behavior (an idea elaborated on by conference presenter Wyatt Mason). “Malaise” was never mentioned in Carter’s speech. But his transformational aspirations are hard to miss. In a nation that was proud of hard work, strong families, close-knit communities, and our faith in God, too many of us now tend to worship self-indulgence and consumption. Human identity is no longer defined by what one does, but by what one owns. But we've discovered that owning things and consuming things does not satisfy our longing for meaning. We've learned that piling up material goods cannot fill the emptiness of lives which have no confidence or purpose. It is this process—the intellectual act of interpreting Carter and his [in]famous speech as aberrant presidential behavior—that allows teachers and their students to explore together the larger question of defining the modern presidency. And it is precisely this purposeful use of a small number of primary sources that forces students to rethink, through writing and reflection, the parameters that shape how presidents relate to their electorate. In our workshop we saw how case studies, in-depth explorations of the particulars of history, precede productive debate on whether the presidency matters. The forgotten Carter presidency can play a disproportionately impactful pedagogical role for teachers interested in exploring the modern presidency. As any high school teacher knows, students rarely bring an open interpretive lens to Clinton, Bush, or Obama. Ronald Reagan, as the first political memory for many of their parents, remains a polarizing a figure. However, few students or their parents hold strong politically consequential opinions about Carter. Most Americans, at best, continue to view him as a likable, honest, ethical man who is much more effective as an ex-president than he was as president. Workshop participants learned that the initial support Carter received after the Malaise Speech faded quickly. Mattson and some members of the administration now argue that the President lacked a plan to follow up on the goodwill he received from a nation desiring leadership. Reading [Ezra Klein](http://m.newyorker.com/reporting/2012/03/19/120319fa_fact_klein), we also considered the possibility that, despite all the attention educators give to presidential speeches (as primary sources that quickly encapsulate presidential visions), there is little empirical evidence that any public address really makes much of a difference. In either case, Carter’s loss 16 months later suggests that his failures of leadership both transformational and transactional. Did Carter’s speech matter? The teachers in the workshop concluded their participation by attempting to answer this question, working collaboratively to draft a brief historical account contextualizing the 1979 malaise moment. In doing so, we engaged in precisely the type of activity missing in too many secondary school classrooms today: interrogating sources, corroborating evidence, debating conflicting interpretations, paying close attention to language, and doing our best to examine our underlying assumptions about the human condition. These efforts produced some clarity, but also added complexity to our understanding of the past and led to many additional questions, both pedagogical and historical. In short, our writing and thinking during the Arendt Conference produced greater uncertainty. And that reality alone suggests that study of the presidency does

indeed matter.

#### Policy engagement doesn’t require you to affirm the USFG or any of the framework offense they want to ascribe to this—it’s an EDUCATION argument

Smith 2012 (Andrea, “The Moral Limits of the Law: Settler Colonialism and the Anti-Violence Movement” settler colonial studies 2, 2 (2012) Special Issue: Karangatia: Calling Out Gender and Sexuality in Settler Societies)

Aside from Derrick Bell, because racial and gender justice legal advocates are so invested in the morality of the law, there has not been sustained strategising on what other possible frameworks may be used. Bell provides some possibilities, but does not specifically engage alternative strategies in a sustained fashion. Thus, it may be helpful to look for new possibilities in an unexpected place, the work of anti-trust legal scholar Christopher Leslie. Again, the work of Leslie may seem quite remote from scholars and activists organizing against the logics of settler colonialism. But it may be the fact that Leslie is not directly engaging in social justice work that allows him to disinvest in the morality of the law in a manner which is often difficult for those who are directly engaged in social justice work to do. This disinvestment, I contend is critical for those who wish to dismantle settler colonialism to rethink their legal strategies. In ‘Trust, Distrust, and Anti-Trust’, Christopher Leslie explains that while the economic impact of cartels is incalculable, cartels are also unstable.18 Because cartel members cannot develop formal relationships with each other, they must develop partnerships based on informal trust mechanisms in order to overcome the famous ‘prisoners’ dilemma’. The prisoner’s dilemma, as described by Leslie, is one in which two prisoners are arrested and questioned separately with no opportunity for communication between them. There is enough evidence to convict both of minor crimes for a one year sentence but not enough for a more substantive sentence. The police offer both prisoners the following deal: if you confess and implicate your partner, and your partner does not confess, you will be set free and your partner will receive a ten-year sentence. If you confess, and he does as well, then you will both receive a five-year sentence. In this scenario, it becomes the rational choice for both to confess because if the first person does not confess and the second person does, the first person will receive a ten-year sentence. Ironically, however, while both will confess, it would have been in both of their interests not to confess. Similarly, Leslie argues, cartels face the prisoners’ dilemma. If all cartel members agree to fix a price, and abide by this price fixing, then all will benefit. However, individual cartel members are faced with the dilemma of whether or not they should join the cartel and then cheat by lowering prices. They fear that if they do not cheat, someone else will and drive them out of business. At the same time, by cheating, they disrupt the cartel that would have enabled them to all profit with higher prices. In addition, they face a second dilemma when faced with anti-trust legislation. Should they confess in exchange for immunity or take the chance that no one else will confess and implicate them? Cartel members can develop mechanisms to circumvent pressures. Such mechanisms include the development of personal relationships, frequent communication, goodwill gestures, etc. In the absence of trust, cartels may employ trust substitutes such as informal contracts and monitoring mechanisms. When these trust and trust substitute mechanisms break down, the cartel members will start to cheat, thus causing the cartel to disintegrate. Thus, Leslie proposes, anti-trust legislation should focus on laws that will strategically disrupt trust mechanisms. Unlike racial or gender justice advocates who focus on making moral statements through the law, Leslie proposes using the law for strategic ends, even if the law makes a morally suspect statement. For instance, in his article, ‘Anti-Trust Amnesty, Game Theory, and Cartel Stability’, Leslie critiques the federal Anti-Trust’s 1993 Corporate Lenience Policy that provided greater incentives for cartel partners to report on cartel activity. This policy provided ‘automatic’ amnesty for the first cartel member to confess, and decreasing leniency for subsequent confessors in the order to which they confessed. Leslie notes that this amnesty led to an increase of amnesty applications.19 However, Leslie notes that the effectiveness of this reform is hindered by the fact that the ringleader of the cartel is not eligible for amnesty. This policy seems morally sound. Why would we want the ringleader, the person who most profited from the cartel, to be eligible for amnesty? The problem, however, with attempting to make a moral statement through the law is that it is counter-productive if the goal is to actually break up cartels. If the ringleader is never eligible for amnesty, the ringleader becomes inherently trustworthy because he has no incentive to ever report on his partners. Through his inherent trustworthiness, the cartel can build its trust mechanisms. Thus, argues Leslie, the most effective way to destroy cartels is to render all members untrustworthy by granting all the possibility of immunity. While Leslie’s analysis is directed towards policy, it also suggests an alternative framework for pursuing social justice through the law, to employ it for its strategic effects rather than through the moral statements it purports to make. It is ironic that an anti-trust scholar such as Leslie displays less ‘trust’ in the law than do many anti-racist/anti-colonial activists and scholars who work through legal reform.20 It also indicates that it is possible to engage legal reform more strategically if one no longer trusts it. As Beth Richie notes, the anti-violence movement’s primary strategy for addressing gender violence was to articulate it as a crime.21 Because it is presumed that the best way to address a social ill is to call it a ‘crime’, this strategy is then deemed the correct moral strategy. When this strategy backfires and does not end violence, and in many cases increases violence against women, it becomes difficult to argue against this strategy because it has been articulated in moral terms. If, however, we were to focus on legal reforms chosen for their strategic effects, it would be easier to change the strategy should our calculus of its strategic effects suggest so. We would also be less complacent about the legal reforms we advocate as has happened with most of the laws that have been passed on gender violence. Advocates presume that because they helped pass a ‘moral’ law, then their job is done. If, however, the criteria for legal reforms are their strategic effects, we would then be continually monitoring the operation of these laws to see if they were having the desired effects. For instance, since the primary reason women do not leave battering relationships is because they do not have another home to go, what if our legal strategies shifted from criminalising domestic violence to advocating affordable housing? While the shift from criminalisation may seem immoral, women are often removed from public housing under one strike laws in which they lose access to public housing if a ‘crime’ (including domestic violence) happens in their residence, whether or not they are the perpetrator. If our goal was actually to keep women safe, we might need to creatively rethink what legal reforms would actually increase safety.

### 1nc case

#### Rutgers makes an evaluation about the debate community based off the Weekly Standard! The debate community does not relegate anyone to the so-called “project”! A weak-ass newspaper that got unanimously rejected by the entire community that mischaracterizes debate should not be a determiner for progress is debate. Emporia won the NDT, and newspapers backlashed, not the debate community.

#### The Weekly Standard is bad scholarship – the debate community response was positive

Redding 13 (Rob, Editor & Publisher – Redding News Review, “History-Setting Debate Team Pulls Winning Case from Web after Negative Press,” <http://www.reddingnewsreview.com/newspages/2013newspages/history_> debate\_press\_13\_1000036.htm)

The Weekly Standard, on April 13, targeted Ryan Wash, a senior, and Elijah Smith, a sophomore, declaring that Emporia's historic win at the National Debate Tournament and the Cross Examination Debate Association championship mark the official "Decline of Debate". Wash, who is openly gay, and his debate partner won both NDT and CEDA using arguments about black gay sexuality.

Maurer said he took down the notes to the winning case because he was concerned about how conservative media has been attacking the school.

"I took them down after the Weekly Standard started quoting some of our stuff. While **I am not all that impressed by the biting nature of the there criticism**, it didn't really cut that deep for me. At the same time, I don't want the creative works to be parsed over by the likes of the Rush Limbaugh and their derivatives in their universe."

Still, Wake Forest University communications chair and former debate coach Allan Louden explains the significance of the win in an white-dominated activity.

“CEDA crowns the popular national champion,” Louden explained, noting that the CEDA tournament is open to all teams that choose to compete. “At NDT, teams have to qualify.”

The NDT has been crowning winners for nearly 70 years, according to Emporia. Its website lists the top four places each year going back to 1947. CEDA’s website goes back to 1986.

Louden’s says the “University of California, Berkeley came within one round of doing it” in 2005.

What is most impressive, the team of Wash and Smith beat Northwestern University, which already has 14 national championships at NDT and one CEDA championship for a total of 15. Dartmouth College and Harvard University are tied at six NDT championships for second place. Harvard has one CEDA championship and Dartmouth has three second place finishes at the CEDA championship.

#### Vote negative to align the ballot with concrete proposals that address discrimination in debate—it’s an ALTERNATIVE to their yes-or-no binary about affirming the community as such.

#### Specifically, that means topic selection reform by requiring greater voting share for groups discriminated against by anti-Blackness; judge preference reform that using Justin Greens proposal for the 2013 Wake tournament as a starting point; strengthened CEDA and NDT bylaw restrictions on harassment and hate speech.

#### These are examples of options that their war-on-debate platform forecloses—we’ll impact turn their method here.

#### 1. Cooption—using the ballot as a platform for all-or-nothing activism is an ineffective method—doesn’t address any of the discrimination they outline in the 1ac—only gives ammo to the machine they’ve criticized

**Talisse 2005** – philosophy professor at Vanderbilt (Robert, Philosophy & Social Criticism, 31.4, “Deliberativist responses to activist challenges”) \*note: gendered language in this article refers to arguments made by two specific individuals in an article by Iris Young

My call for a more detailed articulation of the second activist challenge may be met with the radical claim that I have begged the question. It may be said that my analysis of the activist’s challenge and my request for a more rigorous argument presume what the activist denies, namely, that arguments and reasons operate independently of ideology. Here the activist might begin to think that he made a mistake in agreeing to engage in a discussion with a deliberativist – his position throughout the debate being that one should decline to engage in argument with one’s opponents! He may say that of course activism seems lacking to a deliberativist, for the deliberativist measures the strength of a view according to her own standards. But the activist rejects those standards, claiming that they are appropriate only for seminar rooms and faculty meetings, not for real-world politics. Consequently the activist may say that by agreeing to enter into a discussion with the deliberativist, he had unwittingly abandoned a crucial element of his position. He may conclude that the consistent activist avoids arguing altogether, and communicates only with his comrades. Here the discussion ends.

However, the deliberativist has a further consideration to raise as his discursive partner departs for the next rally or street demonstration. The foregoing debate had presumed that there is but one kind of activist and but one set of policy objectives that activists may endorse. Yet Young’s activist is opposed not only by deliberative democrats, but also by persons who also call themselves ‘activists’ and who are committed to a set of policy objectives quite different from those endorsed by this one activist. Once these opponents are introduced into the mix, the stance of Young’s activist becomes more evidently problematic, even by his own standards.

To explain: although Young’s discussion associates the activist always with politically progressive causes, such as the abolition of the World Trade Organization (109), the expansion of healthcare and welfare programs (113), and certain forms of environmentalism (117), not all activists are progressive in this sense. Activists on the extreme and racist Right claim also to be fighting for justice, fairness, and liberation. They contend that existing processes and institutions are ideologically hegemonic and distorting. Accordingly, they reject the deliberative ideal on the same grounds as Young’s activist. They advocate a program of political action that operates outside of prevailing structures, disrupting their operations and challenging their legitimacy. They claim that such action aims to enlighten, inform, provoke, and excite persons they see as complacent, naïve, excluded, and ignorant. Of course, these activists vehemently oppose the policies endorsed by Young’s activist; they argue that justice requires activism that promotes objectives such as national purity, the disenfranchisement of Jews, racial segregation, and white supremacy. More importantly, they see Young’s activist’s vocabulary of ‘inclusion’, ‘structural inequality’, ‘institutionalized power’, as fully in line with what they claim is a hegemonic ideology that currently dominates and systematically distorts our political discourses.21

The point here is not to imply that Young’s activist is no better than the racist activist. The point rather is that Young’s activist’s arguments are, in fact, adopted by activists of different stripes and put in the service of a wide range of policy objectives, each claiming to be just, liberatory, and properly inclusive.22 In light of this, there is a question the activist must confront. How should he deal with those who share his views about the proper means for bringing about a more just society, but promote a set of ends that he opposes?

It seems that Young’s activist has no way to deal with opposing activist programs except to fight them or, if fighting is strategically unsound or otherwise problematic, to accept a Hobbesian truce. This might not seem an unacceptable response in the case of racists; however, the question can be raised in the case of any less extreme but nonetheless opposed activist program, including different styles of politically progressive activism. Hence the deliberativist raises her earlier suspicions that, in practice, activism entails a politics based upon interestbased power struggles amongst adversarial factions.

#### 2. Their understanding of our white subject position is a fatalist, self-fulfilling prophecy—it foregoes the value of allies by depicting the debate community as an enemy to fight – our alternative is to expose the narrative of the white ally, not to redeem whiteness, but for its utility – only then is it possible for the judge to create a pro-active position

Tatum 94 (Beverly Daniel, “Teaching White Students about Racism: The Search for White Allies and the Restoration of Hope,” Teachers College Record, Summer 1994, 95(4), [https://web-prod.spu.edu/depts /csfd/documents/TeachingWhiteStudentsaboutRacism.pdf](https://web-prod.spu.edu/depts%20/csfd/documents/TeachingWhiteStudentsaboutRacism.pdf))

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THE MODEL OF THE WHITE ALLY In fact, another model does exist. There is a history of white protest against racism, a history of whites who have resisted the role of oppressor and who have been allies to people of color. Unfortunately these whites are often invisible to students; **their names are unknown**. Think back to the beginning of this article. How many names of white antiracists were on the tip of your tongue? If students have studied the civil rights era (many of my students are poorly informed about this period of history), they may know about Viola Liuzzo and Michael Schwerner and other whites killed for their antiracist efforts. But who wants to be a martyr? Do they know about white allies who spoke up, who worked for social change, who resisted racism and lived to tell about it? How did these white allies break free from the confines of the racist socialization they surely experienced to redefine themselves in this way? These are the voices that many white students are hungry to hear. This information needs to be provided in order to help white students construct a pro-active white identity. In my class I try to provide concrete examples of such people. White professors teaching about racism who see themselves as allies may be able to share examples from their own lives and in this way might be role models for their white students. As an African American professor, I am limited in this regard.17 My strategy has been to invite a well-known white antiracist activist, Andrea Ayvazian, to my class to speak about her own personal journey toward an awareness of racism and her development as a white ally.18 Students typically ask questions that reflect their fears about social isolation at this phase of development. “Did you lose friends when you started to speak up?” “My boyfriend makes a lot of racist comments. What can I do?” “What do you say to your father at Thanksgiving when he tells those jokes?” White students, who often comment about how depressing it is to study about racism, typically say that the opportunity to talk with this ally gave them renewed hope. Today’s class began with a visit from . . . a white woman who has made dismantling white privilege a way of life. . . . Her personal story gave me a feeling of hope in the struggle against racism. [Terri, a white w o m a n ] Now that we have learned about the severity of all of the horrible oppression in the world, it is comforting to know how I can become an ally. [Barbara, a white woman] What a POWERFUL speaker! Andrea was so upbeat and energetic. I think that her talk really boosted the spirits in our class. I personally have become quite disillusioned with some of our small group discussions of late, and having her talk brought some deep reflection and positive insight on the future—especially ideas and revelations concerning my role as perhaps a white ally. . . . Her presentation was overall very well received, and I enjoyed it v e r y much. There i s h o p e ! [Robin, a white female] One point that the speaker discussed at length was the idea that “allies need allies,” others who will support their efforts to swim against the tide of cultural and institutional racism. This point was especially helpful for one young woman who had been struggling with the feelings of isolation often experienced by whites in the Disintegration stage. She wrote: About being an ally, a positive role model: . . . it enhanced my positive feelings about the difference each individual (me!) can make. I don’t need to feel helpless when there is so much I can do. I still can see how easily things can back-up and start getting depressing, but I can also see how it is possible to keep going strong and powerful. One of the most important points she made was the necessity of a support group/system; people to remind me of what I have done, why I should keep going, of why I’m making a difference, why I shouldn’t feel helpless. I think our class started to help me with those issues, as soon as I started to let it, and now I’ve found similar supports in friends and family. **They’re out there**, its just finding and establishing them—it really is a necessity. Without support, it would be too easy to give up, burn out, become helpless again. In any endeavor support is important, but when the forces against you are so prevalent and deep-rooted as racism is in this society, it is the only way to keep moving forward. [Joanne, a white woman] In my view, the restoration of hope is an essential part of the learning process. Otherwise, students, both white and of color, become immobilized by their own despair. Though the focus of this article is clearly on the process of white racial identity development, it should be pointed out that students of color also need to know that whites can be allies. For some students of color, the idea that there are white people who have moved beyond guilt to a position of claiming responsibility for the dismantling of institutional racism is a novel one. They too find hope in the possibility. Writing in response to the activist’s visit, Sonia, a Latina, commented: I don’t know when I have been more impressed by anyone. She filled me with hope for the future. She made me believe that there are good people in the world and that whites suffer too and want to change things . In addition to inviting Andrea Ayvazian to my class, I try to provide written materials about white people who have been engaged in examining their own white identity and who have made a commitment to antiracist activity in their own lives. However, this information is not easily located. One of the consequences of racism in our society is that those who oppose it are often marginalized. As Colman McCarthy writes in the foreword to The Universe Bends toward Justice, “**students know warmakers, not peacemakers** . ”1 9 As with other marginalized groups, the stories of peacemakers, of white allies, are not readily accessed. Yet having access to these stories makes a difference to students who are looking for ways to be agents of change. A resource list of materials I have been able to identify is included at the conclusion of this article. Students, motivated by their own need for such information, can be quite resourceful in the generation of this knowledge. Recently, a white woman who had taken my Psychology of Racism course conducted an independent study project investigating the phenomenological experience of being a white ally on a college campus. Interviewing other white women, ranging in age from nineteen to forty-seven, she was able to generate valuable information about the daily implications of being an antiracist.2 0 It was apparent that her research was more than an academic exercise—indeed a way to strengthen her own commitment to antiracist action. More of this kind of research needs to be done so that the fourth model of whiteness, that of the white ally, becomes a more visible option for white students. Though the focus here has been on the provision of white role models for students trying to construct a positive white racial identity, it is important to acknowledge that there is a parallel need for both white students and students of color to see and read about clear examples of empowered people of color. Teaching about racism should not be only a litany of the ways people of color have been victimized by oppression. It must also include examples of the resistance of people of color to victimization. Just as white students are not eager to see themselves as oppressors, students of color do not want to be characterized as victims.2 1 In addition, white students should not be led to believe that the role of the ally is to “help” victims of racism. The role of the ally is to speak up against systems of oppression, and to challenge other whites to do the same. **Teaching about racism needs to shift from an exploration of the experiences of victims and victimizers to that of empowered people of color and their white allies, creating the possibility of working together as partners in the establishment of a more just society**.

#### 3. Dominant ideology is strengthened by critical opposition. Their understanding of privilege and debate functions more to validate their efforts than address the problem. The 1ac prefigures us as ambassadors for the status quo—voting aff can only entrench that symbolic order

David Gray Carlson Professor of Law, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law Columbia Law Review November, 1999

Schlag presents a dark vision of what he calls "the bureaucracy," which crushes us and controls us. It operates on "a field of pain and death." n259 It deprives us of choice, speech, n260 and custom. n261 As bureaucracy cannot abide great minds, legal education must suppress greatness through mind numbing repetition. n262 In fact, legal thought is the bureaucracy and cannot be distinguished from it. n263 If legal thought tried to buck the bureaucracy, the bureaucracy would instantly crush it. n264 Schlag observes that judges have taken "oaths that require subordination of truth, understanding, and insight, to the preservation of certain bureaucratic governmental institutions and certain sacred texts." n265 Legal scholarship and lawyers generally n266 are the craven tools of bureaucracy, and those who practice law or scholarship simply serve to justify and strengthen the bureaucracy. "If there were no discipline of American law, the liberal state would have to invent it." n267 "Legal thinkers in effect serve as a kind of P.R. firm for the bureaucratic state." n268 Legal scholarship has sold out to the bureaucracy: Insofar as the expressions of the state in the form of [statutes, etc.] can be expected to endure, so can the discipline that so helpfully organizes, rationalizes, and represents these expressions as intelligent knowledge. As long as the discipline shows obeisance to the authoritative legal forms, it enjoys the backing of the state... Disciplinary knowledge of law can be true not because it is true, but because the state makes it true. n269 Scholarship produces a false "conflation between what [academics] celebrate as 'law' and the ugly bureaucratic noise that grinds daily in the [\*1946] [ ] courts...." n270 Scholarship "becomes the mode of discourse by which bureaucratic institutions and practices re-present themselves as subject to the rational ethical-moral control of autonomous individuals." n271 "The United States Supreme Court and its academic groupies in the law schools have succeeded in doing what many, only a few decades ago, would have thought impossible. They have succeeded in making Kafka look naive." n272 Lacanian theory allows us to interpret the meaning of this anti-Masonic vision precisely. Schlag's bureaucracy must be seen as a "paranoid construction according to which our universe is the work of art of unknown creators." n273 In Schlag's view, the bureaucracy is in control of law and language and uses it exclusively for its own purposes. The bureaucracy is therefore the Other of the Other, "a hidden subject who pulls the strings of the great Other (the symbolic order)." n274 The bureaucracy, in short, is the superego (i.e., absolute knowledge of the ego), n275 but rendered visible and projected outward. The superego, the ego's stern master, condemns the ego and condemns what it does. Schlag has transferred this function to the bureaucracy. As is customary, n276 by describing Schlag's vision as a paranoid construction, I do not mean to suggest that Professor Schlag is mentally ill or unable to function. Paranoid construction is not in fact the illness. It is an attempt at healing what the illness is - the conflation of the domains of the symbolic, imaginary, and real. n277 This conflation is what Lacan calls "psychosis." Whereas the "normal" subject is split between the three domains, the psychotic is not. He is unable to keep the domains separate. n278 The symbolic domain of language begins to lose place to the real domain. The psychotic raves incoherently, and things begin to talk to [\*1947] him directly. n279 The psychotic, "immersed in jouissance," n280 loses desire itself. Paranoia is a strategy the subject adopts to ward off breakdown. The paranoid vision holds together the symbolic order itself and thereby prevents the subject from slipping into the psychotic state in which "the concrete 'I' loses its absolute power over the entire system of its determinations." n281 This of course means - and here is the deep irony of paraonia - that bureaucracy is the very savior of romantic metaphysics. If the romantic program were ever fulfilled - if the bureaucracy were to fold up shop and let the natural side of the subject have its way - subjectivity would soon be enveloped, smothered, and killed in the night of psychosis. n282 Paranoid ambivalence toward bureaucracy (or whatever other fantasy may be substituted for it) is very commonly observed. Most recently, conservatives "organized their enjoyment" by opposing communism. n283 By confronting and resisting an all-encompassing, sinister power, the subject confirms his existence as that which sees and resists the power. n284 As long as communism existed, conservatism could be perceived. When communism disappeared, conservatives felt "anxiety" n285 - a lack of purpose. Although they publicly opposed communism, they secretly regretted its disappearance. Within a short time, a new enemy was found to organize conservative jouissance - the cultural left. (On the left, a similar story could be told about the organizing function of racism and sexism, which, of course, have not yet disappeared.) These humble examples show that the romantic yearning for wholeness is always the opposite of [\*1948] what it appears to be. n286 We paranoids need our enemies to organize our enjoyment. Paranoid construction is, in the end, a philosophical interpretation, even in the clinical cases. n287 As Schlag has perceived, the symbolic order of law is artificial. It only exists because we insist it does. We all fear that the house of cards may come crashing down. Paradoxically, it is this very "anxiety" that shores up the symbolic. The normal person knows he must keep insisting that the symbolic order exists precisely because the person knows it is a fiction. n288 The paranoid, however, assigns this role to the bureaucracy (and thereby absolves himself from the responsibility). Thus, paranoid delusion allows for the maintenance of a "cynical" distance between the paranoid subject and the realm of mad psychosis. n289 In truth, cynicism toward bureaucracy shows nothing but the unconfronted depth to which the cynic is actually committed to what ought to be abolished.

#### Resistance makes ideology enjoyable—they get to relish our failure to justify a system without having to dislodge any fundamental beliefs. It’s a cynical gesture to frame your vote as the arbiter of their cause

Slavoj **Zizek**  Philosopher and Psychoanalyst, Institute for Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. Cardozo Law Review 19**95**

Emphasis should be laid on the inherent political dimension of the notion of enjoyment or on the way this kernel of enjoyment functions as a political factor. Let us probe this dimension through one of the enigmas of cultural life in postsocialist Eastern Europe: the fate of Milan Kundera. Throughout the sixties and the seventies, Kundera's novels, from The Joke to The Unbearable Lightness of Being, were hailed in the West at the quintessential cultural expression of the Central European movement, preparing the ground for the "velvet revolution" that overthrew the Communist regime in 1990. Yet in his own country, the Czech Republic, the attitude towards him in the "orthodox" dissident circles was always one of uneasiness. Even now, after the victory of democracy, he suffers a kind of excommunication in Bohemia. His works are rarely published, the media pass them over in silence, and everybody is somehow embarrassed to speak about him. In order to justify such a treatment, one rakes up old stories about his hidden collaboration with the Communist regime, about his taking refuge in private pleasures and avoiding the morally upright conflict a la Vaclav Havel, etc. However, the roots of this resistance lie deeper: Kundera conveys a message unamenable to the "normalized" democratic consciousness. At first glance, the fundamental axis that structures the universe of his works seems to be the opposition between the pretentious pathos of the official socialist ideology and the islands of everyday private life, with its small joys and pleasures, laughters and tears, beyond the reach of ideology. These islands enable us to assume a distance which renders visible the ideological ritual in its vain, ridiculous pretentiousness and grotesque meaninglessness: it is not worth the trouble to revolt against an official ideology with pathetic speeches on freedom and democracy - sooner or later, such a revolt leads to a new version of the "Big March" (Kundera's ironic name for the tightly controlled mass movement in which individual destinies are sacrificed to some sacred "progressive" ideological goal). If Kundera is reduced to such an attitude, it is easy to dismiss him via Havel's fundamental "Althusserian" insight into how the **ultimate conformist attitude** is precisely such an "apolitical" stance which, while publicly obeying the imposed ritual, privately indulges in cynical irony. It is not sufficient to ascertain that the ideological ritual is a mere appearance which nobody takes se- [\*930] riously - this appearance is essential, which is why one has to take a risk and refuse to participate in the public ritual. n8 One must therefore take a step further and consider that there is no way to simply step aside from ideology. The private indulgence in cynicism and the obsession with private pleasures are all precisely how totalitarian ideology operates in nonideological everyday life. It is how this life is determined by ideology, how ideology is "present in it in the mode of absence," if we may resort to this syntagma from the heroic epoch of structuralism. The depoliticization of the private sphere in late Socialist societies is "compulsive," marked by the fundamental prohibition of free political discussion; for that reason, such depoliticization always functions as the evasion of what is truly at stake. This accounts for the most immediately striking feature of Kundera's novels: the depoliticized private sphere in no way functions as the free domain of innocent pleasures; there is always something damp, claustrophobic, inauthentic, even desperate, in the characters' striving for sexual and other pleasures. In this respect, the lesson of Kundera's novels is the exact opposite of a naive reliance on the innocent private sphere; the totalitarian socialist ideology vitiates from within the very sphere of privacy to which we take refuge. This insight, however, is far from conclusive. Another step is needed to deal with Kundera's even more ambiguous lesson. Notwithstanding the dampness of the private sphere, the fact remains that the totalitarian situation gave rise to a series of phenomena attested by numerous chronicles of everyday life in the socialist East. In reaction to totalitarian ideological domination, not only a cynical escape into the "good life" of private pleasures took place, but also an extraordinary flourishing of authentic friendship, of paying visits at home, of shared dinners, and of passionate intellectual conversations in closed societies - features which usually fascinated visitors from the West. The problem, of course, is that there is no way to draw a clear line of separation between the two sides; they are the front and the back of the same coin, which is why, with the advent of democracy, they both get lost. It is to Kundera's credit that he does not conceal this ambiguity: the spirit of "Middle Europe" - of authentic friendship and intellectual sociability - sur- [\*931] vived only in Bohemia, Hungary, and Poland as a form of resistance to totalitarian ideological domination. Perhaps yet another step is to be ventured here; the very subordination to the socialist order brought about a specific enjoyment: not only the enjoyment provided by an awareness that people were living in a universe absolved of uncertainty (since the system possessed, or pretended to possess, an answer to everything), but above all the **enjoyment of the very stupidity of the System** - a relish in the emptiness of the official ritual, in the worn-out stylistic figures of the predominating ideological discourse. n9 An exemplary case of this enjoyment that pertains to the "totalitarian" bureaucratic machinery is provided by a scene from Terry Gallein's film, Brasil. n10 In the labyrinthine corridors of a large government building, a high-ranking functionary marches promptly, followed by several clerks desperately trying to keep pace with him. The functionary moves at a frenetic pace, inspecting documents and shouting orders to the people around him while quickly walking, in a great hurry, as if on his way to some important meeting. When this functionary stumbles upon the film's hero, Jonathan Pryce, he exchanges a couple of words with him and rushes forward, busy as ever. However, half an hour later, the hero sees him again in a distant corridor, carrying on his senseless ritualistic march. Enjoyment is provided by the very senselessness of the functionary's act: although his frantic officiating imitates efficiency, it is in the strict sense purposeless - a pure ritual repeated ad infinitum. The contemporary Russian composer Alfred Schnittke succeeded in exposing this quality in his opera, Life with an Idiot: n11 the so-called "Stalinism" confronts us with what Lacan designated as the imbecility inherent to the signifier as such. n12 The opera tells the story of an ordinary married man ("I") who, under a punishment imposed by the Communist Party, is compelled to take a person from a lunatic asylum to live with his family. This idiot, Vava, appears to be a "normal" bearded, bespectacled intellectual, constantly spouting meaningless political phrases; he soon, however, shows his true colors as an obscene intruder, first by having sex with I's wife and then with I himself. Vava stands here not only for [\*932] the **empty pseudointellectual prattle, but for the imbecile obscenity of the symbolic order itself**, of language which "runs amok" and gets entangled in the vicious cycle of enjoying its own game. Insofar as we are living in the universe of language, we are condemned to this imbecility of the superego: we can assume a minimal distance from it, thus rendering it more bearable, but we can never be rid of it.

#### The affirmative embraces the politics of delusion – channeling resistance into the debate space confines it and prevents social change outside of it. Debate is a play, the performances exist to produce enjoyment, not radicalism and pretending otherwise deskills resistance. Vote negative to recognize the apolitical nature of the aff.

**Gunnell, 86** - Distinguished Professor of Political Science at University of Albany (John G., “Tradition, Interpretation, and Science: Political Theory in the American Academy” pages 351-352)

There may be pointed exceptions; but, on the whole, the radicalism of political theory in the American university is now distinctly academic in both senses of that term. This is due in part to some definite historical factors internal to the evolution of the social sciences in the United States. There is a great distance between the radical activist origins of social science in America (during the twenty years from 1865 to 1885) and contemporary claims about radical social science and critical political theory. What has intervened is academic professionalism. Radical or critical political theory is an idea, largely something that is talked about rather than practiced. It is an academic fantasy and a faint memory which long ago severed any real connection with the objects in their concern. Only a strange academic pretension produces the notion that finding the right philosophical grounding can make academic political theory into something more than it is. Only another pretension implies that depth of concern or other emotive attributes can make this academic practice, as either scholarly production or classroom education, a form of political action or some equivalent to it.

Secured (or imprisoned) within structures of the university and profession, self-ascribed academic radicals posture like actors on a stage. They only descend into the audience within the limits of certain avante-garde productions that would never, in the end, endanger their status as actors or propel the audience beyond the role of spectators. But even the audience consists primarily of other actors. Caught up in this academic theater, they come to believe after a while that the play is the most real thing, that acting is a more noble and efficacious endeavor than the actual practices of life, and that its purity must be maintained. In large measure, of course, this is rhetoric, but not the rhetoric of the street. Political myth is one thing, but mythical politics is another.

While these actors have visions of the world which they wish to reproduce, they have long since lost touch with the concrete character of society, and their world is the product of a script written by others. Maybe the greatest irony is that, while their performances are dedicated to changing the world, they seldom address the specific world in which they reside. They are content to play in a theater whose management and financing is microcosm of the world which they wish to transform, but their vision is too prodigious to be directed toward such small objects. They may complain in passing about the way the players are hired and fired and about the lack of democracy in the company, but they are on the road too frequently to get involved deeply. And, after all, it is their sinecure as permanent members of the troupe that allows them to display their grand gestures without fear of contamination or reprisal.

There are some, usually the more conservative players, who also think that society is a seamless web and that theater changes the world, and they become upset at stage histrionics which mock and criticize life. But much paranoia is surpassed only by the blind faith of those who believe that their performances transform the lives of those with whom they come into contact and that the theater is surely so much a part of life that any real distinction is forced and analytic. It is difficult to know how many have a real passion for the life which they represent on stage or the extent to which their drama is a surrogate for what the world denies them or what they have denied themselves. Probably, many are just actors with feigned and rehearsed concern which they have acquired from their masters and coaches. For them, the play is the thing. For a few, however, these scenes are a vehicle for higher purpose. Sadly, society reserves the theater for their activity, putting them safely away where anything can be said, **b**everyone knows that it is just a play. Society knows that, in the end, the demands of the profession will keep most from mixing their art with life. Of the few who escape to seek recognition outside the theater, it is safe to assume that they are too inexperienced in the ways of the world to manipulate it and that the worst oppression is simply to ignore them.

This fable is merely a way of making a long story short. But I do want to make it as clear as possible that the apoliticalness and conservatism ascribed to me is charged against a background of alienated and philosophical radicalism that seldom talks about actual practices, let alone to them. My concern with the open society, which Reid takes to reflect attachment to liberal ideology, simply comes from the observation that such a society effectively defuses radicalism. It does so particularly by reserving the university for radical talk, deprived or at least flattened of potential significance through pure tolerance. Reid wishes to pose the question of "the theorist's public responsibility," and this question should be posed. But my brief comments about the open society are less a way of legitimating the abdication of that responsibility than a way of indicating how it cannot be fulfilled in terms of alienated political theory. To couch diagnosis and prescription in this language is to continue to ensure impotence-both because it has no audience and because it obscures the world as much as the conceptual schemes of orthodox social science. It merely substitutes one reified structure for another.

## 2nc

### 2nc

#### Forgot to save the tag for this—there was a really long rant about war on debate…

Bhambra 10—U Warwick—AND—Victoria Margree—School of Humanities, U Brighton (Identity Politics and the Need for a ‘Tomorrow’, http://www.academia.edu/471824/Identity\_Politics\_and\_the\_Need\_for\_a\_Tomorrow\_)

2 The Reification of Identity We wish to turn now to a related problem within identity politicsthat can be best described as the problem of the reiﬁcation of politicised identities. Brown (1995) positions herself within thedebate about identity politics by seeking to elaborate on “the wounded character of politicised identity’s desire” (ibid: 55); thatis, the problem of “wounded attachments” whereby a claim to identity becomes over-invested in its own historical suffering and perpetuates its injury through its refusal to give up its identity claim. Brown’s argument is that where politicised identity is founded upon an experience of exclusion, for example, exclusion itself becomes perversely valorised in the continuance of that identity. In such cases, group activity operates to maintain and reproduce the identity created by injury (exclusion) rather than– and indeed, often in opposition to – resolving the injurious social relations that generated claims around that identity in the ﬁrst place. If things have to have a history in order to have af uture, then the problem becomes that of how history is con-structed in order to make the future. To the extent that, for Brown, identity is associated primarily with (historical) injury, the future for that identity is then already determined by the injury “as both bound to the history that produced it and as a reproach to the present which embodies that history” (ibid 1995: 73). Brown’s sug-gestion that as it is not possible to undo the past, the focus back- wards entraps the identity in reactionary practices, is, we believe,too stark and we will pursue this later in the article. Politicised identity, Brown maintains, “emerges and obtains its unifying coherence through the politicisation of exclusion from an ostensible universal, as a protest against exclusion” (ibid: 65). Its continuing existence requires both a belief in the legitimacy of the universal ideal (for example, ideals of opportunity, and re- ward in proportion to effort) and enduring exclusion from those ideals. Brown draws upon Nietzsche in arguing that such identi-ties, produced in reaction to conditions of disempowerment andinequality, then become invested in their own impotence through practices of, for example, reproach, complaint, and revenge. These are “reactions” in the Nietzschean sense since they are substitutes for actions or can be seen as negative forms of action. Rather than acting to remove the cause(s) of suffering, that suf-fering is instead ameliorated (to some extent) through “the estab-lishment of suffering as the measure of social virtue” (ibid 1995:70), and is compensated for by the vengeful pleasures of recrimi-nation. Such practices, she argues, stand in sharp distinction to –in fact, provide obstacles to – practices that would seek to dispel the conditions of exclusion. Brown casts the dilemma discussed above in terms of a choicebetween past and future, and adapting Nietzsche, exhorts theadoption of a (collective) will that would become the “redeemer of history” (ibid: 72) through its focus on the possibilities of creat-ing different futures. As Brown reads Nietzsche, the one thingthat the will cannot exert its power over is the past, the “it was”.Confronted with its impotence with respect to the events of thepast, the will is threatened with becoming simply an “angry spec-tator” mired in bitter recognition of its own helplessness. The onehope for the will is that it may, instead, achieve a kind of mastery over that past such that, although “what has happened” cannotbe altered, the past can be denied the power of continuing to de-termine the present and future. It is only this focus on the future, Brown continues, and the capacity to make a future in the face of human frailties and injustices that spares us from a rancorous decline into despair. Identity politics structured by ressentiment – that is, by suffering caused by past events – can only break outof the cycle of “slave morality” by remaking the present againstthe terms of the past, a remaking that requires a “forgetting” of that past. An act of liberation, of self-afﬁrmation, this “forgettingof the past” requires an “overcoming” of the past that offers iden-tity in relationship to suffering, in favour of a future in whichidentity is to be deﬁned differently. In arguing thus, Brown’s work becomes aligned with a posi-tion that sees the way forward for emancipatory politics as re-siding in a movement away from a “politics of memory” (Kilby 2002: 203) that is committed to articulating past injustices andsuffering. While we agree that investment in identities prem-ised upon suffering can function as an obstacle to alleviating the causes of that suffering, we believe that Brown’s argument as outlined is problematic. First, following Kilby (2002), we share a concern about any turn to the future that is ﬁgured as a complete abandonment of the past. This is because for those who have suffered oppression and exclusion, the injunction to give up articulating a pain that is still felt may seem cruel and impossible to meet. We would argue instead that the “turn to the future” that theorists such as Brown and Grosz callfor, to revitalise feminism and other emancipatory politics, need not be conceived of as a brute rejection of the past. Indeed, Brown herself recognises the problems involved here, stating that [since] erased histories and historical invisibility are themselves suchintegral elements of the pain inscribed in most subjugated identities[then] the counsel of forgetting, at least in its unreconstructedNietzschean form, seems inappropriate if not cruel (1995: 74). She implies, in fact, that the demand exerted by those in painmay be no more than the demand to exorcise that pain throughrecognition: “all that such pain may long for – more than revenge– is the chance to be heard into a certain release, recognised intoself-overcoming, incited into possibilities for triumphing over, and hence, losing itself” (1995: 74-75). Brown wishes to establish the political importance of remembering “painful” historical events but with a crucial caveat: that the purpose of remembering pain is to enable its release . The challenge then, according to her,is to create a political culture in which this project does not mutate into one of remembering pain for its own sake. Indeed, if Brown feels that this may be “a pass where we ought to part with Nietzsche” (1995: 74), then Freud may be a more suit-able companion. Since his early work with Breuer, Freud’s writ-ings have suggested the (only apparent) paradox that remember-ing is often a condition of forgetting. The hysterical patient, who is doomed to repeat in symptoms and compulsive actions a past she cannot adequately recall, is helped to remember that trau-matic past in order then to move beyond it: she must remember inorder to forget and to forget in order to be able to live in the present. 7 This model seems to us to be particularly helpful for thedilemma articulated by both Brown (1995) and Kilby (2002),insisting as it does that “forgetting” (at least, loosening the holdof the past, in order to enable the future) cannot be achieved without ﬁrst remembering the traumatic past. Indeed, this wouldseem to be similar to the message of Beloved , whose central motif of haunting (is the adult woman, “Beloved”, Sethe’s murderedchild returned in spectral form?) dramatises the tendency of theunanalysed traumatic past to keep on returning, constraining, asit does so, the present to be like the past, and thereby, disallow-ing the possibility of a future different from that past. As Sarah Ahmed argues in her response to Brown, “in order to break the seal of the past, in order to move away from attach-ments that are hurtful, we must ﬁrst bring them into the realm of political action” (2004: 33). We would add that the task of analys-ing the traumatic past, and thus opening up the possibility of political action, is unlikely to be achievable by individuals on their own, but that this, instead, requires a “community” of participants dedicated to the serious epistemic work of rememberingand interpreting the objective social conditions that made up thatpast and continue in the present. The “pain” of historical injury is not simply an individual psychological issue, but stems from objective social conditions which perpetuate, for the most part, forms of injustice and inequality into the present. In sum, Brown presents too stark a choice between past andfuture. In the example of Beloved with which we began thisarticle, Paul D’s acceptance of Sethe’s experiences of slavery asdistinct from his own, enable them both to arrive at new under-standings of their experience. Such understanding is a way of partially “undoing” the (effects of) the past and coming to terms with the locatedness of one’s being in the world (Mohanty 1995). As this example shows, opening up a future, and attending to theongoing effects of a traumatic past, are only incorrectly under-stood as alternatives. A second set of problems with Brown’s critique of identity poli-tics emerge from what we regard as her tendency to individualise social problems as problems that are the possession and theresponsibility of the “wounded” group. Brown suggests that the problems associated with identity politics can be overcome through a “shift in the character of political expression and politi-cal claims common to much politicised identity” (1995: 75). She deﬁnes this shift as one in which identity would be expressed in terms of desire rather than of ontology by supplanting the lan-guage of “I am” with the language of “I want this for us” (1995:75). Such a reconﬁguration, she argues, would create an opportu-nity to “rehabilitate the memory of desire within identiﬁcatory processes…prior to [their] wounding” (1995: 75). It would fur-ther refocus attention on the future possibilities present in theidentity as opposed to the identity being foreclosed through its attention to past-based grievances.

#### Racism is an altogether unique fantasy—this requires different critical strategies. Waging war on the debate community is exactly the kind of juicy controversy that gives it venom. If we are a “reflective question mark” back at the aff, we are doing the better debating—our job is not to give a definitive answer on why some asshole wrote a weekly standard article

Slavoj **Zizek** Philosopher and Psychoanalyst, Institute for Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana. Cardozo Law Review 19**95**

How are we to combat effectively this id-evil which, on account of its "elementary" nature, remains impervious to any rational or even purely rhetorical argumentation? Racism is always grounded in a particular fantasy, which by definition resists universalization. n29 The translation of the racist fantasy into the universal medium of symbolic intersubjectivity (the Habermasian ethics of dialogue) in no way weakens the hold of the racist fantasy upon us. n30 If we are to undermine this power of fantasy, a **different political strategy** is needed - a strategy able to incorporate what Lacan called "la traversee du fantasme," n31 a strategy of overidentification, which takes into account the fact that the obscene superego qua basis and support of the public law is operative only insofar as it remains unacknowledged, hidden to the public eye. What if, instead of an ironic critical dissection which reveals their impotence before the face of racism's fantasmatic kernel, we proceed a contrario and publicly identify with the obscene superego? In the process of the disintegration of socialism in Slovenia, the postpunk group Laibach staged an aggressive inconsistent mixture of Stalinism, Nazism, and Blut und Boden ideology. The first reaction of the enlightened leftist critics in Slovenia was to conceive of Laibach as the ironic imitation of totalitarian rituals. However, their support of Laibach was always accompanied by an uneasy feeling: "What if they really mean it? What if they truly identify with the totalitarian ritual?" Or, a more cunning version of it, transferring their own doubt onto the Other: "What if Laibach overestimates its public?" "What if the public takes seriously what Laibach mockingly imitates, so that Laibach actually strengthens what it purports to undermine?" Their uneasy feeling is fed on the assumption that ironic distance is automatically a subversive attitude. What if, on the contrary, the dominant attitude of the contemporary "postideological" universe is precisely the cynical distance towards public values? What if this distance, **far from posing any threat** to the system, designates the supreme form of conformism, since the normal functioning of the system **required cynical distance?** In this case, the strategy of Laibach appears in a new light: it frustrates the system (the ruling ideology) precisely insofar as it is distanced from its ironic imitation; but overidentification with it, by bringing to light the obscene superego underside of the system, suspends its efficiency. n32 The ultimate expedient of Laibach is their deft manipulation of transference; their public (especially intellectuals) is obsessed with the "desire of the Other" - whether Laibach's actual position is truly totalitarian or not. They address Laibach with a question and expect an answer, failing to notice the crucial fact that Laibach itself does not function as an answer but as a question. By means of the elusive character of their desire, the indecision regarding where they actually stand, Laibach compels us to take a position and decide upon our desire. Laibach actually accomplishes here the reversal that defines the psychoanalytic cure. At the outset of the cure is transference: the transferential relationship is put in force as soon as the analyst appears in the guise of the subject who is supposed to know the truth about the patient's desire. When, in the course of the psychoanalysis, the patient complains that he does not know what he wants, the complaint is addressed to the analyst, with the implicit supposition that the analyst already knows it. In other words, insofar as the analyst stands for the big Other, the analyst's illusion lies in reducing his ignorance about his desire to an "epistemological" incapacity: the truth about his desire already exists, it is registered somewhere in the big Other, and one has only to bring it to light and his desiring will run smoothly. The end of psychoanalysis, dissolution of transference, designates the moment when the question that the patient aimed at the analyst turns back towards the patient himself. First, the patient's (hysterical) question addressed an analyst who was supposed to possess the answer; now, the analyst is forced to acknowledge that he is merely a reflective question mark addressed back to the patient. Here, one can explain Lacan's thesis that an analyst is authorized only by himself: n33 the patient becomes the analyst upon assuming that his desire has no support in the Other, that the authorization of his desire has no support in the Other, and that the authorization of his desire can come only from himself. Insofar as this rever- [\*938] sal defines drive, one can explain Lacan's thesis that what takes place at the end of psychoanalysis is the shift from desire to drive. n34

#### Instead of asking what the neg should do instead, you should determine what the aff should have done differently. Displacing responsibility for a cure onto the neg is an act of projection that maintains the underlying fantasy. Only analyzing these structures can clear the way for acts that disrupt the entire ideological system

Žižek, Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Science (University of Ljubljana), 2000 [Slavoj, Contingency, Hegemony, Universality, p. 124-127]

Now I can also answer the obvious counter-argument to this Lacanian notion of the act: if we define an act solely by the fact that its sudden emergence surprises/transforms its agent itself and, simultaneously, that it retroactively changes its conditions of (im)possibility, is not Nazism, then, an act *par excellence*? Did Hitler not ‘do the impossible', changing the entire field of what was considered `acceptable' in the liberal democratic universe? Did not a respectable middle-class petit bourgeois who, as a guard in a concentration camp, tortured Jews, also, accomplish what was considered impossible, in his previous ‘decent’ existence and acknowledge his ‘passionate attachment’ to sadistic torture? It is here that the notion of ‘traversing the fantasy’, and - on a different level - of transforming the constellation that generates social symptoms becomes crucial. An authentic act disturbs the underlying fantasy, attacking it **from the point of `social symptom'** (let us recall that Lacan attributed the invention of the notion of symptom to Marx!). The so-called `Nazi revolution', with its disavowal/displacement of the fundamental social antagonism ('class struggle' that divides the social edifice from within) - with its projection/externalization of the cause of social antagonisms into the figure of the Jew, and the consequent reassertion of the corporatist notion of society as an organic Whole - clearly *avoids* confrontation with social. antagonism; the ‘Nazi revolution’ is the exemplary case of a pseudo-change, of a frenetic activity in the course of which many things did change – ‘something was going on al1 the time’ - so that, precisely, something.- that which *really matters* - would not change; so that things would fundamentally 'remain the same'. In short, an authentic act is not simply external with regard to the hegemonic symbolic field disturbed by it: an act is an act only *with regard to* some symbolic field, as intervention into it. That is to say: a symbolic field is always and by definition in itself 'decentred', structured around a central void/impossibility (a personal life-narrative, say, is a bricolage of ultimately failed attempts to come to terms with some trauma; a social edifice is an ultimately failed attempt to displace/obfuscate its constitutive antagonism); and an act disturbs the symbolic field into which it intervenes not out of nowhere, but precisely *from the standpoint of this inherent impossibility, stumbling block, which is its hidden, disavowed structuring principle.* In contrast to this authentic act which intervenes in the constitutive void, point of failure - or what Alain Badiou has called the 'symptomal torsion’ of a given constellation - the inauthentic act legitimizes itself through reference to the point of substantial fullness of a given contellation (on the political terrain: Race, True Religion, Nation...): it aims precisely at obliterating the last traces of the 'symptomal torsion' which disturbs the balance of that constellation. One palpable political consequence of this notion of the act that has to intervene at the `symptomal torsion' of the structure (and also a proof that our position does not involve `economic essentialism') is that in each concrete constellation there is *one* touchv nodal point of contention which decides where one 'truly stands'. For example, in the recent struggle of the so-called `democratic opposition' in Serbia against the Milosevic regime, the truly touchy topic is the stance towards the Albanian majority in Kosovo: the great majority of the `democratic opposition' unconditionally endorse Milosevic’s anti-Albanian nationalist agenda, even accusing him of making compromises with the West and `betraying' Serb national interests in Kosovo. In the course of the student demonstrations against Milosevic's Socialist Party falsification of the election results in the winter of 1996, the Western media which closely followed events, and praised the revived democratic spirit in Serbia, rarely mentioned the fact that one of the demonstrators' regular slogans against the special police was `Instead of kicking us, go to Kosovo and kick out the Albanians!'. So - and this is my point - it is theoretically as well as politically wrong to claim that, in today's Serbia, 'anti-Albanian nationalism' is simply one among the `floating signifiers' that can be appropriated either by Milosevic's power bloc or by the opposition: the moment one endorses it, no matter how much one 'reinscribes it into the democratic chain of equivalences', one already accepts the terrain as defined by Milosevic, one - as it were - is already `playing his game'. In today's Serbia, the absolute sine qua non of an authentic political act would thus be to reject absolutely the ideologico-political topos of the Albanian threat in Kosovo. Psychoanalysis is aware of a whole series of `false acts': psychotic-paranoiac violent *passage a l'acte*, hysterical acting out, obsessional self-hindering, perverse self-instrumentalization – all these acts are not simply wrong according to some external standards, they are *immanently wrong* since they can be properly grasped only as reactions to some disavowed trauma that they displace, repress, and so on. What we are tempted to say is that the Nazi anti-Semitic violence was `false' in the same way: all the shattering impact of this large-scale frenetic activity was fundamentally `misdirected', it was a kind of gigantic *passage a l'acte* betraying an inability to confront the real kernel of the trauma (the social antagonism). So what we are claiming is that anti-Semitic violence, say, is not only `factually wrong' (Jews are `not really like that', exploiting us and organizing a universal plot) and/or ‘morally wrong’ (unacceptable in terms of elementary standards of decency, etc.), but also `untrue’ in the sense of an inauthenticity which is simultaneously epistemological and ethical, just as an obsessional who reacts to his [sic] disavowed sexual fixations by engaging in compulsive defence rituals acts in an inauthentic way. Lacan claimed that even if the patient's wife is really sleeping around with other men, the patient's jealousy is still to be treated as a pathological condition; in a homologous way, even if rich Jews `really' exploited German workers, seduced their daughters, dominated the popular press, and so on, *anti-Semitism is still an emphatically `untrue', pathological ideological condition* - why? What makes it pathological is the disavowed subjective libidinal investment in the figure of the Jew – the way social antagonism is displaced--obliterated by being 'projected' into the figure of the Jew. So - back to the obvious counter-argument to the Lacanian notion of the act: this second feature (for a gesture to count as an act, it must 'traverse the fantasy') is not simply a further, additional criterion, to be added to the first ('doing the impossible', retroactively rewriting its own conditions): if this second criterion is not fulfilled, the first is not really met either - that is to say; we are not actually `doing the impossible', traversing the fantasy towards the Real.

#### If anything they’re saying is true, reject time wise

**Martin 10** – Renee, pacifist, anti-racist, blogger on Womanist Musings (The Limitations of Tim Wise, Womanist Musings, http://www.womanist-musings.com/2010/11/limitations-of-tim-wise.html, November 29, 2010, MCL)

Wise also has a tendency to reduce race relations to a Black/White binary. To be of colour in the U.S. is to be not White of non European descent. With the exception of a small passage on the fallacies in Disney's Pocahontas, Wise mainly framed racism as something Whites do to Blacks, rather than Whiteness as an institution that is harmful to every single person of colour. This is erasure and it ignores the hierarchies of power that support Whiteness, as well as ensures that people of colour are constantly fixated on each other, rather than united to bring an end to White supremacy. Social justice is hard work and it demands a full-time commitment and therefore, I completely understand when someone attempts to earn a living, even as they raise awareness to the multiple issues that plague our planet. It is highly problematic that a White man is earning a substantial living talking about the way that race effects people of colour. Wise of course covers this by discussing Whiteness, but the truth of the matter is, that you cannot talk about Whiteness without examining people of colour. He is essentially profiting from hundred of years of our history and taking on an expert status that is denied people of colour when we discuss our lived experiences. His very existence as White, educated male of class, TAB, cisgender, heterosexual privilege, means that he is affirming much of the very narrative that he seeks deconstruct. Wise makes White people feel safe. He gives them the appropriate liberal spin that never expects them to seek truth via the people most impacted by race. Each chapter of his book began with a James Baldwin quote, proving that people of colour exist for the purposes of appropriation, but never really to interact with, unless one is in a leadership role. One of the main problems with Wise's work is that it does not encourage those researching anti-racism to seek out the opinions of people of colour, thus once again turning Whiteness into the arbitrator. This normalizes oppression and further supports White supremacy. Wise does encourage readers to take on a subordinate role, but how believable is that when he continually fails to do so himself. Wise claims that it is his right to be forthright about race because he is fighting to end White supremacy,which he sees as harmful, not only to himself but to all people, but using the operating status of Whiteness to fight the battle cannot possibly disarm, much less eradicate this sickness. In the end, I think that Wise is very well aware that what he has to say has already been said and in fact argued infinitely better by people of colour. To really challenge privilege, one must first learn from the people that it impacts the most. Depending on Tim Wise to teach you about race means that you are not ready to move out of your comfort zone and really see racism for the pure evil that it is.

#### There is no ethical relation to the past—their fixation on it only fosters melancholy and frustration—that makes it impossible to be open to new conditions of possibility

**Best 12**—associate professor of English at the University of California, Berkeley

(Stephen, “On Failing to Make the Past Present”, Modern Language Quarterly 2012 Volume 73, Number 3: 453-474, dml)

In fact, why has the slave past had such enormous weight for an entire generation of thinkers? Why must we predicate having an ethical relation to the past on an assumed continuity between that past and our present and on the implicit consequence that to study that past is somehow to intervene in it? Through what process has it become possible to claim the lives and efforts of history’s defeated as ours either to redeem or to redress? And if we take slavery’s dispossessions to live on into the twenty-­first century, divesting history of movement and change, then what form can effective political agency take? Why must our relation to the past be ethical in the ­first place — and is it possible to have a relation to the past that is not predicated on ethics? It is time to ask these questions again, though I am far from having answers to them. The idea of continuity between the slave past and our present provides a framework for conceptions of black collectivity and community across time. And this idea, a proxy for race, nests within it a signi­cant thesis: the present that most African Americans experience was forged at some historical nexus when slavery and race conjoined, and in the coupling of European colonial slavery and racial blackness a history both inevitable and determined proved the result.2 Nonetheless, with terms of coalition and political solidarity increasingly dif­ficult to articulate, a sense of racial belonging rooted in the historical dispossession of slavery seems unstable ground on which to base a politics. My goal is merely to clear some space for a black politics not animated by a sense of collective condition or solidarity.3 The project of rethinking racial belonging might well begin with forms of unbelonging, negative sociability, abandonment, and other disruptions that thwart historical recovery.These premise a kind of social connectedness on what anthropologists term “social abandonment,” the idea that the social destinies of the unwanted “are ordered.”4 The traces of abandonment frustrate historical recovery (or the attempt to solicit the past for present purposes) to the extent that they signal “an insistent previousness evading each and every natal occasion,” especially when the names proposed for that natality are either “race” or “blackness.”5 One critical origin for these ideas comes from queer theory, specifi­cally the historiographical ethics of what Leo Bersani calls an “anticommunal model of connectedness,” or in Daniel Tiffany’s phrase “a sociological sublime magnetized by abjection.”6 These strains of thought not only acknowledge the radical alterity of the past but announce that “it may be necessary to check the impulse to turn . . . representations [of the past] to good use in order to see them at all.”7 This essay invites contemplation of the gains to be derived from extending the queer acknowledgment of nonrelationality between the past and the present to the racial case. An understanding of slavery in relation to the politics of abandonment (as articulated especially in queer critique) responds to the calls of David Scott and David Lloyd to invigorate discussions of the usable past with the idea of failed futures. Extending the insights of Reinhart Koselleck’s Futures Past, Scott argues that the political projects begun by earlier revolutionaries and historical predecessors can be neither continued nor completed. It is futile to attempt to redeem the past, as for merly dominant cognitive and political categories can no longer “have the same usefulness, the same salience, the same critical purchase, when the historical conjuncture that originally gave [them] point and purchase has passed.” Any revisionary practice of historical criticism in the present must unfold against the backdrop of “the dead end of the hopes that de­fined the futures of the anticolonial and . . . postcolonial projects.”8 Faced with such foreclosed possibilities, we have only our present conjuncture, only our current predicament. Writing in much the same spirit, Lloyd argues that the ­figures in the past with whom we crave a connection possess their own “specifi­c and unreproducible orientation to the future,” and our present, rather than represent the ful­llment of that projection, is more likely “the future imposed on the dead by past violence.” The restlessness of the dead, Lloyd proposes, “stems from the lack of a future fi­t for them.”9 To be historical in our work, we might thus have to resist the impulse to redeem the past and instead rest content with the fact that our orientation toward it remains forever perverse, queer, askew. With its goal of replacing holding with letting go, clutching with disavowal, this essay runs against the grain of work advanced under the banners of “recovery” and “melancholy.” The goal is to specify some of the limits to these modes of critique and to propose other ways of thinking about loss than have been offered by the melancholic turn in recent African Americanist and African-diasporic cultural criticism.

### at: communication impossible

#### They rely on every consensus they criticize—even making the case for antagonism or protest implies that rational argument is possible. Voting neg uses the resolution as a fallible proposition; voting aff gives it power by making your ballot the final verdict.

**Knops 2007** – DPhil, Lecturer, Department of Political Science and International Studies, University of Birmingham, UK (March, Andrew, Journal of Political Philosophy, 15.1, “Debate: Agonism as Deliberation – On Mouffe’s Theory of Democracy”, Wiley Online)

THE arguments advanced in Chantal Mouffe's The Democratic Paradox represent a sustained attack on deliberative accounts of democracy.1 In this article I suggest that, contrary to Mouffe's claims, her model is compatible with and indeed presupposes a deliberative framework. I argue first that Mouffe's agonistic alternative to deliberation is reliant for its coherence on the notion of rational consensus, which at the same time constitutes the main target of her critique of deliberative democracy. While reliant on that notion, she is barred from using it because of her objections to it. The second stage of my evaluation of Mouffe's case therefore consists in a rehabilitation of deliberative notions of consensus against Mouffe's objections. I show how each of these obstacles can be overcome by a deliberative theory. In the process I relate the postmodern concerns, which underpin Mouffe's agonistic approach, to deliberative theory. I then show how Mouffe's model may be seen as coherent within a deliberative framework.

I. MOUFFE'S RELIANCE ON CONSENSUS

The first point to make about Mouffe's argument in The Democratic Paradox is that it promotes a single, universal characterisation of the political. The terrain of the political is portrayed as constituted through power, making antagonism ‘ineradicable’ (DP, p. 104). This is a universal claim about the political. Moreover, Mouffe seeks to establish the acceptability of these claims by giving reasons. This implies that she assumes that it is possible to establish such a universal model of politics through rational argument. This is precisely what she criticises deliberative theorists for.

Of course, the content of the model for which Mouffe seeks rational acceptance is portrayed as very different to a deliberative approach (DP, p. 102). In particular, it accepts the inevitability of antagonism, seeks to convert this into adversarial contest, and rejects the possibility of ever reaching consensus. Agreements are always contingent assertions of hegemonic power that necessarily exclude and are therefore unstable.2 However, Mouffe does not believe that politics should be left as merely the interplay of differences within this domain of power.

Firstly, Mouffe argues that there should be common adherence to – consensus on – at least minimal ‘ethico-political’ principles of democracy. She is rather vague about what these principles might be, although specifying ‘liberty’ and ‘equality’ as among them (DP, p. 102). Of course this could hardly be otherwise: her theory is a theory of democracy, so there must be some shared version of democracy for individuals to adhere to, and for the theory to defend. Mouffe immediately qualifies this constraint by arguing that there will be many different accounts of how these minimal principles might be applied and pursued, and that there should be no limitations on competition between opposing versions (DP, p. 103). Nevertheless, Mouffe still owes an explanation of how there can be such a consensus in the first place, of what such a consensus might consist, why it should be privileged over other versions of the political – for example, oligarchy, or dictatorship – and how this might be justified without recourse to some form of rational argument akin to that deployed by deliberative theorists.

Although less clear, it is also apparent that Mouffe requires all participants in her preferred adversarial mode of interaction to abide by a further set of principles: a mutual respect for beliefs, and the right to defend them (DP, pp. 102–103). Given that she contrasts such exchange with more aggressive antagonistic conflict (DP, p. 102), this suggests at least some overlap with the principles of equal respect and autonomy underlying a deliberative approach. Nevertheless, on this characterisation the fit with deliberation is not complete. It is possible to argue that other forms of interaction short of violence, such as bargaining, negotiation and trading between different interests, show respect for others’ beliefs and their right to defend them, and fall short of ‘annihilation’ or violence.

However, Mouffe adds a further qualification to the ‘free-play’ of differences that other theories permit. She argues that it should be possible to identify, condemn and act against relations of subordination or domination (DP, pp. 19–21). It would seem therefore that we should interpret her description of adversarial relations, and in particular the principle of respect for the right of others to defend their beliefs, in light of this further stipulation. So where relations of subordination restrict a person's ability to defend their beliefs, those relations should be opposed. If we read these two principles – of respect for belief and opposition to subordination – together, then Mouffe's model does appear to be privileging the kind of open fair exchange of reasons between equals that deliberative theorists promote. Not only do these dimensions of Mouffe's formula constitute further examples of consensus that can be reached in principle and by rational means (since Mouffe uses arguments to motivate our acceptance of them), but the content of that formula looks remarkably like the method for reaching collective decisions through a procedure for rational discussion that deliberative theorists support.

An insistence on the need to distinguish and combat relations of subordination is necessary for any theory to have critical bite. What does and what does not amount to oppression, and what should or should not be condemned, must then be gauged by reference to some sort of standard. However, Mouffe would seem to assume that we already all have access to such shared standards, or at very least that it is possible to establish them. Again, this marks her acceptance of another form of consensus – as she herself acknowledges (DP, p. 134). Furthermore, if that consensus is not to be biased against a particular group in society, it is difficult to see how the mechanism for reaching it can be other than a rational discussion.

To argue otherwise would be to perpetuate the imposition of a hegemonic, partial and exclusive viewpoint – the exercise of power – that Mouffe is arguing against. So here Mouffe's theory requires the possibility, at least, of a rational consensus not merely on procedural matters that frame democratic exchange, but also on the substance or outputs of that process – practical political decisions. While she presents this as a small exception to her thesis in The Democratic Paradox, it would seem to be pretty much all-embracing. Having described politics as defined by the exercise of power, her theory turns out to admit of the possibility of rational consensus on matters of power – in other words, on any aspect of the subject matter of politics.

From all this we can conclude that Mouffe's alternative is firstly grounded in a universal account of the political and the democratic which she wishes us to accept on the basis of the rational arguments she advances in The Democratic Paradox. Since it is a defence of democracy, this model assumes further consensus on the values of liberty and equality, which are to be interpreted as incorporating respect for others’ beliefs and their right to defend them. Mouffe also argues that it is to incorporate an opposition to relations of oppression or subordination. Mouffe sees the purpose of political action as the identification of such oppression and subordination, and the organisation of collective action against it. This implies a deliberative mechanism of fair and equal exchange of reasons between all affected as the standard of legitimacy for political decisions, if decisions are not to reproduce the relations of subordination that Mouffe wishes to combat.

So it would seem that Mouffe's own agonistic alternative to deliberative democracy, designed to counter the impossibility of rational consensus, is itself reliant on that very notion. Without it, it is neither a theory of democracy (as opposed to a mere description of the domain of politics) nor a critical theory allowing for collective action against oppression and subordination. Yet Mouffe is now faced with a dilemma. The very reason for advocating her alternative was the impossibility of the notion of rational consensus, and she has offered detailed arguments to show how rational consensus was impossible. However, it now turns out that her alternative relies on the notion of rational consensus that she has rejected. Either she must abandon her alternative altogether, or she must rehabilitate the notion of rational consensus, and with it the idea of deliberative democracy that she has criticised. I will explore the second option.

II. REHABILITATION OF DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY

Mouffe's objection to deliberative democracy is that it is founded on a notion of rational consensus that is not only empirically, but conceptually impossible to realise. Because of this, it is untenable that any one theory of democracy should be preferred over others on purely rational grounds, and within a democracy it is impossible to reach neutral agreement on what would be in the best interests of the collectivity. In this section I will defend deliberative democracy against these charges, showing that Mouffe's criticisms do not establish that rational consensus is conceptually impossible. It may be very difficult to achieve, but this does not undermine its utility as a goal at which we should aim. In mounting this defence I will initially concentrate on one of the two perspectives from which Mouffe launches her attack – that grounded in a Wittgensteinian theory of language. This defence will also demonstrate the similarities between that theory and a deliberative theory of rational consensus.3 These arguments can then be extended to deal with Mouffe's second line of criticism from linguistic deconstruction.

A. Wittgenstein

Mouffe explicitly identifies two sources on whose interpretation of Wittgenstein she draws in criticising deliberative democracy. They are Hannah Pitkin, in her work Wittgenstein and Justice, and James Tully.4 To do justice to Mouffe's argument, I will stick to the version of Wittgenstein advanced by these two commentators.

In arguing against the possibility of rational consensus, Mouffe uses three key Wittgenstinian concepts: the idea that general terms in language are learned through ‘practice’ and not through the application of a conceptual scheme to particular cases; that such practice is grounded in specific ‘forms of life’; and that forms of life are not susceptible of simple classification or description in the form of rules (DP, pp. 70–1). Using the sources above, I will take a closer look at these concepts, to show that it is indeed possible to reconcile such notions with the possibility of a rational consensus reached through deliberation.

As Pitkin explains, Wittgenstein's version of language suggests that we learn terms through practice. The traditional account of language learning views it as the process of associating a term, for example a name, with a particular object or picture of that object in our heads. We can then apply that name when we encounter the object again. We associate a definition with that name, and it becomes a label for the object.5 While language can be learned and used in this way, Wittgenstein argues that this is a very limited account, which only explains a small section of what we use language to do. What about learning the words ‘trust’, ‘spinster’ or ‘envy’?6 He therefore develops a more comprehensive account of language learning which sees it as a particular practice. We learn to use a particular phrase in a particular context. Having heard its use in a context before, we hear it repeated in similar circumstances. We therefore learn to associate it with aspects of those circumstances, and to reproduce and use it in those circumstances for ourselves. So, for example, the (polite!) child learns that “Please may I have the marmalade?” results in the person who uttered it being passed the marmalade. They make the same sounds, and they are themselves passed the marmalade. They later learn that “Please may I have the jam?” leads to their being passed the jam. Finally, they understand that “Please may I have x?” will lead to their being given whatever they choose to substitute for x. This example is helpful because it shows how the meaning of a word can be refined through its use. It may be that a child initially only associates “Please may I have . . .” with marmalade. It is only when the same words are used to elicit the passing of another object – in our example, jam – that they associate it with that other object, and then eventually, after several iterations, with any object. This process may also involve them using the phrase, and projecting it into new contexts of their own. It may also, of course, involve them making mistakes, which are then corrected.

Because words are developed through repeated use in this way, they rarely have settled meanings. By applying them to new contexts, we can use them to focus on different aspects of meaning. Pitkin suggests the example of ‘feed the monkey’ and ‘feed the meter’.7 Prior to such application, however, we may only have had a vague idea of the word's meaning, gathered through past usage. In most, if not all, cases this process is ongoing. So words are learned through a kind of ‘training’ or ‘practice’, and learning or understanding a word is an activity that involves using the word in the correct situation. It is not a case of applying a clear-cut rule to a definite situation.8

Because words develop through practices and their use in particular situations, and in many cases we continue to develop their meaning through such use, very rarely will a term have a single, fixed meaning. Rather, Wittgenstein argues, the different situations in which such a general term is used are like separate language games. Just like moves in a game, words that have meaning when used in one situation may be meaningless when used in another. For example, we cannot talk of ‘checking the King’ in football. While there are connections between games, they are linked like members of a family: some share the same colour eyes, others the same shape of nose, others the same colour hair, but no two members have all the same features.9 Wittgenstein also uses the analogy of an historic city to show how language builds up. While some areas may be uniform, many have been added to higgledy-piggledy, with no clear pattern over how streets are laid out, or which run into which.10 Wittgenstein therefore argues that it is impossible to assimilate the operation of all language to a single model, such as the ‘picture theory’ or label model of meaning. Different language games have different rules, and we can only discover these by investigating particular practices of use in specific cases.11

However, Wittgenstein concedes that there must be some kind of regularity to our use of words. Without some form of consistency, we could not know that our use of a word in a new context was supposed to indicate or evoke a similar context in which the word had been used in the past. That words do so, Wittgenstein argues, is due to their basis in activity– they are used by us in certain situations – and that such use is grounded ultimately in activities that are shared by groups of us, or all of us. Cavell sums this up well when he says:

We learn and teach words in certain contexts, and then we are expected, and expect others, to be able to project them into further contexts. Nothing insures that this projection will take place, just as nothing insures that we will make, and understand, the same projections. That on the whole we do is a matter of our sharing routes of interest and feeling, modes of response, senses of humour and of significance and of fulfilment, of what is outrageous, of what is similar to what else, what a rebuke, what forgiveness, of when an utterance is an assertion, when an appeal, when an explanation – all the whirl of organism Wittgenstein calls ‘forms of life’.12

These forms of life are not so much constituted by, but constitute, language. They serve as its ‘ground’. Therefore, although the process of explaining a term, and of reasoning in language, may continue up to a point, it will always come to an end and have to confront simple agreement in activity, ways of going on, or forms of life.

Mouffe sees this account as ruling out the possibility of rational consensus. Following Tully, she argues that the fact that arguments are grounded in agreement in forms of life, which constitute a form of practice marking the end point of explanation or reasons, means that all attempts at rational argument must contain an irrational, practical element.13 Neither is it possible to suggest, as she accuses Peter Winch of doing, that we can see forms of life as some underlying regularity, which argument or reasoning can then make explicit. Again with Tully, she contends that the ‘family resemblance’ or ‘historic city’ analogy for the development of language shows it to be far too varied and idiosyncratic for such an account.14

Yet I would like to argue that Wittgenstein's theory as characterised above does not rule out rational argument, and the possibility of consensus, at least in principle. Wittgenstein himself characterises the offering of reasons as a kind of ‘explanation’. This much is granted by Tully.15 Explanations are requested by someone unfamiliar with a practice, who would like to understand that practice. Wittgenstein sees this as a completely legitimate use of language and reason.16 This is not surprising, as this process of explanation is precisely the form of language learning that he sets out. A person uses a term based on their understanding of its use from their past experiences. This projection either meets with the predicted response, or a different one. If the latter, the person modifies their understanding of the term. It is only when we go further, and assume that there can be an explanation for every kind of confusion, every kind of doubt, that we get into trouble.17 But this is precisely not what a deliberative theory of reasoning holds. A deliberative theory of reasoning models communicative reason – reason used to develop mutual understanding between two or more human beings. To this extent, the truths that it establishes are relative, though intersubjective. They hold, or are useful for, the collectivity that has discursively constructed them. They do not claim to be objective in an absolute sense, although the concept can be extended, in theory, to cover all people and hence to arrive as closely as possible to the notion of an absolute.

The process that Habermas calls ‘practical discourse’18 and the process that Wittgenstein calls ‘explanation’ are basically one and the same. Both are synonyms for deliberation. Habermas sees the essentially rational nature of language as the capacity for a statement to be rejected, in the simplest case with a ‘no’.19 It is with this response that the request for reasons, latent in all rational statements, is activated.20 If we widen the sense of rejection meant by Habermas beyond the paradigm case of the utterance of a ‘no’ to the broader case of a failure to elicit an expected response, we can see the similarities between Habermas’ notion of deliberation and Wittgenstein's concept of explanation. Like Wittgenstein, Habermas sees ‘normal’ language use as taking place against a backdrop of conventionally shared meanings or understandings.21 It is only when this assumption breaks down, when the response differs from what was expected, that deliberation is required. Shared understandings and usage are established anew, through a dialogical sharing of reasons, or explanations, which repairs the assumption that we do use these words in similar ways.22

But this dialogical sharing of reasons is nothing more than Wittgenstein's concept of explanation and language learning. As Tully points out, Wittgenstein's view of language is inherently dialogical. His examples involve interlocutors who have different views of the use of language.23 This leads to the use of a word eliciting a response that was not expected – a rejection. The rejection requires the reappraisal and refinement of our understanding of the word, based on the new information given to us about it by the unexpected reaction. Based on this adjusted understanding we use words again to try to achieve our goal. Through this process of trial and error we build up a shared vocabulary, restoring the assumption that we use these words in the same way, and in the process we understand the other's form of life that gave rise to their unexpected use. The very process of developing that understanding is the process of deliberation. Indeed, in this sense deliberation – explanation or the clarification of usage across different forms of life – can in itself be seen as the process of development of language use.

Before moving on, we should note an important feature of this process: any instance of shared understanding developed in this way will be partial. It will have emerged from particular uses tied to particular spheres of activity. It is important, therefore, that we do not stretch an understanding developed in this way too far. We must be open to its fallibility – to the possibility that new situations will open up different applications of a term, and so require further development of meaning, as we encounter others who use terms differently due to different aspects of their ‘forms of life’.24 While there may be regularities in ‘forms of life’, it is difficult to specify them a priori. They only emerge, as Wittgenstein argues, piecemeal, through the process of attempting to understand others in language. However, the process of explanation, or understanding through deliberation, allows us to be open to these possibilities**.** The contrast with others’ usage that this involves also makes us more clearly aware of aspects of our own usage that were previously hidden. So we can see this as an understanding developed through reason, though partial, fallible and grounded in practice.

Deliberative democracy, then, is compatible with a Wittgensteinian theory of language, which sees language as grounded in forms of life. Mouffe makes two errors that lead her to suggest it is not. The first is the assumption that because language is ultimately grounded in practice, rather than reason, it cannot be used to reach a rational consensus. However, if we read deliberative theories as mobilising a form of rationality aimed at intersubjective explanation and mutual understanding, we can see that the two accounts are perfectly compatible. The second error is to take Wittgenstein's warning that different uses of language, in different games, are so varied and diverse as to be ungovernable by rules, to rule out any possibility of reasoned communication. Here we need to understand that Wittgenstein's concept of ‘forms of life’ refers to regularities in practice that underpin language. While these do not take the form of prescriptive rules, they can still be discovered through language and the process of explanation. Indeed, this is an important purpose of language. Seen in this way, Wittgenstein's thought shows how reason, or explanation, works to bring out emergent, partial, but shared understandings grounded in people's own, but different, experiences. The partial nature of such understandings also emphasises the need to regard them as fallible and open to challenge and revision when new situations are encountered. However, this does not in principle preclude the use of reason to reach consensus. Moreover, the partiality of such understandings can only be understood against a conception of complete or comprehensive agreement. This is exactly what deliberative theory proposes. These insights will now be used to defend deliberation against the second, deconstructionist, set of arguments that Mouffe musters.

B. Deconstruction

Mouffe also uses Derrida's notions of differance and the ‘constitutive other’25 to argue that any form of consensus must always be partial and biased against a group that it excludes, while necessarily unstable as it contains the traces of this power. This precludes the very idea of a consensus that is neutral because it is reached on rational grounds.26

However, using our enhanced understanding of deliberation we can see how such an argument is flawed. While consensus through rational argument cannot be guaranteed, it cannot be ruled out either. The only way to find out whether it is possible or not is through argument. In addition, that process of reasoning, or explanation, is itself a process in which we are made more aware of difference, through the projection of language to describe others’ forms of life. Without this attempt, we may never become aware of these different forms of meaning, or their associated forms of life. So, far from hiding difference by imposing one group's biased or partial interpretation on all, deliberation opens up and exposes such uses of power, making clear these divisions, and allowing for collective agreement and collective action to change oppressive practices.

Another way of characterising this process is to see it as the activity of questioning. Questioning allows those from one form of life to understand those from another, by showing how their interlocutors’ understanding is different from their own. The importance of this activity for deliberation lies in the fallibilistic nature of consensus in deliberative theory, which allows for any consensus that is reached rationally to remain open to question. Such openness guards against the kind of hegemonic claims that concern Mouffe.27 This allows for sufficient stability through agreement, since challenges must be reasoned challenges, without atrophy. Moreover, the development of understanding through questioning/reasoning will relate the partial understandings or practices from whose dialectic it emerges. This reduces the potential for ongoing exclusion through, for example, a ‘tit-for-tat’ exchange in which ex-oppressors become the oppressed.

The fallibilistic and partial nature of deliberation or explanation also secures it against Mouffe's use of the Derridean concept of undecidability.28 This trades on the limitations of human foresight to argue that every element of decision must actually contain an element of unpredictability or risk. Mouffe infers from this that consensus must always be irrational (DP, pp. 135–6). However, once again we can pray in aid the fallibilistic, defeasible nature of reason. New events that were not foreseen will not be covered by the language that we have attempted to extend to govern our future actions. This leads to a need to revise such language to arrive at a more comprehensive description that will be more adequate. As we have seen, reasoned argument is well equipped to do this. So while all decisions may well contain an irreducible element of ‘undecidability’ in Derrida's sense, this does not make decisions irrational, nor does it rule out the possibility of rational consensus through deliberation.

Finally amongst Mouffe's deconstructionist arguments against deliberation we have her use of Lacan. She deploy's Lacan's notion of the ‘master signifier’29– a set of unquestioned assumptions that form the frame for any discourse – to illustrate that all discourses must be conditioned by authority. This gives her yet another reason why the idea of neutral rational consensus, free from power, is conceptually flawed (DP, pp. 137–8).

The defeasibility of deliberation, and its privileging of questions, again serves to turn Mouffe's point. While many, perhaps all, exchanges are indeed conditioned by a set of underlying assumptions that are not questioned, or of which we are dimly aware, such assumptions are in principle open to being questioned. Otherwise they would not be assumptions. The fact that Lacan can identify such assumptions, means that it is possible to do so, and thereby to expose them to questioning. While this might not happen in a particular exchange, this may well open up over time, or across discourses. Such questioning then serves as precisely the sort of critical standard that Lacan and Mouffe seek to provide. Their endeavours are therefore not invalid, but gain their validity from within, and not outside, a deliberative framework of rational argument aimed at mutual understanding. Without such an ideal their critical projects founder, just as much as deliberation's.

III. CONCLUSION

Mouffe believes in a consensus that distinguishes and opposes oppressive uses of power, seeing the purpose of politics as collective action towards its eradication. This consensus is based on shared norms of reciprocity and equality in the exchange of reasons or explanations. And she argues for this consensus using reasons. In all these senses, her agonistic theory of democracy can be seen to be deliberative. However, we could equally argue that deliberation, and rational consensus, can be seen as agonistic. Deliberation is equivalent to the Wittgensteinian process of explanation and language learning. The understandings reached through either process are partial and defeasible, formed from an encounter with difference. In this sense, there is always the risk of an agreement or consensus resulting in the erroneous projection of one party's understandings onto another, constraining their meanings – it is fraught with the possibility of hegemony. We must guard against such hegemonic tendencies by remaining open to every possibility of their exercise, holding discourses up to careful scrutiny of the language and assumptions that might underlie them. Not only will this help resist power, it will also assist in building deeper and better understanding, or more rational consensus. So we can see that the two processes of deliberative and agonistic democracy – one grounded in critical theory and the other in postmodernism, are in fact mutually dependent aspects of a solution to the same problem.

## 1nr

### AT: Purity

#### Purity is neither a possible nor desirable condition of ethics -- we are always complicit, but that's what makes criticism possible. Reject the more-radical-than-thou politics of supposedly militant alternatives which are in fact nothing more than vehicles for self-righteous resentment in the sheep's clothing of refusalism

Lotringer '1 Sylvere, founder of Semiotext(e), Professor Emeritus at Columbia University "Doing Theory" Semiotext(e) - Pirate Edition [typed from print]

You’re always part of something, of course; purity is a myth. You need one foot on the ground in order to kick with the other, if you even do that. Criticizing isn’t kicking, it is just a kick, and a side—kick at that. It doesn’t take you anywhere, or anywhere it’s worth going to. It’s like keeping the two feet on the ground and pretending you’re flying. It’s a trickster’s game. Critique is merely a mirage of its own shadow, it’s always complicit in some ways with what it criticizes. There’s no way out of the system and no outside to institutions; the only way to preserve the capacity for change is to keep the door open a crack, playing one institution against another without ever settling for any. Always looking for another door to open somewhere, and go for it. You only know that you’ve succeeded, however temporarily, when you feel a breath of fresh air on your face, some breathing space. Then you realize you’re still alive and you kick. One of the things about which one could reproach the American academic Left is its identification with the institution, its lures and rewards. Camille Paglia was not far off the mark when she asserted that ‘most of America’s academic leftists are no more radical than my Aunt Hattie... These people have risen to the top not by challenging the system but by smoothly adapting themselves to it. They’re company men.. .‘ But so is everybody else for that matter, and I don’t see why one should hold a special grudge against them. It’s more important to preserve one’s energy intact than yielding to the dubious pleasure of criticizing—feeling right, righteous—and entering the same circle of rhetorical negation and subversion, the dialectics of resentment. As Deleuze saw, the man of resentment needs to conceive of someone other than himself, then oppose him in order to finally position himself as such. ‘Strange syllogism of the slave who needs two negations in order to create the appearance of an affirmation.’4 It is the same dialectics that threw women academics into the patriarchal hands of Lacan, a worthy adversary to negate and deconstruct, giving one’s critique the appearance of an affirmation. The negation of a negation, though, never becomes an affirmative action. You have to step aside and see the whole picture, with yourself in it, writing this piece, before you get there. Patriarchy is among us all, not just among the patriarchs. And yet there’s no way of opposing them on their own ground without replicating in some way the same strictures. There’s no glorious alternative to the pleasure of criticizing, just a long patience: keep on a separate course, deliberately choosing to differ from something else rather than oppose it. It may not be easy to forget what it is you don’t agree with, but spending one’s time bitching about it doesn’t make it any better. Being too aware of oppositions—the cultivation of resentment—would limit your range of choice and weaken your own project. It would turn your ‘differences’ into yet another turf war, losing sight of what’s really at stake. Better assume that one shares something, anything— a political past, a sense of justice, an experience of oppression— with what one differs from, and go somewhere else. Wouldn’t you rather be an academic Marxist, especially after the collapse of ideologies and the impossibility of making a real difference in the American society at large, than a cynical corporate type? Political rhetoric in the other is no worse than a culture of resentment in oneself. But maybe this attitude is the luxury of the ‘beautiful soul.’ Just put it to the test and you may quickly see it vanish. In the late ‘70s embattled Italian ‘autonomists’ like Tony Negri or Oreste Scaizone, innovative Marxists and post—Marxists, were being jailed for their alleged association with the Red Brigades. *Semiotext(e)* directly appealed to other ‘radical’ academic journals for ideological solidarity, and *Telos,* especially, expressed a genuine interest, although never followed up on it. Finally they showed up with a few others to the meeting they were supposed to have co— organized and quietly walked away from the issue. I still feel terrible about it, but abstained from reacting. Who was it who said that the Left always betrays? There’s no gain in becoming cynical. Cynicism is the rampant disease of capitalist societies, and a bit of **calculated naïveté** sometimes helps. The way to deal with cynicism may be to create more singular paths for every situation, experimenting with the tools at hand. Everything eventually falls into place around that. This is what Deleuze and Guattari did in *Anti—Oedipus,* outwardly an attack on psychoanalysis, but in fact a subtle subversion of Marxism. And yet the book isn’t ‘anti—Marxist’ either. It just looks somewhere else, not at Marx himself, but at the object he kept addressing: Capital. Lyotard perfectly understood that ‘what the book subverts most profoundly is what it doesn’t criticize.’5 Why would they waste energy criticizing Marx when they never stop using elements of his analysis? Instead of opposing him, they looked anew at the nature of Capital itself, updating Marxist analysis to the limitless movement of Capital in its advanced form. They went beyond Marx, but holding him by the hand. Becoming more Marxian than him, but on their own terms. Marx expected Capital to reach its limit and trigger a general crisis that would open the way to socialism. What Deleuze and Guattari hypothesized instead is that Capital is always besides itself, going beyond its own borders, its end being not the production of objects, but the production of itself through them. The first aim of capitalist production is to insure its own circulation. And yet it can only persevere in its own thrust if it keeps creating artificial frontiers, folding back within itself in order to contain the irrepressible movement of its own flows. Capital too always betrays. Hypothesizing really is what the ‘theory’ in ‘French Theory’ is about, as opposed to philosophy, which mostly refers back critically to its own history. And this may account for the fact that ‘French Theory’ never got a foothold in departments of philosophy in America. For one, the place was already occupied. And then it had no academic axe to grind. (Deleuze did that in his formative years, grinding academic essays in order to get out of the tradition. The way he did it, though, was getting onto the back of an author and giving him a monstrous child made with his own text, ‘because the author actually had to say everything that I made him say.’6) Analytical philosophers never took ‘French Theory’ seriously, actually couldn’t wait until it went away. These kinds of wild ‘speculations’ were good enough for departments of Comp Lit and English who merely dabble with ideas and found in ‘deconstruction’ a further incentive to return to what they had been doing all along: a close reading of texts. Derrida’s textual strategies fed right into literary studies, and it is there that they remained for the most part. In the margins of the text, at the center of academe. Rather than philosophy, the term ‘theory,’ borrowed from linguistic theory, actually conveys pretty accurately the tentative outlook and intellectual daring of systems that are, in a sense, joy rides for the mind, the freedom to push new paradigms as far as they could go regardless of consequences, temporarily bracketing traditional ethical concerns or dominant ideologies. A hypothesis, Webster says, is ‘a tentative assumption made in order to draw out and test its logical or empirical consequences,’ or simply a supposition made for the sake of argument. ‘French Theory’ obviously belongs to the hypothetical genre7 since it refuses to consider ready—made answers; rather, it keeps problematizing them in a number of different ways. Unlike a law, inferred from scientific data explaining a principle operating in nature, a theory ‘implies a greater range of evidence and greater likelihood of truth.’ These distinctions, of course, are kind of blurred, and it would be all the more difficult to assign the various ‘hypotheses’ a place in relation to truth since truth itself was being problematized. Foucault’s major concern precisely was to establish a history of truth, making clear that history merely was a tentative construction made in the present tense. Overlapping and often contradicting themselves on major points, all these theories washed over such wide areas of knowledge and gave out such a sense of momentum and discovery that they were rightly grasped as a full—fledged theory of culture. And it is true that, whatever their differences, which they themselves often considerably magnified, what Deleuze and Guattari, Foucault (the Nietzscheans), Baudrillard and Virilio (the Extrapolationists) shared is a paradoxical hypothesis about the nature of reality in advanced capitalist societies. This reality could be expressed in terms of the radical exchangeability or ‘deterritorialization’ elicited by Capital: exchange, flows, simulation, speed. They differed about the way this exchangeability occurs, or where it eventually leads to, if anywhere, but the overall picture they made of advanced techno-capitalism is deeply at variance with everything that had come before them. The Frankfurt School was not hypothetical in the same way. It was more of a moral philosophy, looking at its own as— suxnptions before making one step in any direction. It never attempted to grasp the nature of contemporary society by going to the limit, as all French Theorists, in some way or other, do. No wonder these dizzying hypotheses would exert a strong fascination over American readers, often generating a veritable cult. When was it that theory ever matched science fiction? They also deeply antagonized those who had powerful stakes in a less fluid and destabilizing view of reality. Foucault was rapidly accepted throughout the American intellectual landscape as ‘a stern prophet of doom,’ of body disciplines and paranoiac surveillance, a notion that he himself strongly objected to. His analyses happened to feed right into neo—Marxist analyses of late capitalism based on alienation and ideological control. Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘psychotic’ vision of contemporary society met with far more resistance. Actually it was rejected outright for some twenty years after they first presented their theses in person in New ‘York (together with Foucault and Lyotard) at the ‘Schizo-Culture’ conference organized by *Semiotext(e)* at Columbia University in 1975. It may be that their analysis was too radical to be acceptable by the ‘radicals’ themselves, too close in any case to the actual workings of American society which keeps stripping everything to the bone, only leaving empty pods behind. Who would want to be told in so many words that they’re mere conduits of Capital, self— important zombies confusing workaholism with freedom and entertainment with life? The closer one gets to embody the perfect form of Capital, coping with the flows, embracing corporate nomadism and the values of the global market—place, carried away at ‘broad—band’ speed towards a gaping future, the more imperative it becomes to recreate islands of identity, of meaning, of neurosis, of security in an ocean of cynicism and meaninglessness. And this is why, paradoxically, the only French theories that were readily acknowledged, even avidly sought for in America, were those which offered something to hold onto, the crutches of structures (Lacan’s ‘symbolic’), the romance of meaning (Kristeva’s ‘semiotic’ process), or the repeatable protocol of their endless undoing (Derrida). Gated comunities, models of thought, a prison of one’s own. Follow me. Anything but taking your own life in your hands. But who really wants to live even the life of the mind?

#### Moral purity isn’t the solution, but tactics – aka the 2nc and all the allies arguments are

**Grossberg, 92** [Lawrence, Morris Davis Professor of Communication Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, “We Gotta Get Out of this Place: Popular Conservatism and Postmodern Culture”, page 388-389 //liam ]

﻿The demand for moral and ideological purity often results in the rejection of any hierarchy or organization. The question-can the master's tools be used to tear down the master's house?-ignores both the contingency of the relation between such tools and the master's power and, even more importantly, the fact that there may be no other tools available. Institutionalization is seen as a repressive impurity within the body politic rather than as a strategic and **tactical**, even empowering, necessity. It sometimes seems as if every progressive organization is condemned to recapitulate the same arguments and crisis, often leading to their collapse. 54 For example, Minkowitz has described a crisis in Act Up over the need for efficiency and organization, professionalization and even hierarchy,55 as if these inherently contradicted its commitment to democracy. This is particularly unfortunate since Act Up, whatever its limitations, has proven itself an effective and imaginative political strategist. The problems are obviously magnified with success, as membership, finances and activities grow. This refusal of efficient operation and the moment of organization is intimately connected with the Left's appropriation and privileging of the local (as the site of democracy and resistance). This is yet another reason why structures of alliance are inadequate, since they often assume that an effective movement can be organized and sustained without such structuring. The Left needs to recognize the necessity of institutionalization and of systems of hierarchy, without falling back into its own authoritarianism. It needs to find reasonably democratic structures of institutionalization, even if they are impure and compromised.

### Allies

#### The position that whiteness is always white supremacy makes it impossible to reclaim an identity that disavows its historical complicities

Shannon Sullivan, 08

Penn State University, “Whiteness as Wise Provincialism: Royce and the Rehabilitation of a Racial Category” Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society: A Quarterly Journal in American Philosophy, Vol. 44, Num. 2, Spring 2008, Muse

Likewise, whiteness need not conflict with membership in humanity as a whole. The two identities can—and must—flourish together. The relationship between provincialism and nationalism, as discussed by Royce, serves as a fruitful model for the relationship of whiteness and humanity, and critical conservationists of whiteness should follow Royce’s lead by taking head-on the challenge of critically defending whiteness. Like embracing provincialism, embracing whiteness might seem to be a step backward for the modern world—toward limitation and insularity that breed ignorance, prejudice, and hostility toward others who are different from oneself. Like having a national rather than provincial worldview, seeing oneself as a member of humanity rather than of the white race seems to embody an expansive, outward [End Page 239] orientation that is open to others. But there is a “new social mission” with respect to racial justice that whiteness, and not humanity as a whole, can fulfill. Race relations, especially in the United States, have reached a point where humanity needs a “highly organized” anti-racist whiteness, that is, an anti-racist whiteness that is consciously developed and embraced. How then can we (white people, in particular) wisely guide the development of such whiteness so that it does not result in disloyalty to other races and humanity as a whole?

Before addressing this question, let me point out two important differences between whiteness and provincialism as described by Royce. First, while Royce calls for the development of a wise form of provincialism, he is able to appeal to existing “wholesome” forms of provincialism in his defense of the concept. He addresses himself “in the most explicit terms, to men and women who, as I hope and presuppose, are and wish to be, in the wholesome sense, provincial,” and his demand that “the man of the future . . . love his province more than he does to-day” recognizes a nugget of wise provincialism on which to build (65, 67). The development of wise provincialism does not have to be from scratch. In contrast, it is more difficult to pinpoint a nugget of “wholesome” whiteness to use as a starting point for its transformation. Instances of white people who helped slaves and resisted slavery in the United States, for example, certainly can be found—the infamous John Brown is only one such example—but such people often are seen as white race traitors who represent the abolition, not the transformation of whiteness.9 The task of critically conserving whiteness probably will be more difficult than that of critically conserving provincialism since there is not a straightforward or obvious “right form and true office” of whiteness to extol.

Second, true to his idealism, Royce describes both provincialism and its development as explicitly conscious phenomena. Royce notes the elasticity of the term “province”—it can designate a small geographical area in contrast with the nation, or it can designate a large geographical, rural area in contrast with a city (57–58)—but it always includes consciousness of the province’s unity and particular identity as this place and not another. Put another way, probably every space, regardless of its size, is distinctive in some way or another. What gives members of a space a provincial attitude is their conscious awareness of, and resulting pride in, that space as the distinctive place that it is. On Royce’s model, someone who is provincial knows that she is, at least in some loose way. The task of developing her provincialism, then, is to develop her rudimentary conscious awareness of her province, to become “more and not less self-conscious, well-established, and earnest” in her provincial outlook (67).

In contrast—and here lies the largest difference between provincialism and whiteness—many white people today do not consciously think of themselves as members of this (white) race and not another, not even loosely. Excepting members of white militant groups such as the Ku [End Page 240] Klux Klan or the Creativity Movement, contemporary white people do not tend to have a conscious sense of unity as fellow white people, nor do they consciously invoke or share special ideals, customs, or common memories as white people. They often are perceived and perceive themselves as raceless, as members of the human species at large rather than members of a particular racial group. This does not eliminate their whiteness or their membership in a fairly unified group. Just the opposite: such “racelessness” is one of the marks and privileges of membership in whiteness, especially middle and upper class forms of whiteness. White people can feel a pride in the ideals and customs of whiteness and possess a sense of distinction from people of other races without much, if any conscious awareness of their whiteness and without consciously identifying those ideals and customs as white. To take one brief example, styles and customs of communication in classrooms tend to be raced (as well as classed and gendered), and white styles of discussion, hand-raising, and turn-taking tend to be treated as appropriate while black styles are seen as inappropriate.10 White students often learn to feel proud and validated by their teachers as good students when they participate in these styles, and this almost always happens without either students or teachers consciously identifying their style (or themselves) as white. Such students appear to belong and experience themselves as belonging merely to a group of smart, orderly, responsible students, not to a racialized group.

In the United States and Western world more broadly, unconscious habits of whiteness and white privilege have tended to increase after the end of de jure racism.11 Unlike provincialism as described by Royce, whiteness tends to operate more sub- and unconsciously than consciously. But I do not think that this fact spoils wise provincialism as a fruitful model for wise whiteness. First, and reflecting a basic philosophical disagreement that I have with Royce’s idealism, I doubt that provincialism always functions as consciously as Royce suggests it does. The unity, pride, and love that are the hallmarks of provincialism could easily function in the form of unreflective beliefs, habits, preferences, and even bodily comportment. In fact I would argue that many aspects of our provincial loyalties—whatever type of province is at issue—operate on sub- or unconscious levels. In that case, provincialism and whiteness would not be as dissimilar in their operation as Royce’s description implies.

Second, even if provincialism tends to consciously unify people while whiteness does not, Royce’s advice that people should attempt to become more, rather than less self-conscious in their provincialism still applies to white people with respect to their whiteness. Given whiteness’s history as a racial category of violent exclusion and oppression, one might think that white people need to focus less on their whiteness, to distance themselves from it. But just the opposite is the case. Given [End Page 241] that distance from racial identification tends to be the covert modus operandi for contemporary forms of white privilege, white people who wish to fight racism need to become more intimately acquainted with their whiteness. Rather than ignore their whiteness, which allows unconscious habits of white privilege to proliferate unchecked, white people need to bring their whiteness to as much conscious awareness as possible (while also realizing that complete self-transparency is never achievable) so that they can try to change what it means.

But why focus on increased awareness of whiteness simpliciter? I mentioned briefly above that raced styles of communication also tend to be gendered and classed, and even more accurate would be to say that race, gender, class, sexuality, and other significant axes of lived experience transactionally co-constitute one another. Race, including whiteness, is never lived in isolation from these other axes. In the United States, the way that a white person experiences and is impacted by her whiteness likely will vary depending on his/her ethnicity, gender and class in particular, and across the globe, national differences can give whiteness a very different meaning.12 For these reasons, one might wonder why I do not urge white people’s increased consciousness of, for example, their Irish-American-whiteness, Southern-woman-whiteness, or lesbian-working-class-whiteness. Such forms of hyphenated whiteness might seem more likely to be sources of consciously felt unity, shared customs, and memory than would generic whiteness. In that case, “wise whiteness” should be read as mere shorthand for an indefinite number of forms of anti-racist whiteness.

I agree that one of the functions of the term wise whiteness is to serve as an umbrella for the infinitely rich and complicated ways that white people embody their whiteness. But I think it is important that the term not be understood merely as a bit of convenient shorthand that could be discarded without loss. It has a more substantial function than that of an umbrella, and treating it as mere shorthand risks letting white privilege and white supremacy off the hook too easily. Especially in the case of white ethnicities, insisting that whiteness always be considered in connection with other axes of identity can collapse race into ethnicity and work to deflect attention away white domination and oppression. Whiteness does mean different things for, e.g., Irish-American-whites and Italian-American-whites, and these two groups of white people have different racial histories and therefore at least somewhat different racial presents. But its full meaning is not contained in those different ethnicities. There is something to being white that being contemporarily Irish or Italian alone does not capture. So while whiteness is always transactionally constituted in and through other categories of lived experience, a functional separation of race from those other categories can be and sometimes needs to be made. In practice there is no such thing as whiteness by itself, and yet for particular purposes [End Page 242] and because of the tendency of its erasure, it can be useful to focus on whiteness in abstraction from other lived categories. In that pragmatic sense, with the term “wise whiteness” I speak not only of the rehabilitation of a collection of hyphenated forms of whiteness, but also for a rehabilitated whiteness simpliciter.

Royce’s eloquent pleas on the behalf of provincialism speak to my point about bringing whiteness to as much conscious awareness as possible. As Royce appeals to his readers, he urges, “I hope and believe that you all intend to have your community live its own life, and not the life of any other community, nor yet the life of a mere abstraction called humanity in general” (67). On the same theme, he later compares the problem of wise provincialism with the problem of any individual activity, which admittedly can become narrow and self-centered. Acknowledging this problem, Royce counters,

But on the other hand, philanthropy that is not founded upon a personal loyalty of the individual to his own family and to his own personal duties is notoriously a worthless abstraction. We love the world better when we cherish our own friends the more faithfully. We do not grow in grace by forgetting individual duties in behalf of remote social enterprises. Precisely so, the province will not serve the nation best by forgetting itself, but by loyally emphasizing its own duty to the nation . . . .

(98)

The disappearance of the individual does not well serve larger social enterprises. Those enterprises thrive only if the personal, passionate energies of individuals are poured into them. Large enterprises and institutions tend to become anemic abstractions if they are not rooted in felt individual commitments. Likewise, properly understood, the nation need not be in a competitive relationship with the various communities that it shelters. Loyalty to and love for one’s more local connections can be a powerful source of meaningful loyalty to and love for one’s nation. In both cases, the same pattern can be detected: rich ties to the smaller entity—the individual or the community—are what sustain meaningful connections to the larger entity—the philanthropic cause or the nation. The two are not necessarily in conflict, as is often thought, and in fact the larger entity would suffer if ties to the smaller entity were cut off.

It is useful to anti-racist struggle to think of a similar relationship holding between particular races, including the white race, and humanity at large. While it might initially seem paradoxical, the larger entity of humanity can best be served by people’s ties to smaller, more local entities such as their racial groups. A person’s racial group is not the only smaller entity that provides the rich existential ties of which Royce speaks—he rightly mentions family, and we could add entities such as one’s neighborhood, one’s church, mosque or synagogue, and even [End Page 243] groups based on one’s gender or sexual orientation. But race also belongs in this list of sites of intimate connection that can and often do sustain individual lives and that can support rather than undermine the well being of humanity. Forgetting one’s duty to one’s particular race in the name of working for racial justice, for example, tends to turn that goal into a remote abstraction. “You cannot be loyal to merely an impersonal abstraction,” Royce reminds us.13 Effectively serving the goal of racial justice is more likely to occur if one concretely explores how racial justice could emerge out of loyalty to one’s particular race.

This claim might not seem objectionable when considering racial groups that are not white. Loyalty to other members of their race has been an important way for African Americans, for example, to further the larger cause of racial justice. Black slaves who helped each other escape their white masters fought against slavery and thus helped humanity as a whole. But the history of whiteness suggests that white people’s loyalty to their race not only would not help, but in fact would undermine struggles for racial justice. How could white people serve the larger interests of the human race by being loyal to a race that has oppressed, colonized, and brutalized other races? What possible duties or obligations to their race could white people have, responsibilities that must be remembered if racial justice is to be a concrete, lived goal for white people to work toward?

On the one hand, these questions can seem outrageous, even dangerous. Talk of duty to the white race smacks of militarist white supremacist movements, and indeed the first of the Creativity Movement’s sixteen commandments in their “White Man’s Bible” is that “it is the avowed duty and holy responsibility of each generation to assure and secure for all time the existence of the White Race upon the face of this planet,” and the sixth is that “your first loyalty belongs to the White Race.”14 Noel Ignatiev’s concern about the scholarly validation of white supremacy through the critical conservation of whiteness could not be better placed than here. Temporarily setting aside the dangerous aspect of these questions, they also can seem nonsensical if they do not refer to the goals of white supremacist movements. What anti-racist duties, we might ask with some sarcasm, do white people have that must not be forgotten? African Americans and other non-white people might be able to combine loyalty to their racial group with loyalty to humanity, but white people cannot. Their situations are too different to treat their relationships to their races as similar. Those relationships are asymmetrical, which means that white people’s loyalty to the human race, including racial justice for all its members, conflicts with loyalty to whiteness. Loyalty to humanity would seem to require white people to be race traitors.

On the other hand, these questions present a needed challenge to white people who care about racial justice. Rather than rhetorically or [End Page 244] sarcastically, the questions can be asked in the spirit of Royce’s call for each “community [to] live its own life, and not the life of any other community, nor yet the life of a mere abstraction called humanity in general” (67). For white people to fight white supremacy and white privilege does not mean for them to attempt to shed their whiteness and become members of the human species at large. Attempting to become raceless by living the life of an abstraction called humanity merely cultivates a white person’s ignorance of how race, including whiteness, and racism inform her habits, beliefs, desires, antipathies, and other aspects of her life. It does not magically eliminate her white privilege for even if she succeeds in thinking of herself as a raceless member of humanity, she likely will continue to be identified and treated as white, even if unreflectively or unconsciously, by others. By allowing her white privilege to go unchecked in this way, a white person’s living the life of abstract humanity actually tends to increase, not reduce her racial privilege. To increase the chances of reducing her racial privilege, she must resist the temptation to see herself as raceless and instead figure out what it could mean for her to live her own life as a racialized person.

Living as a racialized, rather than abstract person does not mean attempting to take on a different race. Attempting to take on a different race implicitly acknowledges that whiteness is problematic, and it can seem to be an expression of respect for non-white people. But it often is no better a response to white privilege than attempting to shed one’s whiteness. This is because a white person’s taking on the habits, culture, and other aspects of another race often is an expression of ontological expansiveness, which is a habit of white privileged people to treat all spaces—whether geographical, existential, linguistic, cultural, or other—as available for them to inhabit at their choosing.15 Appropriating another race in this way thus is closer to imperialist colonialism than a gesture of respect. For this reason, white people need to stop trying to flee the responsibilities and duties that come with being white and figure out how to live their own racialized life, not the life of another race. Once they no longer ignore or attempt to flee their whiteness, they can then ask how work for racial justice fits with their duties and responsibilities as a white person and how they might live their own anti-racist white life.

Three “Evils” Eliminated by Wise Whiteness

Royce lists three specific problems in modern American life that cannot be solved without wise provincialism. His discussion of these “evils,” as Royce calls them, also illuminates “evils” that a wise form of whiteness could help meliorate. The first evil is the neglect of and disruption to a community when people are only loosely associated with it and do not invest in, care about, or have a significant history with it. Royce argues [End Page 245] that this problem is growing in frequency and significance as people are increasingly mobile, changing their residency multiple times over their lifetime and often moving great distances from where they were born and raised. This means that communities are increasingly dealing with a large number of newcomers who do not (yet) have an intimate, caring connection to the new place they inhabit. This is “a source of social danger, because the community needs well-knit organization” (73). Provincialism helps these newcomers care for their new home, and a wise provincialism does so without generating any hostility toward either other provincial communities or larger social bodies such as the nation.

In a similar fashion, when white people who care about racial justice have virtually no conscious or deliberate affiliation with their whiteness, the meaning and effect of whiteness is left to happenstance or, more likely, is determined by white supremacist groups. Royce’s primary concern is the dissolution of communities through neglect, and if well-intentioned white people do not care about, invest in, or acknowledge a significant history with their whiteness, then whiteness will be neglected. But unlike provincial communities, whiteness does not necessarily unravel or wither away because of simple neglect by anti-racist white people. Its neglect by anti-racists whites instead leaves it wide open for racist white groups to develop. Like a garden, whiteness can easily grow tough weeds of white supremacy if it is not wisely cultivated. The evil of abandoning whiteness, allowing white supremacists to make of it whatever they will, can be mitigated by a wise form of whiteness.

In practice, this means that white people who care about racial justice need to educate newcomers to whiteness—namely, white children—to be loyal to and care about their race. While Royce’s comments about the problem of newcomers due to increased geographical mobility do not apply directly to whiteness,16 white children can be thought of as newcomers to the community of whiteness who do not (yet) have an intimate connection to their race or know how to cultivate and care for it. Here again is an instance in which white supremacists have been allowed to corner the market on whiteness: almost all explicit reflection and writing on how to raise white children as white has been undertaken by groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, World Church of the Creator, and Stormfront.17 The association is so tight that the mere suggestion of educating white children in their whiteness is alarming to many people. But educating white children about their whiteness need and should not mean educating them to be white supremacists. A wise form of whiteness would help train the developing racial habits of white children in anti-racist ways.18

Royce calls the second problem addressed by provincialism that of “the leveling tendency of recent civilization” (74), but more accurate, I think, would be to characterize the problem as one of monotonous [End Page 246] sameness. Royce is concerned that the increase of mass communication means that people all over the nation, indeed the globe, are reading the same news stories, sharing the same ideas, fashions, and trends, and more and more imitating one another. The rich diversity of humankind, the independence of the small manufacturer, and distinctiveness of the individual are being absorbed into a vast, impersonal social order. A wise provincialism is not wholly opposed to these tendencies. There is great value in large groups of people coming to understand each other across their differences. But, Royce argues, there often also is great value to be found in their differences, and those differences ought to be allowed to thrive. A wise provincialism helps protect the variety of different places and communities so that they are not forced to be identical with each other.

In a similar way, wise whiteness helps preserve racial differences without treating people of various races as wholly alien to each other and thus incapable of understanding each other across their differences. As Lucius Outlaw asks, “Why is it, after thousands of years, that human beings are not all ‘light khaki’ instead of exhibiting the variety of skin tones (and other features) more or less characteristic of various populations called races?”19 The answer, according to Outlaw, is not merely that racism and invidious ethnocentrism have worked to establish inviolable boundaries between white and non-white races. It also is that different races are “the result of bio-cultural group attachments and practices that are conducive to human survival and well-being.”20 With W.E.B. Du Bois, Outlaw argues that racial differences can enrich everyone and that even if racism disappeared tomorrow, we should want discernibly distinct races to continue to exist.21 The baby need not be thrown out with the bathwater. The rich variety of human racial and ethnic cultures need not be eliminated to eliminate racism and invidious ethnocentrism.

A wise whiteness also would caution, however, that white people’s appreciation for racial diversity and variety also can be an insidious form of whiteness in disguise. Too often, celebrations of multiculturalism and racial diversity function as a smorgasbord of racial difference offered up for (middle-to-upper class) white people’s consumption and enjoyment. They do this by acknowledging some differences while simultaneously concealing others. It is very easy for white people to recognize and even celebrate racial difference in the form of different food, dress, and cultural customs. It tends to be much more difficult for them to recognize racial difference in the form of economic, educational, and political inequalities. Royce’s criticism of the leveling tendencies of modern culture does not explicitly depoliticize the issue, and he does mention that variety is needed particularly to counter “the purely mechanical carrying-power of certain ruling social influences,” an example of which is the hegemony of white culture (76). But given the [End Page 247] tendency of white (middle-to-upper class, in particular) people to see whiteness as cultureless and boring and thus want to spice it up by dabbling in other, “exotic” cultures, care must be taken that appreciation of diversity is not sanitized through an avoidance of the history and present of white privilege. When that happens, appreciation of plurality and diversity tend to become a covert vehicle for white ontological expansiveness. In contrast, a wise whiteness values and thus transactionally conserves different races, as Outlaw does, without depoliticizing the meaning of those differences.

### AT: Farley/Brady/Curry

#### Social death is descriptively inaccurate and reinforces fatalism—the truth is that it’s easier to write off gains under antagonism

**Clark**, professor of law – Catholic University, ‘**95**

(Leroy D., 73 Denv. U.L. Rev. 23)

A Final Word Despite Professor Bell's prophecy of doom, I believe he would like to have his analysis proven wrong. However, he desperately leans on a tactic from the past--laying out the disabilities of the black condition and accusing whites of not having the moral strength to act fairly. That is the ultimate theme in both of his books and in much of his law review writing. That tactic not only lacks full force against today's complex society, it also becomes, for many whites, an exaggerated claim that racism is the sole cause of black misfortunes. n146 Many whites may feel about the black condition what many of us may have felt about the homeless: dismayed, but having no clear answer as to how the problem is to be solved, and feeling individually powerless if the resolution calls for massive resources that we, personally, lack. Professor Bell's two books may confirm this sense of powerlessness in whites with a limited background in this subject, because Professor Bell does not offer a single programmatic approach toward changing the circumstance of blacks. He presents only startling, unanalyzed prophecies of doom, which will easily garner attention from a controversy-hungry media. n147 It is much harder to exercise imagination to create viable strategies for change. n148 Professor Bell sensed the despair that the average--especially average black--reader would experience, so he put forth rhetoric urging an "unremitting struggle that leaves no room for giving up." n149 His contention is ultimately hollow, given the total sweep of his work. At some point it becomes dysfunctional to refuse giving any credit to the very positive abatements of racism that occurred with white support, and on occasion, white leadership. Racism thrives in an atmosphere of insecurity, apprehension about the future, and inter-group resentments. Unrelenting, unqualified accusations only add to that negative atmosphere. Empathetic and more generous responses are possible in an atmosphere of support, security, and a sense that advancement is possible; the greatest progress of blacks occurred during the 1960s and early 1970s when the economy was expanding. Professor Bell's "analysis" is really only accusation and "harassing white folks," and is undermining and destructive. There is no love--except for his own group--and there is a constricted reach for an understanding of whites. There is only rage and perplexity. No bridges are built--only righteousness is being sold. A people, black or white, are capable only to the extent they believe they are. Neither I, nor Professor Bell, have a crystal ball, but I do know that creativity and a drive for change are very much linked to a belief that they are needed, and to a belief that they can make a difference. The future will be shaped by past conditions and the actions of those over whom we have no control. Yet it is not fixed; it will also be shaped by the attitudes and energy with which we face the future. Writing about race is to engage in a power struggle. It is a non-neutral political act, and one must take responsibility for its consequences. Telling whites that they are irremediably racist is not mere "information"; it is a force that helps create the future it predicts. If whites believe the message, feelings of futility could overwhelm any further efforts to seek change. I am encouraged, however, that the motto of the most articulate black spokesperson alive today, Jesse Jackson, is, "Keep hope alive!" and that much of the strength of Martin Luther King, Jr. was his capacity to "dream" us toward a better place.

#### Arguments stand or fall based on whether they are good – nothing more nothing less – the negatives argument isn’t policing

Amanda Anderson 6, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Humanities and English at Brown University, Spring 2006, “Reply to My Critic(s),” Criticism, Vol. 48, No. 2, p. 281-290

Lets first examine the claim that my book is "unwittingly" inviting a resurrection of the "Enlightenment-equals-totalitarianism position." How, one wonders, could a book promoting argument and debate, and promoting reason-giving practices as a kind of common ground that should prevail over assertions of cultural authenticity, somehow come to be seen as a dangerous resurgence of bad Enlightenment? Robbins tells us why: I want "argument on my own terms"-that is, I want to impose reason on people, which is a form of power and oppression. But what can this possibly mean? Arguments stand or fall based on whether they are successful and persuasive, even an argument in favor of argument. It simply is not the case that an argument in favor of the importance of reasoned debate to liberal democracy is tantamount to oppressive power. To assume so is to assume, in the manner of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, that reason is itself violent, inherently, and that it will always mask power and enforce exclusions. But to assume this is to assume the very view of Enlightenment reason that Robbins claims we are "thankfully" well rid of. (I leave to the side the idea that any individual can proclaim that a debate is over, thankfully or not.) But perhaps Robbins will say, "I am not imagining that your argument is directly oppressive, but that what you argue for would be, if it were enforced." Yet my book doesn't imagine or suggest it is enforceable; I simply argue in favor of, I promote, an ethos of argument within a liberal democratic and proceduralist framework. As much as Robbins would like to think so, neither I nor the books I write can be cast as an arm of the police.

Robbins wants to imagine a far more direct line of influence from criticism to political reality, however, and this is why it can be such a bad thing to suggest norms of argument. Watch as the gloves come off:

Faced with the prospect of submitting to her version of argument roughly, Habermass version-and of being thus authorized to disagree only about other, smaller things, some may feel that there will have been an end to argument, or an end to the arguments they find most interesting. With current events in mind, I would be surprised if there were no recourse to the metaphor of a regular army facing a guerilla insurrection, hinting that Anderson wants to force her opponents to dress in uniform, reside in well-demarcated camps and capitals that can be bombed, fight by the rules of states (whether the states themselves abide by these rules or not), and so on-in short, that she wants to get the battle onto a terrain where her side will be assured of having the upper hand.

Lets leave to the side the fact that this is a disowned hypothetical criticism. (As in, "Well, okay, yes, those are my gloves, but those are somebody elses hands they will have come off of.") Because far more interesting, actually, is the sudden elevation of stakes. It is a symptom of the sorry state of affairs in our profession that it plays out repeatedly this tragicomic tendency to give a grandiose political meaning to every object it analyzes or confronts. We have evidence of how desperate the situation is when we see it in a critic as thoughtful as Bruce Robbins, where it emerges as the need to allegorize a point about an argument in such a way that it gets cast as the equivalent of war atrocities. It is especially ironic in light of the fact that to the extent that I do give examples of the importance of liberal democratic proceduralism, I invoke the disregard of the protocols of international adjudication in the days leading up to the invasion of Iraq; I also speak about concerns with voting transparency. It is hard for me to see how my argument about proceduralism can be associated with the policies of the Bush administration when that administration has exhibited a flagrant disregard of democratic procedure and the rule of law. I happen to think that a renewed focus on proceduralism is a timely venture, which is why I spend so much time discussing it in my final chapter. But I hasten to add that I am not interested in imagining that proceduralism is the sole political response to the needs of cultural criticism in our time: my goal in the book is to argue for a liberal democratic culture of argument, and to suggest ways in which argument is not served by trumping appeals to identity and charismatic authority. I fully admit that my examples are less political events than academic debates; for those uninterested in the shape of intellectual arguments, and eager for more direct and sustained discussion of contemporary politics, the approach will disappoint. Moreover, there will always be a tendency for a proceduralist to under-specify substance, and that is partly a principled decision, since the point is that agreements, compromises, and policies get worked out through the communicative and political process. My book is mainly concentrated on evaluating forms of arguments and appeals to ethos, both those that count as a form of trump card or distortion, and those that flesh out an understanding of argument as a universalist practice. There is an intermittent appeal to larger concerns in the political democratic culture, and that is because I see connections between the ideal of argument and the ideal of deliberative democracy. But there is clearly, and indeed necessarily, significant room for further elaboration here.