# 1AC

What is war?

Peace is the absence of war. But how do we know if we’ve never lived in a world without war? What can we do to find peace? Is peace even possible?

Rejecting war outright to move towards a state of peace ignores that the justifications for pacifism are tied to the executive’s reasons for war. Despite their numerous differences, those preaching flower power and seeking peace and love had similar endpoints for politics as the military hawks whose policies brought about war and hatred. Whether or not they actually desire peace, war makers evoke the rhetoric of peace to rationalize war as the best way to exterminate all those who considered threats to stability.

But the term “war” is not powerful by itself. Instead its significance comes from its abilities to describe the reality of conflict and motivate further violence with an end goal of creating peace.

War is not just the product of the political system that magically appears on the command of the president. War is the process of politics constantly falling short of ever bringing about peace.

If peace is the ends, war is the means.

But war means different things to different individuals in different situations. War for Congress and the Courts is something better left to the executive. War for the executive is never the fault of the United States. War means protection. War means loving one’s country. War means uniting the world under a common framework. War means appeasing the gods. War means erasing difference. War means victory is the only option. War is the means. Peace is the end.

For me, war means living and breathing, constantly questioning the power manifested around me, and refusing to go on with "business as usual." But can I ever find peace when I know that others may still be at war? What worth are individual conquests of peace over war when others continually suffer?

What use is any goal at all?

Peace is the end forever out of reach, while war extends its reach forever.

Now, all war is not the same and all debate is not the same. Nor can they be treated that simply.

And yet, debaters act like war is just another word on the flow. They claim that a single ballot can bring a state of peace. How might a judge decide between two imaginary worlds when both are prophesized to go boom? Is it meaningful for debaters to claim to have the final solution on how to bring peace without first questioning the meaning of war? What ends justify these means?

Debates about war powers never reach an ending point. After this round, they will continue outside this room. They will continue within halls of power. They will continue in the meetings of local grassroots organizations. They will continue on the everyday level, among people who know the arguments way more than we ever could because they experience presidential war policy act directly upon them. Argument to some people doesn’t just mean a way to develop some skills so we can do better in law school. Instead, argument means protecting oneself from the horrors of the law. This is, after all, a legal topic.

So before proceeding through the rest of this one debate, we must start this conversation with a question: what even is debate?

There are two ways to answer this: either ascribe meaning to debate or allow it to define itself.

Supplying singular meaning to debate is the more dominant answer. This interpretive move constructs debate as a war of words. Debaters treat the ballot as a bullet and seek to destroy anyone blocking the path towards peace.

Anyone believed to be in opposition to one’s end goals become labeled as an enemy through propaganda tactics, justifying argumentative holy wars against all those considered “unreasonable.” Peace can begin only once the enemy is vanquished.

It’s only fitting that the metaphor of debate as a war-of-words grew more powerful on the war powers topic. The opening shots were fired when the Kentucky Round Robin didn’t invite the returning national champion.

Then hostilities increased.

After the historic moment when for the first time two black women won the top two speaker awards at the Kentucky tournament, some judges used point inflation as the only option to charge policy relevance back onto the battlefield of elims. Whether or not it was their goal, they punished the rest of the pool and undid the purpose of affirmative action point inflation.

All the while the flame wars on facebook and ceda forums continued.

But that description is incomplete because the text always adds pages. If debate truly is a war, we cannot understand it fully just by focusing on flashpoint conflicts. Each round would be a battle with individual tactical decisions.

Is debate a war with just two sides of the conflict? Can the divisiveness of debate really be that simple? No and no. This framing ignores how within each section are multiple subsections, comprised of debaters each with unique perspectives on the topic, on argument, and on debate as a whole.

And the central issue of war has not been unique to this year’s resolution, nor even debate. We shouldn’t need evidence to prove how political promises have always fallen short of their mark.

The problem with current forms of politics and debate is their emphasis on a grand-narrative telos, or an endpoint or purpose to be achieved.

The executive claims that the telos of war is to bring peace, but war has yet to reach that conclusion. If we ever reached a utopian state of peace, there would be no more need for war.

Language contains a telos as well. The goal of each sentence is to perfectly encapsulate meaning. Definitions of words establish a telos of signification. The word struggles to perfectly represent the essence of its object. Peace is the absence of war. But if we have yet to realize a state of peace, does the word have any meaning at all?

The president utilizes the power of war to justify targeted killing, indefinite detention, offensive cyber operations, and the introduction of armed forces as means toward the end of peace.

Similarly, debating for the purpose of a single overarching goal means we will do anything necessary to achieve that goal, whether that means excluding teams who do not frame their work in the same unified manner or setting unreachable benchmarks for change that cannot be resolved by a single ballot.

While certain telos have importance in themselves, the problem is how we frame the argument through defining endpoints for debate.

Change in debate is DEFINITELY needed, but if we ever believe it’s finally arrived then we will give up striving for it, and debate will just stay the same.

Change is not a product, but rather a process.

The intellectual battles of debate have not brought us any closer to peace. They’ve only demonstrated the privilege and intellectual dogmatism of debaters claiming to have the silver bullet to end war once and for all. Arguing in circles, the cycles of war continue.

War powers debates do not begin or end along a straight line. They are never resolved. Rather, they revolve circularly, around and around, round after round. Just as each war involves differing contexts that provide new meaning for the word, each debate approaches radically different conclusions.

From the several presidential authority resolutions in the past to the hundreds of individual debates this year, we have not answered once and for all the questions of the topic. Debates over war powers will continue outside of this space and even way after this topic is long forgotten because the literature has no solid base. It’s not frozen as a noun but instead fluid like a verb, constantly spiraling down the drain.

I’d be lying if I said the affirmative has the perfect solution to all these problems. I’d also be employing a grand-narrative telos for voting affirmative. No one individual has all the answers. No collective has all the answers either. But that is the beauty of debate! There is no end-all-be-all of argument. If there was such thing as a perfect speech, there would be no more purpose to debate because the pinnacle has already been reached. Paradoxically, the grand purpose of debate would then be to never realize or actualize the purpose of debate, or else there would be no more reason to debate at all!

Telos is unavoidable, as all argument retains some form of purpose or else nobody would have communicated in the first place. The importance lies in understanding the limits of each argument in ever reaching its purpose and questioning those limits that we establish.

Competition within debate is also inevitable to some extent, so the question is just what metric the judge uses to decide. Treating debate as an ends and ignoring our means is the problem. It ensures that the ballot doesn't represent a product, but rather, endorses our process.

Rather than debating war powers with a singular product in mind, we must embrace the process of debate itself.

To break free from the teleological confines that define debate-as-war, the affirmative allows debate to simply be debate. There are no final-ends to our means. War means war, peace means peace, and debate means debate.

If words loop around themselves with the goal perfect signification, allowing debate to define itself THROUGH itself concedes the shortcomings of language to ever reach its end.

Our solvency is not in the end of achievement, but rather gained through by deconstructing the means of communicative practice that continuously questions its own capabilities to reach a grand finale.

Instead of arguing in favor of a single set conclusion, we debate for the sake of debating.

We can either read into the resolution and become caught in the loop of argument-wars or we can take away from this topic the power to argue through the circularity, through the limitations on speech and thought, through the means… BUT not towards that singular end off in the distance.

The only way out is through. So let’s debate about executive war powers.

First question. What is war?

# 2AC

## Case

Our process of deconstructive performance breaks down logocentric domination that justifies oppressive hierarchies.

Montgomery, ‘10 [Erwin B. Montgomery III, Prof of English at Bryant University; “SPECTERS OF MARKS: ELEMENTS OF DERRIDEAN HAUNTOLOGY AND

BENJAMINIAN POLITICO-HISTORICAL ESCHATOLOGY IN FRANKENSTEIN,

HEART OF DARKNESS, AND THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT’S WOMAN”, 2010]

A deconstructive performance implies an awareness that that to which the performance addresses itself proceeds from the alterity of pure difference. The ethics of deconstruction, in other words, encourages sensitivity to the singularity of entities and events, to their spatial, temporal and constitutional particularities, as the nearest, most faithful conceptual approximation of the event as a-conceptual and wholly other. Deconstruction reminds one that any predication violently imposes itself on the singularity of entities and events, trammeling them into sameness by subsuming them under metaphysical and linguistic categories. Rather than in a telos inherent to an event, any imposed predication finds impetus in ―a moment of economy,‖ Derrida writes, that puts in order the grand conceptual edifice of Western logocentric metaphysics by collapsing and hierarchizing the undifferentiated plenum of a-conceptual, significative potentialities into a sign system devoted to facilitating productive communication.41 Yet this system appears content as it were to burn the village to save the village; signs pressed into service to articulate the singularities of events can only do so by referring them according to the systemic rules governing their use, which precipitate the radical discontiguity between language and the world it purports to describe. Entities and events impress their spectral forms on language without conferring upon it any of their essence. As Ernesto Laclau‘s observes in his analysis of Derrida‘s deconstructive practice, ontology as discourse concerning the being of beings becomes transformed by deconstruction into ―hauntology.‖42

## T 2AC

Our interpretation is that the question of the topic should be political strategy and NOT law enforcement – Aff is a prerequisite to topic knowledge about restrictions.

Rana, ’11 [Aziz Rana received his A.B. summa cum laude from Harvard College and his J.D. from Yale Law School. He also earned a Ph.D. in political science at Harvard, where his dissertation was awarded the university's Charles Sumner Prize. He was an Oscar M. Ruebhausen Fellow in Law at Yale; “Who Decides on Security?”; 8/11/11; Cornell Law Library; <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/clsops_papers/87/>]

If both objective sociological claims at the center of the modern security concept are themselves profoundly contested, what does this mean for reform efforts that seek to recalibrate the r elationship between liberty and security? Above all, it indicates that the central problem with the procedural solutions offered by constitutional scholars – emphasizing new statutory frameworks or greater judicial assertiveness – is that they mistake a question of politics for one of law. In other words, such scholars ignore the extent to which governing practices are the product of background political judgments about threat, democratic knowledge, professional expertise, and the necessity for insulated decision-making. To the extent that Americans are convinced that they face continuous danger from hidden and potentially limitless assailants – danger too complex for the average citizen to comprehend independently – it is inevitable that institutions (regardless of legal reform initiatives) will operate to centralize power in those hands presumed to enjoy military and security expertise. Thus, any systematic effort to challenge the current framing of the relationship between security and liberty must begin by challenging the underlying assumptions about knowledge and security upon which legal and political arrangements rest. Without a sustained and public debate about the validity of security expertise, its supporting institutions, and the broader legitimacy of secret information, there can be no substantive shift in our constitutional politics. The p roblem at present, however, is that no popular base exists to raise these questions. Unless such a base emerges, we can expect our prevailing security arrangements to become ever more entrenched.

## ---AT Decisionmaking

Aff teaches most portable skills for real world activism and decisionmaking – gov expertism and secrecy means we can’t know what we’re up against so we should role-play as ourselves in a state of epistemological incompetence because not everyone who leaves this space will be politicians.

Mansfield, ‘6 [Nick Mansfield; As the Dean Higher Degree Research at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, he is the senior academic responsible for postgraduate research study across all Faculties and departments. After completing his PhD in English Literature from the University of Sydney, Nick was a Harkness Fellow at Columbia University in New York, and subsequently at Yale University. After returning to Australia, he taught at Flinders University in Adelaide, and then at Macquarie, first in English and then in Critical and Cultural Studies. Nick is one of the founding general editors of the journal Derrida Today “Refusing Defeatism: Derrida, Decision and Absolute Risk”; SOCIAL SEMIOTICS VOLUME 16 NUMBER 3 (SEPTEMBER 2006); Accessed 3/12/14]

What is at stake here is the politics of decision and the insistence on responsibility. Someone is making decisions, but because of the undefined nature of their position in a complex that cannot picture, understand or map itself, they cannot know their role, the power of their decision or perhaps even that the small technical choices they are making are world-historical. The shifting nature of the relations between knowledge, power, death-dealing and the on/off logic of technical progress rob decision of ground and moment. No-one really knows or can know what they are doing. It is this hiddenness [sic] and incommensurability, this over-determined, under-self-conscious space that needs to be spoken. ‘‘Decision itself, and choice’’, Derrida writes, ‘‘are being subtracted from us, are abandoning us’’ (1984, 22). The function of speech here then, the meaning of speech, is to allow events to separate and become themselves. This can only happen if decision is fore-grounded as an act in which the issue of competence is at stake, in which those to whom competence is a problem insist that this realisation be included in the texture of every and all decisions. In other words, the automatism of calculated and pre-fixed options has to be exposed for what it is: the will to rob decision of its subjectivity and thus its indeterminacy, to pretend that decisions already long made were not in fact decisions, but the implementation of a necessary programming. Speech then must raise for the competent the slow, hard, gruelling problem of competence. It must remind the competent that it is in in-competence that we may better know the way. In the state of emergency, the terror of the event makes a competence knowable as such purely hypothetical. There can only be in-competence in its two denominations: self-conscious or disingenuous. Only in-competence can decide, and indeed act. What is at stake is whether or not it admits to what it is. (It is this insistence on the logic of in-competence in Derrida that separates this logic of decision from the Schmittian mystification of the decision as the exercise of a sovereignty that substitutes the privilege of exceptionality for the democracy of responsibility. Schmittian decisionism is a relative of calculation because it insists on the invulnerability of the decision to accountability.) The in-competent are not simply just intellectuals then. They are [sic] everyone not in a position of technical, military or political pseudo-competency. In the age of elite techno-military-economic fundamentalism, the broad population, to which the intellectual here is in a metonymic relation, is excluded from the executive knowledge and capability that democracy says it adjudicates and licences. The problem of in-competence that the intellectual curates is socially central because in an age of over-competence, where the prerogative to act is locked up among the super-qualified and their esoteric languages, citizens must know how to evaluate not from a position of information, but from one of ignorance; not from being fully informed, but from being confused, mystified and forgotten. Democracy depends, then, not on the fully-informed citizen, but the unintimidated evaluation carried out by the in-competent and uncertain, those for whom competence endures as a problem. And we must be explicit about this. Our in-competence is being prostituted so that its inflammatory nature can be neutralised. At the moment, in-competence is sucked into the generalised defeatism of the age as automatic, populist scepticism towards judges, academics, politicians, talking heads of every kind homogenised in one sweeping tide of pre-emptive condemnation, the automatic and defensive knee-jerk reaction against the tyranny of competence. This in-competence has to be retrieved as an actively considering responsibility, not panicky defeatist intolerance.

Debate needs differential relationships to the politics of war – making framework a voting issue implies that NONE of our process was productive – they have to win that the 1AC should’ve NEVER HAPPENED and our process should be exterminate from debate, means they preserve status quo acquiescence to dominant grand narrative telos of debate – the executive authority to relegate speech unimportant preserves the hegemonic regime that will eliminate difference through war as a means to the end of peace.

Butler ‘4 [2004, Judith Butler is a Professor of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature at U.C. Berkeley, “Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence”, pg. xix-xxi]

Dissent and debate depend upon the inclusion of those who maintain critical views of state policy and civic culture remaining part of a larger public discussion of the value of policies and politics. To charge those who voice critical views with treason, terrorist-sympathizing, anti-Semitism, moral relativism, postmodernism, juvenile behavior, collaboration, anachronistic Leftism, is to seek to destroy the credibility not of the views that are held, but of the very persons who hold them. It produces the climate of fear in which to voice a certain view is to risk being branded and shamed with heinous appellation. To continue to voice one’s views under those conditions is not easy, since one must not only discount the truth of appellation, but brave the stigma that seizes up from the public domain. Dissent is quelled, in part, through threatening the speaking subject with an uninhabitable identification. Because it would be heinous to identify as treasonous, as a collaborator, one fails to speak, or one speaks in throttled ways, in order to sidestep the terrorizing identification that threatens to take hold. This strategy for quelling dissent and limiting the reach of critical debate happens not only through a series of shaming tactics which have a certain psychological terrorizations as their effect, but they work as well by producing what will and will not count as a viable speaking subject and a reasonable opinion within the public domain. It is precisely because one does not want to lose one’s status as a viable speaking being that ones does not say what one thinks. Under social conditions that regulate identifications and the sense of viability to this degree, censorship operates implicitly and forcefully. The line that circumscribes what is speakable and what is livable also function as an instrument of censorship. To decide what views will count as reasonable within the public domain, however, is to decide what will and will not count as the public sphere of debate. And if someone holds vies that are not in line with the nationalist norm, that person comes to lack credibility as a speaking person, and the media is not open to him or her (though the internet, interestingly, is). The foreclosure of critique -empties the public domain of debate and democratic contestation itself, so that debate becomes the exchange of views among the like-minded, and criticism, which ought to be central to any democracy, becomes a fugitive and suspect activity. Public Policy, including foreign policy, often seeks to restrain the public sphere from being open to certain forms of debate and the circulation of media coverage. One way a hegemonic understanding of politics is achieved is through circumscribing what will and will not be admissible as part of the public sphere itself. Without disposing populations in such a way that war seems good and right and true, no war can claim popular consent, and no administration can maintain popularity.

To produce what will constitute the public sphere, however, it is necessary to control the way in which people see, how they hear, what they see. The constraints are not only on content—certain images of dead bodies in Iraq, for instance, are considered unacceptable for public visual consumption—but on what “can” be heard, read, seen, felt, and known. The public sphere of appearance is one way to establish what will count as reality, and what will not. It is also a way of establishing whose lives can be marked as lives, and whose deaths will count as deaths. Our capacity to feel and to apprehend hangs in the balance. But so, too, does the fate of the reality of certain lives and deaths as well as the ability to think critically and publicly about the effects of war.

## Cap

Framework is a double turn with cap – alternative must escape control over politics – proves the inauthenticity of the alternative and means the perm solves.

Invisible Committee 1

The Invisible Committee. The Cybernetic Hypothesis. 2001

But that also means that its first objective must be to resist all attempts to reduce it away with demands for representation. Fog is a vital response to the imperative of clarity, transparency, which is the first imprint of imperial power on bodies. To become foglike means that I finally take up the part of the shadows that command me and prevent me from believing all the fictions of direct democracy insofar as they intend to ritualize the transparency of each person in their own interests, and of all persons in the interests of all. To become opaque like fog means recognizing that we don't represent anything, that we aren't identifiable; it means taking on the untotalizable character of the physical body as a political body; it means opening yourself up to still-unknown possibilities. It means resisting with all your power any struggle for recognition. Lyotard: "What you ask of us, theoreticians, is that we constitute ourselves as identities, as managers. But if there's one thing we're sure of, it's that this operation (of exclusion) is just a cheap show, that incandescences are made by no one, and belong to no one." Nevertheless, it won't be a matter of reorganizing a few secret societies or conquering conspiracies like free-masonry, carbonarism, as the avant-gardes of the last century envisioned - I'm thinking mostly of the College of Sociology. Establishing a zone of opacity where people can circulate and experiment freely without bringing in the Empire's information flows, means producing "anonymous singularities," recreating the conditions for a possible experience, an experience which will not be immediately flattened out by a binary machine assigning a meaning/direction to it, a dense experience that can transform desires and the moments where they manifest themselves into something beyond desire, into a narrative, into a filled-out body. So, when Toni Negri asked Deleuze about communism, the latter was careful not to assimilate it into a realized and transparent communication: "you ask whether societies of control or communication would give rise to forms of resistance capable of giving a new chance for a communism conceived as a 'transverse organization of free individuals.' I don't know; perhaps. But this would be impossible if minorities got back hold of the megaphone. Maybe words, communication, are rotten. They're entirely penetrated by money: not by accident, but by their nature. We have to detourn/misuse words. Creating has always been something different from communicating. The important thing is maybe to create vacuoles of non-communication, interrupters who escape control." Yes, the important thing for us is to have opacity zones, opening cavities, empty intervals, black blocs within the cybernetic matrix of power. The irregular war waged against the Empire, on the level of a given place, a fight, a riot, from now on will start with the construction of opaque and offensive zones. Each of these zones shall be simultaneously a small group/nucleus starting from which one might experiment without being perceptible, and a panic-propagating cloud within the ensemble of the imperial system, the coordinated war machine, and spontaneous subversion at all levels. The proliferation of these zones of offensive opacity (ZOO), and the intensification of their interrelations, will give rise to an irreversible disequilibrium.

Perm solves – must experiment to find methods of subversion – totalizing conceptions of the “global capitalist system” doom alt solvency.

Connolly, ‘11 [William Connolly, 2011, review quotes of his book “a world of becoming”, <http://obsoletematter.wordpress.com/2011/07/06/william-connolly-a-world-of-becoming/>]

Specific cultural priorities, habits of family life, religious belief and ritual, underground markets, new social movements, tax evasion,cross-state political formations, military reticence or adventurism, media humor and drama, scientific research and teaching all posses partial and shifting degrees of autonomy from system governance. To insist that every practice, once capitalism expands its reach, is entirely absorbed into its orbit is to translate the idea of a world-capitalist system into that of a totality. Such an image exaggerates the absorptive power of one system, and discourages exploration of ways to stretch and challenge global capitalism in creative ways. It promotes either a response of managing the system without modifying its trajectory, or of preparing a revolutionary movement, or of waiting passively for it to burst into flames of its own accord. That is, to translate a world-capitalist system into a totality is to misread what is outside it, to miss those things imperfectly incorporated into it, and to present an apolitical orientation to it.

Aff accesses sequencing DA – deconstructing outdated concepts and starting afresh solves best, otherwise our old remedies become hegemonic.

Galli 10, Carlo Galli, Professor of Political Philosophy at the Univeristy of Bologna, Politics Spaces and Global War, trans. Adam Sitze, p. 188

Rather than denying the theoretico-political novelty of Global War, ratherthan closing our eyes to the fact that Global War radically challengesmodern political philosophy and its categories, and rather than continuing to believe that globalization is not the horizon that determines ourexperience today, our task is to begin to think the novelties, the paradoxes and the aporiac of globalization. We must ask ourselves about its possibilities—not in order to stabilize it, for that would be impossible—but in order to imagine routes within it that would make for a less tumultuous crossing of the sea the world has become.If we do not want to make the mistake of applying old remedies to new illnesses, or to wander ¡n vain in our own smug conceptuality (which has become nothing but ineffectual jargon), we must remember that we scholars need to apply a mix of good sense, humility and theoretical radicalism.This will give us a renewed capacity for observation and analysis, Political philosophy should not institute itself primarily as a public elaboration of criteria of judgment, or as the rational production of a set of guiding values to be put into practice; it should not seek to be a discourse internalto the City. Before it takes on these tasks, it must first begin the radical deconstruction of its own concepts; it must clear the rubble of the Modern off the ground—for today, that rubble hinders more than it helps.

Revolutionary framing of Zavarzedeh ev ignores the adaptability of 21st century capitalism, gets coopted by the system.

De Cock et al, ‘7 [Christian De Cock, Professor of Organization Studies at Swansea University where he also acts as director of the MBA programme. He received his MSc. and PhD. Degrees from the Manchester Business School; Peter Fleming, University Lecturer in Organization Studies at the Judge Business School, University of Cambridge. He has previously held academic posts at Melbourne University (Australia) and Otago University (New Zealand); Alf Rehn, chair of management and organization at Åbo Akademi University, and is a professor of entrepreneurship and innovation at the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, AND is a devoted fan of the divine Patsy Cline; “Organizing revolution?”; MANAGEMENT & ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY Vol 2(2), 2007]

Revolution seems a constant in the world of business. Textbooks talk about Taylorism and Fordism as revolutions. Hammer and Champy’s influential book Reengineering the Corporation had as a subtitle A Manifesto for Business Revolution. Guy Kawasaki wrote ‘Rules for Revolutionaries’, and Gary Hamel is ‘Leading the Revolution’. TQM, brands, hair-care products, part-time work and just about every single invention in the field of information technology have been described as revolutionary. All this would come as no great surprise to Marx. To quote (one more time) a famous passage from the Communist Manifesto: The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and with them the relations of production… Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social relations, everlasting uncertainty and agitation, distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones... All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and men at last are forced to face... the real conditions of their lives and their relations with their fellow men (Marx and Engels 1972, 577–8). Capitalism, Marx reminds us, is an inherently transgressive force, perpetually agitating, disrupting, and dissolving; it is a system which can survive only by constantly revolutionizing its own conditions. Capitalism is not just a historical epoch among others: the properly capitalist mode of production ‘reprograms and utterly restructures the values, life rhythms, cultural habits and temporal sense of its subjects’ (Jameson 2005, 284). What is important to point out here is the enthusiastic tone in Marx’s writing; he considers the dynamism of capitalism a crucial force in the dialectical process. Berman (1983, 94) summarized Marx’s thinking thus: The revolutionary activity… that overthrows bourgeois rule will be an expression of the active and activistic energies that the bourgeoisie itself has set free. Marx began by praising the bourgeoisie, not by burying it; but if his dialectic works out, it will be the virtues for which he praised the bourgeoisie that will bury it in the end. Yet, the dialectic hasn’t quite worked out the way Marx expected. In our 21st century capitalist society the notion of revolution has become linked to a uniquely pressing need for stability, thus creating a most peculiar fusion of dynamism and stasis (cf. De Cock et al. 2005, 48–9). As Eagleton (2005, 59) remarks: ‘Revolution is still with us, and its name is the status quo. This social order must square its drive for stability with the fact that, uniquely among historical regimes, its revolution never ends.’ Since the dynamics of capitalism undermine every stable frame of representation, a crucial task that is normally performed by critico-political activity – undermining the representational frame of the dominant ideological form – is already performed by capitalism itself. This poses various problems for scholars of a critical persuasion, succinctly captured by Zˇizˇek’s (2004, 213) question: ‘How, then are we to revolutionize an order whose very principle is constant self-revolutionizing?’ It should come as no great surprise then that the concept of ‘revolution’ has become less and less fashionable in these times of ‘ludic’ postmodern radicalism in academe. If ‘Emancipation almost always means enslavement for something or someone’ (WOBS 2001, xxxiv), is the closest we can approach revolutionary passion a carnivalesque explosion or strategies of resistance? Can a range of forms of resistance based on micro-strategies take the place of a concerted attempt at ‘overthrow’ or a violent act of revolt? Has resistance (e.g. against globalization) become a viable alternative to revolution, or does it merely create regulatory instances that control the worst excesses of capitalism, thus in effect becoming a ‘less important sideshow’ which acts as a safety valve for late-capitalism? Perhaps cynicism about the whole notion of ‘revolution’ is the appropriate response after all? Radical theorists and activists may enjoy a great deal of freedom to do their work – to read, write, speak, meet, organize. But they may find themselves cast in the paradoxical role of merchants and promoters of revolution, which then becomes a commodity like everything else.