we read the trials aff broken at the Pitt RR vs. Michigan

### \*\*\*2AC\*\*\*

### A2 Disease Reps

**Focus on representations sanitizes power structures and doesn’t solve**

Doug **Stokes**, University of Bristol Politics Department, “Gluing the Hats On: Power, Agency, and Reagan’s Office of Public Diplomacy,” PAPER PRESENTED FOR THE BRITISH INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION, 20**01**, http://web.archive.org/web/20060221025303/http://www.aqnt98.dsl.pipex.com/hats.htm.

In her discursive practices approach, Doty argues that more poststructurally inclined questions as to “how” foreign policy is made possible (that is, an examination of the prior conditions of possibility) provides a more nuanced account of foreign policy formation than questions which ask “why” (that is, why a particular decision or policy was pursued). She rightly argues that “why” questions pre-suppose a discursive matrix, a mode of being and a background of social practices. Furthermore, these “why” questions fail to account for “how these meanings, subjects, and interpretative dispositions are constructed”.66 However, in arguing for the superiority of analyses of possibility conditions, she misses a crucial point and simplifies the very nature of the “how” of foreign policy practice. **Whilst it is important to analyse the discursive conditions of possibility of policy formation, in failing to account for how various discourses were employed and through what institutional mechanisms, how some discourses gained ascendancy and not others, and how social actors intervene in hegemonic struggles to maintain various discourses**, Doty seriously compromises the critical potential of her analysis. By working with a notion of power free from any institutional basis and rejecting a notion of power that “social actors possess and use”,67 **she produces a narrative of foreign policy whereby the differential role of social actors is erased from foreign policy processes and decision making.** For Doty it seems, power resides in discourses themselves and their endless production of and play on meaning, not in the ability on the part of those who own and control the means of social reproduction to manipulate dominant social and political discourses and deploy them institutionally and strategically. **The ability to analyse the use of discourses by foreign policy elites for purposeful ends and their ability to deploy hegemonic discourses within foreign policy processes is lost through a delinking of those elites and discursive production (her “dispersed” notion of power).** Furthermore, Doty assumes that the “kind of power that works through social agents, a power that social actors posses and use” is somehow in opposition to a “power that is productive of meanings, subject identities, their interrelationships and a range of imaginable conduct”. But these forms of power are not mutually exclusive. **Social agents can be both subject to discourse and act in instrumental ways to effect discourse precisely through producing meanings and subject identities, and delineating the range of policy options.** Through her erasure of the link between foreign policy processes and purposeful social agents, **she ends up producing an account of hegemonic foreign policy narratives free from any narrator.**68 **This is particularly problematic because the power inherent within representational practices does not necessarily operate independently from the power to deploy those representations. The power to represent, in turn, does not operate independently from differential access to the principal conduits of discursive production, sedimentation and transmission** (for example, the news media).69 **Thus, Doty’s account fails to provide an adequate analysis of the socially constructed interests that constitute the discursive construction of reality.** As Stuart Hall argues “there are centers that operate directly on the formation and constitution of discourse. The media are in that business. Political parties are in that business. When you set the terms in which the debate proceeds, that is an exercise of symbolic power [which] circulates between constituted points of condensation.”**70 The overall critical thrust of poststructurally inclined IR theorists is blunted by both the refusal to examine or even acknowledge the limits and constraints on social discourses and the denial of any linkage** between identity representations and the interests that may infuse these representations.

### T

**indefinite detention is without trial**

**US LEGAL 13** [last modified, US Legal Forms Inc., Indefinite Detention Law and Legal Definition http://definitions.uslegal.com/i/indefinite-detention/]

**Indefinite detention is the practice of detaining an arrested person by a national government or law enforcement agency without a trial.** It may be made by the home country or by a foreign nation. Indefinite detention is a controversial practice, especially in situations where the detention is by a foreign nation. It is controversial because it seems to violate many national and international laws. It also violates human rights laws. **Indefinite detention is seen mainly in cases of suspected terrorists who are indefinitely detained.** The Law Lords, Britain’s highest court, have held that the indefinite detention of foreign terrorism suspects is incompatible with the Human Rights Act and the European Convention on Human Rights. [Human Rights Watch] In the U.S., indefinite detention has been used to hold terror suspects. The case relating to the indefinite detention of Jose Padilla is one of the most highly publicized cases of indefinite detention in the U.S. In the U.S., indefinite detention is a highly controversial matter and is currently under review. Organizations such as International Red Cross and FIDH are of the opinion that U.S. detention of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay is not based on legal grounds. However, the American Civil Liberties Union is of the view that indefinite detention is permitted pursuant to section 412 of the USA Patriot Act.

**Anthro K: 2AC**

**Perm do both—**

#### The public sphere is reflexive and self-correcting—any criticism they have can be overcome by our method because the public sphere critiques itself

Simon **Susen**, Lecturer, Social and Political Theory, Birbeck College, University of London, “Critical Notes on Habermas’s Theory of the Public Sphere,” SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS, v. 5 n. 1, Spring 20**11**, p. 46-47.

(c) The bourgeois public sphere is critical not only of premodern and modern states, but also of **itself,** for it constitutes an intersubjectively constructed realm based on open and **reflexive** discourses. “It provide[s] the training ground for a critical public reflection still preoccupied with itself” (ibid.: 29; italics added). The self-critical reflexivity of linguistically equipped entities―who, as communicatively interconnected subjects, form the public sphere―is an **invaluable resource** for discursively mediated forms of action coordination in the modern era. Dialogically created public spheres cannot exist without the critical reflection upon the socio-historical constitution of potentially uncritical subjects. The rational-critical character of the modern public sphere is rooted in social actors’ capacity to engage in intersubjective discourse oriented towards the communicative coordination and normative regulation of social life. It is not irrelevant to note that the rational-critical analysis of the public sphere forms part of the rational-critical constitution of the public sphere. Hence, Habermas’s theory of the public sphere is situated in, and can be critiqued by, the public sphere itself. “His theory and his practice assume that critical debate is at the heart of all intellectual activity and every healthy public sphere, and it is clear that he expects his own writing to face the criticisms and contestations with which he regularly confronts his opponents” (Kramer 1992: 256). Engagement in critical discourses, produced by prolific public spheres, is a constitutive element of modern social life. The normative potential of the bourgeois public sphere emanates from critical discursiveness able to question the taken-for-grantedness of accepted forms of quotidian experience. In this sense, the struggle over the creation of an emancipatory society “is a struggle to make publicity a source of reasoned, progressive consensus formation” (Calhoun 1992a: 28). The public sphere is a collective realm in which individuals’ cognitive ability to take on the role of critical and responsible actors is indicative of society’s coordinative capacity to transform itself into an emancipatory project shaped by the normative force of communicative rationality.

**Using anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric justifications are not mutually exclusive**

Eric **Katz**, Science, Technology, and Society Program, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences,

New Jersey Institute of Technology, Winter **99**, [“A Pragmatic Reconsideration of Anthropocentrism,” ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS Vol. 21, <http://www.mv.helsinki.fi/home/mekoskim/Eric%20Katz%20EE.pdf>] E. Liu

As a final point, it should be noted that a shift toward the **inclusion of anthropocentric arguments** in this particular case **is not damaging to** the **basic principles of nonanthropocentrism**. One can view the anthropocentric arguments for the replenishment of the beach and the preservation of Fire Island as a type of covert nonanthropocentric argument for the preservation of the natural system that lies within the hybrid artifactual/natural system. More specifically, environmentalists who are primarily concerned with the wilderness areas of Fire Island (such as the Sunken Forest) and the threatened and endangered species that live on the island can endorse the beach replenishment plan as an anthropocentric argument that achieves the nonanthropocentric goal of wilderness and species preservation. If the beach (an artifact of human) development) is not replenished, then the relatively undisturbed wilderness area that lies landward of the dunes and beach will be destroyed. IV Let me conclude with two brief comments. First, a conceptual and linguistic clarification. As a pragmatist, I have to remember that John Dewey argued relentlessly against the reification of false dualisms. In this essay**, I have tended to accentuate two pairs of dualisms**—anthropocentrism vs. nonanthropocentrism, and the natural vs. the artifactual. Let me stress that **I do not see these concepts as clearly demarcated dualistic ideals**. I believe that **we are actually dealing with a spectrum of possibilities,** that arguments can be more or less anthropocentric or nonanthropocentric, that systems can be more or less natural or artifactual. Indeed, **it is because of the existence of these concepts** along a spectrum **that** the **evaluation and justification of environmental policies requires a flexible and** **pluralistic outlook**. But sometimes in the course of philosophical analysis, **our language tends to emphasize** the **distinctions between** conceptual **pairs**, distinctions **that may not purely exist in reality**. This is just another example of the poverty of our conceptual language in dealing with the richness and complexity of the world.

**Case outweighs and turns the alt—the status quo makes the impact inevitable**

#### Globalization and militarism destroys the environment

Ramachandra **Guha**, Center for Ecological Sciences, “Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique,” ENVIORNMENTAL ETHICS, Spring 19**89**, http://www.eci.ox.ac.uk/~dliverma/articles/Guha%20on%20radical%20environmentalism.pdf

Insofar as it has begun to act as a check on man’s arrogance and ecological hubris, the transition from an anthropocentric (human-centered) to a biocentric (humans as only one element in the ecosystem) view in both religious and scientific traditions is only to be welcomed.4 What is unacceptable are the radical conclusions drawn by **deep ecology**, in particular, that intervention in nature should be guided primarily by the need to preserve biotic integrity rather than by the needs of humans. The latter for deep ecologists is anthropocentric, the former biocentric. This dichotomy **is**, however, **of very little use in understanding t**he dynamics of **environmental degradation. The two fundamental ecological problems facing the globe are** (i) overconsumption by the industrialized world and by urban elites in the Third World and (ii) growing **militarization,** both in a short-term sense **(i.e., o**ngoing regional **wars) and i**n a long-term sense (i.e., the arms race and the prospect of **nuclear annihilation). Neither of these problems has any** tangible **connection to** the **anthropocentric**-biocentric **distinction**. Indeed, **the agents of these processes would barely comprehend this** philosophical **dichotomy. The proximate causes** of the ecologically wasteful characteristics of industrial society and of militarization **are far more mundane**: at an aggregate level, the dialectic of economic and political structures, and at a micro-level, the life-style choices of individuals. These causes cannot be reduced, whatever the level of analysis, to a deeper anthropocentric attitude toward nature; on the contrary, **by constituting a grave threat to human survival, the ecological degradation they cause does not even serve the best interests of human beings!** If my identification of the major dangers to the integrity of the natural world is correct, **invoking the bogy of anthropocentricism is** at best **irrelevant and** at worst **a dangerous obfuscation.**

**Double Bind – EITHER humans are morally equal to animals in which exploiting other animals is justified by the laws of nature, OR humans are morally superior in which case their framework is bunk**

Neil **Schulman, 1995** [“The Illogic of Animal Rights”, http://www.pulpless.com/jneil/aniright.html]

**If human beings are no different from other animals, then**like all other animals**it is our nature to kill any other animal which serves the purposes of our survival** and well-being, for that is the way of all nature. Therefore, aside from economic concerns such as making sure we don't kill so quickly that we destroy a species and deprive our descendants of prey,human animals can kill members of other animal species for their usefulness to us.**It is only if we are not just another animal -- if our nature is distinctly superior to other animals -- that we become subject to ethics at all -- and then those ethics must take into account our nature as masters of the lower** animals. We may seek a balance of nature; but "balance" is a concept that only a species as intelligent as humankind could even contemplate. We may choose to temper the purposes to which we put lower animals with empathy and wisdom; but **by virtue of our superior nature, we decide**... and **if those decisions include** the **consumption of animals** for human utilitarian or recreational purposes, then the limits on the uses we put the lower beasts are ones we set according to our individual human consciences. "Animal rights" do not exist in either case.

**Discussion of human communities is not a link – our interpretation allows for interaction between non-human animals and human animals**

**Trumpeter ’91** “Non-Anthropocentrism in a Thoroughly Anthropocentrized World” Anthony Weston Trumpeter, ISSN: 0832-6193 http://trumpeter.athabascau.ca/content/v8.3/weston.html

By taking the restructuring of human communities as an illustration I do not mean to exclude other obviously vital activities, such as preserving the wilderness. Certainly the wild places that remain to us should be protected. For some places and some species even the near-total exclusion of humans may be necessary. Nonetheless, the project of developing a non-anthropocentric ethic, now conceived as making a space for the co-evolution of a less anthropocentric ethic within a less anthropocentrized world, does redirect our main focus toward the points of *interaction*, encounter, rather than separation. Certainly the aim is not to push humans out of the picture entirely, but rather to open up the possibility of relation *between* humans and the rest of Nature. We need to pay much more attention to places where humans and other creatures, honoured in their wildness and potential relatedness, can come together, perhaps warily but at least openly.

**Anthro inevitable**

**Gillespie ‘98** Alexander, “International Environmental Law, Policy, and Ethics”

An anthropocentric environmental ethic grants moral standing exclusively to human beings and considers nonhuman natural entities and nature as a whole to be only a means for human ends. In one sense, any human outlook is necessarily anthropocentric, since we can apprehend the world only through our own senses and conceptual categories. Accordingly, some advocates of anthropocentric environmental ethics have tried to preempt further debate by arguing that a non-anthropocentric environmental ethic is therefore an oxymoron. But the question at issue is not, “Can we apprehend nature from a nonhuman point of view?” Of course we cannot. The question is, rather, “Should we extend moral consideration to nonhuman natural entities or nature as a whole?” And that question, of course, is entirely open.

**Privilege turn – discussions of anthropocentrism are for those in ivory towers and irrelevant to those truly concerned with ecology**

**Callicott ‘02** J. Baird, University of Texas, “Environmental Ethics: An Overview”

The most radical challenge to mainstream environmental ethics has emerged from a pragmatist perspective. Pragmatists claim that environmental philosophy has been too preoccupied with internecine disputes that are virtually unintelligible to nonphilosophers. According to pragmatists, the arcane philosophical debates about whether the core problem is anthropocentrism or androcentrism; even the distinction between anthropocentric and nonanthropocentric environmental ethics – all are irrelevant to real-world environmental problem solving and policy making. Environmental ethicists the pragmatist environmental philosophers argue, should not be in the business of generating a one-size-fits-all theory, but instead be engaged in casuistry. They believe that one should begin with the actual issue in its local context. This facilitates the involvement of all the various interested parties (animal rights advocates, developers, stakeholders, and environmentalists) and helps to work toward a more democratically oriented solution. It rejects the binary notion that all environmental ethics should be one thing or the other – all theory or all pragmatic casuistry – and permits the complementary interaction of both top-down theory and bottom-up problem solving.

**The K is fundamentally contradictory – it ignores that humans are natural beings too**

**Grey ’93** William, “Anthropocentrism and Deep Ecology” Australian Journal of Philosophy, Vol 71, No 4 (1993), pp. 463-475

There is an obvious tension which arises when attempting to rectify the first two worries at the same time. For extolling the virtues of the natural, while at the same time vilifying the [hu]man-made or artificial, depends on a distinction between the natural and the artificial which the stress on a continuity between human and nonhuman (the focus of the second worry) undermines. On the one side there is emphasis on continuity and dependency, and on the other on distinctness and separation. It seems that, while we are a part of nature, our actions nevertheless unnatural. This is one of the points where deep ecologists often risk lapsing into an incoherence, from which they are able to save themselves (as I will illustrate) with the help of a little covert anthropocentrism. Or putting the point another way, a suitably enriched (non-atomistic) conception of humans as an integral part of larger systems – that is, correcting the misconception of humanity as distinct and separate from the natural world – means that anthropocentric concern for our own self well-being naturally flows on to concern for the nonhuman world. If we value ourselves and our projects, and part of us is constituted by the natural world, then these evaluations will be transmitted to the world.

**1. Sacrifices real world problems—object-oriented ontology doesn’t reveal how to recognize and represent the possibility of all objects**

**Berry 12** (David, Senior Lecturer, stunlaw: a critical review of politics, arts and technology, “The Uses of Object-Oriented Ontology,” May 5, 2012, http://stunlaw.blogspot.com/2012/05/uses-of-object-oriented-ontology.html)

**In this ‘liberation’** therefore, **we are saved from the ‘crushing’ problem of repetitive accounts of marginal inequality and suffering**. This is **achieved by a new ‘humanism’ that rejects the human as having any special case, such that** the marginal **problems of women, LGBT, immigrants, asylum seekers, and the poor are replaced with the problem of a litany of objects such as “quarks, Elizabeth Bennet, single-malt scotch, Ford Mustang fastbacks, lychee fruit, love affairs, dereferenced pointers, Care Bears**, sirocco winds, the Tri-City Mall, tort law, the Airbus A330, the five-hundred drachma note” (Bogost 2012a: 133). He notes, “**If** we take seriously the idea that **all objects recede** interminably **into themselves, then human perception becomes just one among many ways** that **objects** might **relate**. **To put things at the centre of a new metaphysics** also **requires us to admit** that **they do not exist just for us**” (Bogost 2012a: 9). **Leaving aside the question as to why we would want to apply that idea in the first place when it stands as hypothesis rather than expressing any form of evidence or proof**, one might wonder **how** one is **to judge between the different forms of perception in order to (re)present the litanies, let alone recognize them. This is a constant and unexamined problem within** the domain of **object-oriented ontology and is hardly dealt with** by Harman’s notion of ‘metaphor’ or ‘alluding’ to things (Harman 2009b).

**That means the aff collapses into nihilism—humans can’t be denied a specialness in relation to objects and then speak for those object, thereby affirming our specialness—it’s a contradiction that must be rejected**

**Berry 12** (David, Senior Lecturer, stunlaw: a critical review of politics, arts and technology, “The Uses of Object-Oriented Ontology,” May 5, 2012, http://stunlaw.blogspot.com/2012/05/uses-of-object-oriented-ontology.html)

Putting to one side the somewhat doubtful claim that the former litany is given more credence by anyone except, perhaps, humanities scholars, here we see a claim to a collective ‘we’ that Bogost wishes to speak for and to. Further, he adds, “Let me be clear: we need not discount human beings to adopt an object-oriented position – after all, we ourselves are of the world as much as musket buckshot and gypsum and space shuttles. But we can no longer claim that our existence is special as existence” (Bogost 2012a: 8). Indeed, if we were to take this claim seriously then one would be driven to wonder why Bogost is writing his book at all, but of course, “musket buckshot and gypsum and space shuttles” cannot be the addressees of this text as patently they do not read. So **object-oriented ontology** (OOO) **is trying to do two things** here, **on the one hand deny the specialness of humans’ existence in relation to other objects, whilst simultaneously having to write for them and to make arguments supporting their claims – thereby acknowledging the very special existence that humans possess, namely qualities of understanding, taking a stand on their own being, etc. This is a** classic **performative contradiction**. Whilst **it would be** perfectly **legitimate to outline a** formalist **theory** or methodological position **that**, for the sake of the approach, **limits** the **requirement to treat human actors as particular or special in relation to others** (this is the methodological innovation within Actor-Network Theory), **it is** quite **another to then extend this claim into a philosophical system which is part of a special order of discourse particular to human beings, that is, philosophy. This** so-called **philosophical non-human turn, is interesting for its nihilistic and conservative implications**, something we now turn to in detail.

**2. Doesn’t solve—OOO ascribes sameness to objects with no connection—doesn’t create understanding of the world—and, it links to cap**

**Berry 12** (David, Senior Lecturer, stunlaw: a critical review of politics, arts and technology, “The Uses of Object-Oriented Ontology,” May 5, 2012, http://stunlaw.blogspot.com/2012/05/uses-of-object-oriented-ontology.html)

To draw back to the original question: what are the uses of object-oriented ontology? It seems to me that **object-oriented ontology and speculative realism together reflect a worrying spirit of conservatism within philosophy. They discount the work of human activity and place it alongside a soporific litany of naturalised objects** – a method **that points less at the interconnected nature of things, and gestures more towards the infinity of sameness**, the gigantic of objects, the relentless distanceless of a total confusion of beings (see Harman 2009a for a discussion of things and objects). In short, **experience as passive, disoriented and overwhelming**, what Heidegger described as **the “terror” of pure** unmitigated **flatness. And with that, philosophy becomes ‘cold’ philosophy, instead of understanding, we have lists and litanies of objects**. Not so much philosophy as philosography, **where rather than understanding the world, there is an attempt to describe it, and a worrying tendency towards the administration of things through a cataloguing operation. These litanies** – cascades and tumbling threads of polythetic classification – **are linked merely by sequence, in which each item has no need to bear any resemblance to the ones before or after. They posit no relationships, and offers no narrative connections, and are therefore “essentially uncontrollable: at the limit so indeterminable that anything can be connected with anything” (Anderson 2012).** But of course there is a connection, a link, a thread, performed by the philosographer who chooses consciously or unconsciously the elements that make up the chain, and which are inscribed in books and articles. **The use of object-oriented ontology**, then, **is bound up in its apparent conservatism which rallies at the temerity of human-beings to believe in themselves, their politics, and their specialness. Instead of World, object-oriented ontology posits universe**, its founding principle is the Gigantic. As Heidegger explained: 1. The gigantism of the slowing down of history (from the staying away of essential decisions all the way to lack of history) in the semblance of speed and steer ability of "historical" [historisch] development and its anticipation. 2. The gigantism of the publicness as summation of everything homogeneous in favour of concealing the destruction and undermining of any passion for essential gathering. 3. The gigantism of the claim to naturalness in the semblance of what is self-evident and "logical"; the question-worthiness of being is placed totally outside questioning. 4. The gigantism of the diminution of beings in the whole in favour of the semblance of boundless extending of the same by virtue of unconditioned controllability. The single thing that is impossible is the word and representation of "impossible" (Heidegger 1999: 311). **To see what "shows up" to the philosographer one is unsurprised to see lists that are often contaminated by the products of neoliberal capitalism, objects which could not just appear of themselves, but required actual concrete labour of human beings to mediate their existence**. For some reason, **object-oriented ontology is attracted to the ephemerality of certain objects, as if by listing them they doubly affirm their commitment to realism, or that the longer the list the more ‘real’ it is. There is also the tendency to attempt to shock the reader by the juxtaposition of objects that would normally be thought to be categorically different** – see Bogost (2009) for a discussion of whether including Harry Potter, blinis, and humans in a list was a striking enough example. These rhetorical strategies are interesting in thermselves, but I do not see them as replacements for philosophy. This demonstrates that the speculative realists have not escaped the so-called ‘correlationist circle’ (Harman 2009b), nor provided a model for thinking about the anti-correlationist paradox which remains present in their own work. We should therefore ask object-oriented ontologist to move beyond merely staring at the objects they see around them and catch sight of what is being listed in their descriptive litanies. That is, examining the lists they produce, we can see what kind of objects they see as near, and which they see as far, and therefore question their claims to see objects all the way down (see Bogost 2012: 83-84). Yet **as we examine these lists there appears to be a profound forgetting of Being, as it were, as they write both for and as subjects of Late Capitalism – a fact which remains hidden from them – and a seemingly major aporia** in their work.

**3. Links to itself—OOO is a product of descriptions—means you can’t escape the problem of objectification**

**Benzon 12** (William L., “Literary Criticism 21: Academic Literary Study in a Pluralist World,” 2012, Social Science Research Network)

For the practice that I’d like to rationalize depends on objectifying the text.22 **Description is**, in effect, **a way of objectifying the** text. **Or, rather more awkwardly, it is the way you identify those features of the text that can be objectified**. Those are formal features, but not meanings. Alas, **though OOO is about objects, objectification runs against its spirit**. Though I don’t have citations immediately at hand, **OOOists have explicitly asserted that, in talking about objects, they do not mean to objectify anything, rather the contrary. For objectification surely implies some kind of “fixing in place,” some kind of finitude. And that’s what OOOists want to deny or evade**. They’re more interested in the fact of “withdrawal” than in whatever one can make contact with. Where I see literary form as a finite “boundary” on an infinite landscape” of meaning, they see nothing at all. **They simply want to wander in the landscape and extol its virtues. Thus they’ve adopted rhetorical strategies that treat all objects as subjects though, as I’ve suggested in a post on OOO rhetoric**,23 **as the expense of a profusion of utterly trivial subjects**. In short, **from my point of view, OOO would seem to be little more than another form of French theory**. But it IS THAT, a little more. A that little is a “flat” ontology in which all objects are on an equal footing. To be sure, Harman has a two-level ontology, real and sensual objects, and Morton follows him in this. But that bit of stratification does not affect my argument.

**4. That means the Aff has nothing new to provide us—a properly executed object-oriented ontology EMBRACES mind-independent reality and reductionist attempts to know it—it’s just science**

**Brassier 11** The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism, edited by Levi R. Bryant, Nick Srnicek, Graham Harman, <http://www.re-press.org/book-files/OA_Version_Speculative_Turn_9780980668346.pdf>

18. However, in the absence of any understanding of the relationship between 'meanings' and things meant—the issue at the heart of the epistemological problematic which Latour dismisses but which has preoccupied an entire philosophical tradition from Frege through Sellars and up to their contemporary heirs the claim that nothing is metaphorical is ultimately indistinguishable from the claim that everything is metaphorical.10 The metaphysical difference between words and things, concepts and objects, vanishes along with the distinction between representation and reality: 'It is not possible to distinguish for long between those actants that arc going to play the role of "words" and those that will play the role of "things'". (2.4.5). ®n dismissing the cpistemological obligation to explain what meaning is and how it relates to things that are not meanings, Latour, like all postmodernists—his own protestations to the contrary notwithstanding—reduces everything to meaning, since the difference between 'words' ami 'things' turns out to be 110 more than a functional difference subsumed by the concept of'actant'—that is to say, it is a merely nominal difference encompassed by the metaphysical function now ascribed to the metaphor 'actant'. Sincc for Latour the latter encompasses everything from hydroelectric powerplants to toothfairies, it follows that every possible difference between powerplants and fairies—i.e. differences in the mechanisms through which they affect and are a fleeted by other entities, whether those mechanisms are currently conceivable or not—is supposed to be unproblematically accounted for by this single conceptual metaphor. 19. **This is reductionism with a vengeance**; but because it occludes rather than illuminates differences in the ways in which different parts of the world interact, **its very lack of explanatory purchase can be brandished as a symptom of its irreductive prowess by those who are not interested in understanding** the difference between wishing and **engineering**. Latour writes to reassure those who do not really want to know. If the concern with representation which lies at the heart of the unfolding episteinological problematic from Descartes to Scllars was inspired by the desire not just to understand but to assist science in its effort to explain the world, then **the recent wave of attempts to liquidate epistemology by dissolving representation can be seen as symptomatic of** that **cognophobia** **which**, from Nietzsche through Heidegger and up to Latour, has **fuelled a concerted effort** on the part of some philosophers **to** contain if not **neutralize** the disquieting implications of **scientific understanding."** 20. While irreductionists prate about the 'impoverishment' attendant upon the cpistcmological privileging of conceptual rationality, all they have to offer by way of alternative is a paltry metaphorics that occludes every real distinction through which representation yields explanatory understanding. 21. Pace Latour, there is a non-negligible difference between conceptual categories and the objects to which they can be properly applied. But because he is as oblivious to it as the post-structuralists he castigates, Latour's attempt to contrast his 'realism' to postmodern 'irrealism' rings hollow: he is invoking a difference which he cannot make good on. By collapsing the reality of the difference between concepts and objects into differences in force between genetically construed 'actant s', Latour merely erases from the side of'things' ('forces') a distinction which textualists deny from the side of'words' ('signifiers'). 22. **Mortgaged to the cognitive valence of metaphor but lacking the resources to explain** let alone legitimate it, Latour's irrcductionism cannot be understood as a theory, where the latter is broadly construed as a series of systematically interlinked propositions held together by valid argumentative chains. Rather, Latour's texts consciously rehearse the metaphorical operations they describe: they are 'networks' trafficking in 'word-things' of varying 'power', nexuses of'translation' between octants' of differing 'force', etc. In this regard, they are exercises in the practical know-how which Latour exalts, as opposed to demonstrative prepositional structures governed by cognitive norms of cpistemic veracity and logical validity. But this is just to say that the ultimate import of Latour's work is prescriptive rather than descriptive—indeed, given that Issues of epistemic veracity and validity arc irrelevant to Latour, there is nothing to prevent the cynic from concluding that Latour's politics fneo-liberal) and his religion (Roman Catholic) provide the most telling indices of those forces ultimately motivating his antipathy towards rationality, critique, and revolution. 23. In other words, Latour's texts are designed to do things: they have been engineered in order to produce an cfTcct rather than establish a demonstration. Far from trying to prove anything, **Latour is explicitly engaged in persuading the susceptible into embracing his irreductionist worldview** **through** a particularly adroit deployment of **rhetoric**. **This is the** traditional **modus** **operandi** **of the sophist**. But only the most brazen of sophists denies the rhetorical character of his own assertions: 'Rhetoric cannot account for the force of a sequence of sentences because if it is called 'rhetoric' then it is weak and has already lost'. {2.4.1) This resort to an already metaphorized concept of'force' to mark the extra-rhetorical and thereby allegedly 'real' force of Latour's own 'sequence of sentences' marks the nee plus ultra of sophistry.'2 24. Irreductionism is a species of correlationism: the philosopheme according to which the human and the non-human, society and nature, mind and world, can only be understood as reciprocally correlated, mutually interdependent poles of a fundamental relation. Corrclationists arc wont to dismiss the traditional questions which have preoccupied metaphysicians and epistemologists—questions such as 'What isX?' and 'How do we know X?'—as false questions, born of the unfortunate tendency to abstract one or other pole of the correlation and consider it in isolation from its correlate. For the correlationist, since it is impossible to separate the subjective from the objective, or the human from the non-human, it makes no sense to ask what anything is in itself, independently of our relating to it. By the same token, once knowledge has been reduced to technical manipulation, it is neither possible nor desirable to try to understand scientific cognition independently of the nexus of social practices in which it is invariably implicated. Accordingly, correlationism sanctions all those variants of pragmatic instrumentalism which endorse the primacy of practical 'know-how' over theoretical 'knowing-that' Sapience becomes just another kind of sentience—and by no means a privileged kind either. 25. Ultimately, **correlationism is** not so much a specific philosophical doctrine as **a general** and highly versatile **strategy for deflating traditional** metaphysical and epistemological **concerns by reducing both questions of'being' and of'knowing1 to** concatenations of **cultural form**, political contestation, **and social practice**. By licensing the wholesale conversion of philosophical problems into symptoms of non-philosophical factors (political, sociocultural, psychological, etc.), **correlationism provides the** (often unstated) **philosophical premise for** the spate of twentieth century **attempts to dissolve the problems of philosophy into questions of politics, sociology, anthropology, and psychology.** **To reject correlationism** and reassert the primacy of the epistemology-metaphysics nexus **is not to revert to a reactionary philosophical purism**, insisting that philosophy remain uncontaminatcd by politics and history. **It is simply to point out that**, while they are certainly socially and politically nested, the problems of **metaphysics and epistemology nonetheless possess a relative autonomy and remain** **conceptually irreducible—just as** the problems of **mathematics and physics** retain their relative autonomy despite always being implicated within a given socio-historical conjuncture. The fact that philosophical discourse is non-mathematical and largely (but by no means entirely) unformalized (but certainly not unfonnalizable), does not provide a legitimate warrant for disregarding its conceptual specificity and reducing it to a set of ideological symptoms. Again, this is not to assert (absurdly) that the problems of metaphysics or epistemology have no social determinants or political ramifications, but simply to point out that they can no more be understood exclusively in those terms than can the problems of mathematics or physics. 26. To refuse corrclationism's collapsing of epistemology into ontology, and of ontology into politics, is not to retreat into reactionary quietism but to acknowledge the need to forge new conditions of articulation between politics, epistemology, and metaphysics. The politicization of ontology marks a regression to anthropomorphic myopia; **the ontologization of politics falters the moment it tries to infer political prescriptions from metaphysical description.** **Philosophy and politics cannot be metaphysically conjoined;** philosophy intersects with politics at the point where critical epistemology transects ideology critique**. An emancipatory politics oblivious to epistemology quickly degenerates into metaphysical fantasy**, which is to say, a religious substitute.'3 The failure to change the world may not be unrelated to the failure to understand it. 27. The assertion of the primacy of correlation is the condition for the post-modcrn dissolution of the cpistcmology-mctaphvsics nexus and the two fundamental distinctions concomitant with it: the sapience-sentience distinction and the conceptobject distinction. In eliding the former, correlationism eliminates epistemology by reducing knowledge to discrimination. In eliding the latter, correlationism simultaneously reduces things to concepts and concepts to things. Each reduction facilitates the other: the erasure of the epistemological difference between sapience and sentience makes it easier to collapse the distinction between concept and object; the elision of the metaphysical difference between concept and object makes it easier to conflate sentience with sapience. Thus Latour's reduction of things to concepts (objects to 'act ants') is of a piece with his reduction of concepts to things ('truth' to force). 28. **The rejection of correlationism entails the reinstatement of** the critical nexus between epistemology and metaphysics and its attendant **distinctions:** sapience/sentience; **concept/object**. **We need to know what things are in order to measure the gap between their phenomenal and noumcnal aspects** as well as the difference between their extrinsic and intrinsic properties. **To know (in the strong scientific sense) what something is is to conceptualize it.** This is not to say that things arc identical with their concepts. The gap between conceptual identity and non-conceptual difference—between what our concept of the object is and what the object is in itself—is not an ineffable hiatus or mark of irrecuperable altcrity; it can be conceptually converted into an identity that is not of the concept even though the concept is of it. Pace Adorno, there is an alternative to the negation of identity concomitant with the conccpt's failure to coincide with what it aims at: a negation of the concept determined by the object's non-conceptual identity, rather than its lack in the concept. Pace Deleuze, there is an alternative to the affirmation of difference as non-representational concept (Idea) of the thing itself: an affirmation of identity in the object as ultimately determining the adequacy of it s own conceptual representation. **The difference between the conceptual and the extra-conceptual need not be characterized as lack** or negation, or converted into a positive concept of being as Ideal diffcrcncc-in-itsclf: it can be presupposed as already-given in the act of knowing or conception. But it is presupposed without being posited. **This is what distinguishes scientific representation and governs its stance towards the object**.'4 29. What is real in the scientific representation of the object does not coincide with the object's quiddity as conceptually circumscribed—the latter is what the concept means and what the object is; its metaphysical quiddity or essence—but **the scientific posture is one which there is an** immanent yet transcendental **hiatus between the reality of the object and its being as conceptually circumscribed: the posture of scientific representation is one in which it is the former that determines the latter** and forces its perpetual revision. Scientific representation operates on the basis of a stance in which something in the object itself determines the discrepancy between its material reality—the fact that it is, its existence—and its being, construed as quiddity, or what it is. The scientific stance is one in which **the reality of the object determines the meaning of its conception**, and allows the discrepancy between that reality and the way in which it is conceptually circumscribed to be measured. This should be understood **in contrast to the classic correlationist model according to which** it is **conceptual meaning that determines the 'reality' of the object**, understood as the relation between representing and represented.

**5. And, all our arguments apply—it’s their burden to prove the distinctions between different types of OOO**

**Wolfendale 12** (Peter, PhD candidate at University of Warwick, The Noumenon’s New Clothes, Speculations III, <http://speculations.squarespace.com/storage/Noumenons%20New%20Clothes_Pt1_Wolfendale.pdf>

I will plead forgiveness for my bombast, but **there is a certain grandeur to the pronouncements regarding the emergence of OOO** as a philosophical movement **that demands parody**, and I hope this can be taken in good spirit, as a sort of gesture to clear the air. I have every intention of taking these pronouncements as seriously as possible, and perhaps even more seriously than they are intended. **Graham Harman, the erstwhile leader of this most vocal faction of what was once, fleetingly, called Speculative Realism** (SR), **has often expressed a preference for what he calls hyperbolic readings of philosophies**.2 The idea here is to imagine the relevant philosophy in a position of nigh-unassailable strength, so as to tease out what would be missing from a world in which it had become dominant. **To imagine a given philosophical tendency actually winning the discursive battles in which it is engaged is to treat it with the utmost seriousness. It is to treat it as a genuine contender for truth, whose claims to truth are sincere enough to be taken at face value**. This is **the kind of respect that any serious philosophical position should be treated with,** and this goes double for nascent philosophical movements that claim to have both wide ranging implications and applications. The aim of this paper is to take OOO seriously, and to treat it with at least this level of respect (my initial parody aside).