# 1NC – Weber PS

### 1NC

#### Interpretation: The resolution should define the division of ground- the role of the ballot is to determine the efficacy of a topical proposal relative to the status quo or a competing option.

#### The ‘United States federal government’ is the three branches.

U.S. Legal ’16 [U.S. Legal; 2016; Organization offering legal assistance and attorney access; U.S. Legal, “United States Federal Government Law and Legal Definition,” <https://definitions.uslegal.com/u/united-states-federal-government/>]

The United States Federal Government is established by the US Constitution. The Federal Government shares sovereignty over the United Sates with the individual governments of the States of US. The Federal government has three branches: i) the legislature, which is the US Congress, ii) Executive, comprised of the President and Vice president of the US and iii) Judiciary. The US Constitution prescribes a system of separation of powers and ‘checks and balances’ for the smooth functioning of all the three branches of the Federal Government. The US Constitution limits the powers of the Federal Government to the powers assigned to it; all powers not expressly assigned to the Federal Government are reserved to the States or to the people.

#### The resolution is a proposition of policy – “United States” and “should” prove

Ericson 3 (Jon M., Dean Emeritus of the College of Liberal Arts – California Polytechnic U., et al., The Debater’s Guide, Third Edition, p. 4)

The Proposition of Policy: Urging Future Action In policy propositions, each topic contains certain key elements, although they have slightly different functions from comparable elements of value-oriented propositions. 1. An agent doing the acting ---“The United States” in “The United States should adopt a policy of free trade.” Like the object of evaluation in a proposition of value, the agent is the subject of the sentence. 2. The verb should—the first part of a verb phrase that urges action. 3. An action verb to follow should in the should-verb combination. For example, should adopt here means to put a program or policy into action though governmental means. 4. A specification of directions or a limitation of the action desired. The phrase free trade, for example, gives direction and limits to the topic, which would, for example, eliminate consideration of increasing tariffs, discussing diplomatic recognition, or discussing interstate commerce. Propositions of policy deal with future action. Nothing has yet occurred. The entire debate is about whether something ought to occur. What you agree to do, then, when you accept the affirmative side in such a debate is to offer sufficient and compelling reasons for an audience to perform the future action that you propose.

#### Core antitrust laws refer to statutory laws – the increased prohibitions must be reflected IN Clayton, Sherman and FTC

Kuntz 2-23-21

(Kendall. MARYLAND CAREY SCHOOL OF LAW. Can the Courts and New Antitrust Laws Break Up Big Tech? https://www.law.umaryland.edu/Programs-and-Impact/Business-Law/JBTLOnline/Break-Up-Big-Tech/)

There are three core antitrust laws in effect today: the Sherman Act, the Clayton Act, and the Federal Trade Commission Act. These three antitrust laws attempt to protect market competition for the benefit of consumers. The Sherman Act outlaws monopolies and contracts that unreasonably restrain trade. The Clayton Act prohibits mergers and acquisitions that substantially lessen competition or create a monopoly. Lastly, the Federal Trade Commission Act bans “unfair methods of competition” and “unfair or deceptive acts or practices.” Antitrust laws are not established to punish success, but are focused on preventing anticompetitive effects, exclusionary practices, reduced consumer choice, and hindered innovation.

#### C. Three impacts:

#### 1. Clash: Debate requires negation- affirmatives that don’t address the resolution makes irrative clash impossible because shifting away from the resolutional agent and mechanism kills negative ground by making it concessionary and allows for aff conditionality which cements the structural advantages of the affirmative through crushing limits.

#### 2. Fairness- debates about scholarship in a vacuum are myopic and breed reactionary generics – they allow the aff to cement their infinite prep advantage, because all the aff has to do is find evidence supporting an ideological orientation towards the world – this crushes clash because all of our prepared negative strategies are based on praxis, and by not defending a clear actor and mechanism we lose 90% of negative ground, and the aff still retains traditional competition standards like perms to make being neg impossible

#### 3. Aff Conditionality - Affirmatives that don’t address the resolution make deploying other strategies against them inordinately Aff tilted. They have the ability to radically recontextualize link arguments, emphasize different prescriptive claims of the 1AC while using traditional competition standards like perms to make being negative inordinately difficult. We learn nothing by the affirmative spitting truth claims that the neg is expected to respond to as if there was debatable ground there.

### 1NC

#### We accept the invitation if and only if the affirmative agrees for the judge to vote negative and thus, we engage in sharing experiences in debate without competitive motivation to collaborate in developing solutions to identified problems within debate.

### 1NC

Strikeuary CP

#### CP Text: Debate labor should organize and advocate for a general strike and debate stoppage until the debate community

#### - Creates spaces for debaters of color, debaters that have been subjected to any form of discrimination based on their gender or sexual orientation to share their experiences

#### - Create a platform for debaters to share any issues they have with the activity/community as anticompetitive

#### Solves the affirmative – strikes produce meaningful change

Kelly 1-24-19 (Kim. Freelance journalist and organizer based in Philadelphia. Her work on labor, class, politics, and culture has appeared in the New Republic, the Washington Post, the Baffler, and Esquire, among other publications, and she is the author of FIGHT LIKE HELL, a forthcoming book of intersectional labor history. Teen Vogue. Everything You Need to Know About General Strikes. https://www.teenvogue.com/story/general-strikes-explained)

“Historically speaking, the general strike is incredibly successful since it completely shuts down the functions of the economy,” author and union organizer Shane Burley tells Teen Vogue. “This is really the foundation of the power workers have under capitalism, to withhold their labor and undermine capital. Because a general strike affects the economy so broadly, it gives workers a huge bargaining chip to make massive societal demands — not just in one workplace, but of capital across all sectors.”

As noted by Black liberation and socialist author W.E.B. Du Bois, one of the country’s most successful general strikes happened during the Civil War, when roughly half a million enslaved Africans escaped Southern plantations and found the Union Army, and mass numbers of poor white Confederates deserted their posts — two independent collective actions that, together, helped kneecap the Confederacy.

More recently, a general strike in India saw 150 million workers across various industries demanding higher wages and union protections in what may well be history’s largest general strike. In 2006, janitors in Houston made waves with a nine-week strike that piggybacked on a wave of wildcat strikes and school walkouts in response to H.R. 4437, a bill that sought to criminalize both undocumented people and anyone who offered them aid (the legislation ultimately failed).

“To this day, the idea of a mass or general strike remains both an ideal and a tactic that can be picked up by everyday people if and when they discover the power to do so,” Andrew O'Conner, an editor at It's Going Down, an anarchist news and podcast platform, tells Teen Vogue. “And as American history has shown, this tactic is one that has been used by the working class as a whole, across lines of color, gender, trade, and geography.”

Organizers stress the importance of first building mutual aid networks and strong community systems to care for people in the event of a mass labor action like a general strike, before asking people to hit the streets. It’s hard enough to go out on a planned strike during union contract negotiations (and the Trump-controlled National Labor Relations Board is trying to make it harder). In those cases, workers at least have the support of their union, and, hopefully, a strike fund to help cover bills.

The resources and infrastructure needed to adequately care for those participating in a general strike are impossible to calculate. In addition, the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act (which was passed in the wake of the women-led 1946 Oakland general strike) outlawed actions taken by unionized workers in support of workers at other companies, effectively rendering both solidarity actions and the general strike itself illegal.

Elana Levin, a former union organizer who teaches digital strategy as program director for New Media Mentors and is a co-founder of Organizing 2.0, tells Teen Vogue that “striking means not asking permission” in the first place. She’s excited about the interest she’s seen in the idea of a general strike, but warns that hastily planned action could end up harming more than it helps.

“If you are asking someone to strike, you have to be able to help them answer the question of how will you help them survive if they do. It’s a question that has been asked and answered before, but it is a serious thing,” she says. “In reality, general strikes are generally lead by the most marginalized groups, because it is a way to wield power.”

O’Conner says self-organization is one of the most useful building blocks of any major worker action, and adds that it's important to break down barriers between striker and supporter to craft a more cohesive, purpose-driven community based on class solidarity.

“As we saw with the current mass teachers strikes, which can be seen as literal general strikes across trade lines, collective and communal mutual aid and support from both picketers and community members, like schoolchildren, is key,” O’Conner says. “In some instances, workers also choose to strike by offering services for free: For instance, during many transit strikes and job actions, bus drivers and transit operators will refuse to collect money. We see many of these experiments playing out now with the shutdown, from mass sickout strikes to services being offered for out-of-work employees.”

An organizer with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), who chose to remain anonymous for this story, tells Teen Vogue that one of the keys to unlocking those levels of support also lies in good old-fashioned community organizing and remembering how difficult it can be for people to take that step toward the picket line, because of familial obligations or existing financial hardship.

“The way to actually figure this out is to do the work of labor and community organizing — that is, actually asking your coworkers and your neighbors about the material issues that affect them, how you can address those issues collectively, and, if they think a general strike could work, what they would need to take that step,” they said. “Maybe it's child care? Maybe it's a hardship fund to cover lost wages? Maybe it's just the support of the community? With the current government shutdown threatening to starve the poor through lack of SNAP funding and various bodies of federal workers already furloughed, we could be entering the kind of crisis that makes a general strike possible.”

So, is it time for a general strike? We clearly have a whole lot to do before anyone goes calling for mass action, but activists around the U.S. are already hard at work on these kinds of mutual aid projects and community outreach efforts. We may not be ready yet, but the groundwork is already being laid. As bad as things are now, oppressed workers in the past have fought against even more daunting odds to take their power back … and if things get gnarly enough, it may happen again.

### 1NC

#### Invitational rhetoric is based in civility- anyone who is seen as uncivil or anyone that isn’t a cis white straight man is excluded from accepting or engaging through invitational rhetoric

Cloud and Lozano-Reich 9 (Nina M. Lozano-Reich & Dana L. Cloud Western Journal of Communication Vol. 73, No. 2, April–June 2009, pp. 220–226 CRITICAL RESPONSE The Uncivil Tongue: Invitational Rhetoric and the Problem of Inequality <https://www.academia.edu/6726470/The_Uncivil_Tongue_Invitational_Rhetoric_and_the_Problem_of_Inequality>)

Bone et al. acknowledge that historically, societal standards of decorum have often been used to silence groups and keep them in their place. Nowhere is this truer than in the case of women, told to play nice with their oppressors (Ehrenreich & English, 2005). But the authors contradict this position when they argue, ‘‘When we adopt an invitational approach and are civil [emphasis added], the potential for grief and violence is minimized’’ (p. 457). Likewise, they write, ‘‘Civility ... can be understood as an ... integral component of democracy’’ (p. 457). Based upon historical and contemporary examples, we reject these claims; when theorizing as to how individuals should deal with ‘‘difficult situations,’’ our authors’ call for adopting an invitational paradigm grounded in civility is not only antithetical to the goals of invitational rhetoric, but also in combating systems of oppression. Historically, dominant groups have repeatedly enacted civilizing strategies to effectively silence and punish marginalized groups (e.g., labor; women and people of color; the poor; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender [LGBT] people). Indeed, 19th-century notions of propriety and civility were used as cultural ideals to place legal, political, and physical restrictions on women—whereby relegating women to the private sphere (Oravec, 2003). Antifeminists frequently appealed to masculine norms of ‘‘civilization’’ to ‘‘depict women as less civilized than men, less able to contribute to the advancement of the race’’ (Bederman, 1995, p. 121). Extending this history, women of color have been silenced through civilizing strategies that deem legitimately angry speech to be ‘‘uppity’’ ‘‘or ‘‘illiterate’’ (Anzaldu´ a, 1999; hooks, 1989). It has taken decades of critical feminist scholarship to resist politics of civility and overcome oppressive stereotypes so that women of color can be viewed as speaking subjects, and not as uncivilized subjects needing a firm hand. Similarly, LGBTQ sexual practices have also been vulnerable to oppressive charges of indecorum. Culturally, dominant sexual ethics and decorous community standards function to shame queer individuals, and stigmatize nonnormative acts of sexuality (Morris & Sloop, 2006; Warner, 1999). One need only look to hate crimes enacted upon gays or immigrants, or acts of femicide inflicted upon women who dare to speak out. Clearly, a move towards civility in relation to oppressed groups may potentially increase grief and violence. Bone et al. claim that civility fosters democracy. While voting is indeed civil, radical social change has not occurred in voting booths, but results, instead, from democratic grassroots tactics. Protestors inherently do not operate within the realm of decorum. Indeed, political confrontations up to and including violence have been perennial resources in struggles for justice (Kirkpatrick, 2008). The civility standard is detrimental to this project. When measured by standards of civility, protesters are framed as wild and riotous by dominant media, rendering their struggles illegitimate (Gitlin, 2003). In a post-9=11 climate, moreover, ‘‘uncivil’’ protestors are equated with terrorists (and terrorists cannot be ascribed any rationality whatsoever). Bederman (1995) asks whether conforming to mainstream standards of civility replaces one kind of exclusion with another. This paradox holds except in cases of discourses among equals. Discourses of civilization ‘‘have proven [to be] a slippery slope for those who dream of a more just society’’ (Bederman, 1995, p. 239). Likewise, Mayo (2002) argues that ‘‘civility is a form of social discrimination, for it is predicated on making distinctions that support accepted practices and values, and entails enacting those distinctions to the detriment of the purportedly uncivil’’ (p. 82). In other words, we view Bone et al.’s argument for invitational civility in situations of conflict as potentially perpetuating discrimination in the name of peace. Theorizing resistance to oppression requires attention to both invitation and confrontation, along with criteria enabling critics to evaluate both modes. Consequently, we believe it is irresponsible to displace more confrontational models for social change in favor of a politics of civility that has been proven to leave those already disempowered in a continued state of conformity, punishment, and=or silence.

#### The alternative is the rejection of invitational rhetoric in favor of the theory of the uncivil tongue

Cloud and Lozano-Reich 9 (Nina M. Lozano-Reich & Dana L. Cloud Western Journal of Communication Vol. 73, No. 2, April–June 2009, pp. 220–226 CRITICAL RESPONSE The Uncivil Tongue: Invitational Rhetoric and the Problem of Inequality <https://www.academia.edu/6726470/The_Uncivil_Tongue_Invitational_Rhetoric_and_the_Problem_of_Inequality>)

Civility, in short, should not be advocated as a stance for feminists or others struggling for change. Although beyond the scope of this brief response to present a complete theorization of when and under what conditions invitational, civil discourse provides an ethically desirable stance, we have attempted here to posit equality as the necessary prerequisite (not outcome) for a productive invitational, civil discourse. Bone et al.’s defense of invitational rhetoric begs the question of when invitation and civility are functional for the oppressed and when they are not. We contend that defending invitational rhetoric in conditions of antagonism is fraught with contradictions exposed in exploration of the historical uses of ‘‘civility’’ to discipline women and Others. Unfortunately, invitation and civility are as likely to be bludgeons of the oppressor as resources for the oppressed. Further conversation about the merits of invitational rhetoric must grapple with this contradiction. The cause of justice may not need a theory of invitation but rather a theory of the uncivil tongue.

### 1NC

Technofuturism

#### Pessimistic politics saps the utopian energy of modernity, fueling neoliberal abandonment of progressive democratic politics. This affective demobilization results in passivity and resignation.

Karlsson 14 [Rasmus, Senior lecturer in Political Science at Umea University, “Theorizing sustainability in a post-Concorde world,” *Technology in Society* 39.1, http://bit.ly/2j6e614]

Certain in their belief that “ecological losses cannot be undone through the basic tenets of modernity” ([36]:245) as in the continuation of the rationalist-scientific enterprise, political ecologists seek to halt, and ultimately reverse, the structural processes of modernity. Running directly counter to prevailing socio-economic dynamics, it is not surprising that this effort has met with limited success. But by constantly emphasizing the ecological destructive tendencies of modernity while ignoring its long-term potential, political ecologists have been surprisingly successful in eroding our confidence in that science and technology can be used, in a conscious and radical manner, to ultimately overcome these destructive tendencies. By doubting our ability to consciously govern the future, political ecologists have drained the modern project of its utopian energies, effectively creating a passivity towards the future by which short-sighted market imperatives, rather than transparent democratic decisions and long-term public investments, become the determining factors. Instead of shiny fusion reactors and space travel, we are beginning to realize that the future may well be one of oil sands, offshore drilling, and increasingly destructive resource wars. Ironically, it may thus be that it is these feelings of passivity and doubt that ultimately will help create the very future that political ecologists fear. While few would dispute the more general claim that there has been a loss of confidence in our ability to democratically decide the long-term future ([75]; p. 6; [82]; p. 1), it would certainly be incorrect to attribute all of this loss to a relative small number of political ecologists, working on the margins of social discourse. But in their role as “truth tellers”, political ecologists have been able to tap into more general sentiments of estrangement that modernity has created. Capitalizing on the ontological insecurity arising from the acceleration of change in contemporary society, political ecologists have been able to project an alternative world of permanence and belonging. While such a world would also mean a foregoing of the existential freedom and mobility that modernity has given rise to [33], it is important to remember that for most people this is not about articulating a coherent social philosophy but about giving voice to a feeling of psychological bewilderment. In a similar fashion, while most people would, on reflection, acknowledge that humanity's lot has vastly improved over the last two hundred years, there are also legitimate concerns about the growth of conspicuous consumption, the emptiness of materialism, and the deep inequalities that persist, in particular at the global level. By articulating such concerns, political ecologists speak where others remain silent, an act which in itself has generated sufficient epistemic noise and doubt, not to reverse modernity, but to put sand in its machinery. Meanwhile, economic globalization has continued unchecked, lifting hundreds of millions of people out of poverty (most notably in China) but also fuelling resentment as labour markets have become ever more stratified. Instead of seeing the possibilities in new global forms of welfare capitalism, the Left has found itself helplessly watching as an ever tighter straitjacket has been sewn around its political ambitions. For the Right, the same straitjacket has been viewed as a “golden straitjacket” ([31]:104) thought to ensure prudent macroeconomic policies, monetary stability, and protect against economic interventionism. Although recent events may have shattered some of those beliefs, these “ideas still walk among us” [70] to a surprisingly high degree, largely because the Left has been unable to formulate a coherent ideological alternative. Arguably, the most important legacy of the last decades of neoliberalism has been its attack on the idea of a self-directing democratic future. Neoliberals have been particularly opposed to the idea that society should make “grand” choices or pursue different “utopian” visions of the future. Instead, neoliberals believe that the state should at a maximum provide the “framework for utopia” [64] within which individuals can then pursue their own conceptions of the good. In relation to modernity, neoliberals have sought to convey the impression that all its grand tasks have either been completed or proven impossible; that redistribution has been attempted but failed since the poor are not poor because of structural reasons but because of lacking individual ambition, and that the road to the future goes through privatization and away from the public as an acting political subject. Contrary to the historic evidence of how public scientific research has driven long run growth in modern capitalism [55], neoliberals have argued that most public investments are “inherently wasteful” ([12]:153) and have forcefully hammered home the message that financial markets alone are able to make wise allocation choices and that markets can accurately reflect all relevant sources of social risk. Again, it is easy to think that these beliefs should have been thoroughly falsified by the recent financial meltdown which, if anything, has proven that markets are particularly bad at correctly estimating systemic risks. Yet, even in these extreme times, the Left has shown a remarkable lack of political imagination and remained trapped in nostalgic dreams of its own past glories. Unable to invigorate the utopian energies of modernity yet equally unwilling to commit to their reversal, contemporary society finds itself in a state of debilitating disorientation [44]. In the West, in particularly in the United States and Great Britain, rifts in the fabric of modernity are beginning to show. Bridges in perpetual disrepair, decrepit concrete motorway interchanges, and chronically delayed trains are all products of a politics of decline. While some of these effects may be caused simply by an early entry into industrialism, they also reflect a deeper political paralysis, one that has been made worse by ever harsher demands for public austerity. Despite record levels of private wealth, we increasingly find that we can no longer afford to invest in the future. While the reactionary worldview has found itself in ascendance, the Left, tied down by postmodern quibbles, has become fundamentally uncertain about what purposes its politics should serve. In the imagery of this article, we can now more clearly see what forces that are defining the post-Concorde world. On one hand, we have the political ecological critique of modernity which has revealed the terrible ecological price that human development has exerted yet obscured its emancipatory hopes and long-term potential. On the other hand, as the neoliberal rhetoric about the inherent wastefulness of public investments has taken hold, we find the very idea of the future as a site of democratic choice to be under attack by far more powerful forces. Taken together, these otherwise unrelated ideological currents have to a large extent succeeded in destabilizing the modern project and replacing it with a sense of resignation and pessimism about the future. Although we remain haunted by fears of far-future catastrophes (it is for instance commonly acknowledged that the most devastating effects of climate change will not be felt until the end of this century), such long time horizons are not at all employed when discussing what possibilities humanity may have as we are emerging as a planetary civilization. This mismatch between problems and solutions reflects a profound uncertainty about the desired direction of change, an uncertainty which, this article suggests, may in fact be our most serious cause for concern. If it is correct to say that the post-Concorde world is characterized by a deep-felt ambivalence towards modernity, then it becomes important to spell out the implications of this ambivalence in terms of our prospects for environmental sustainability.

#### The alternative is a progressive counter-narrative of globalization and democratic investment in universal prosperity. This is the only way to prevent intensification of xenophobic violence and climate nationalism.

Karlsson 16 [Rasmus, Senior lecturer in Political Science at Umea University, “The Environmental Risks of Incomplete Globalization,” *Globalizations*, http://bit.ly/2jS3RNS]

Every year, more and more people travel by airplane and are able to experience other countries and cultures first-hand. As the world gets smaller, it is becoming increasingly difficult to deny our common humanity and insist on the artificial segregation of people based on mere geographical luck. Yet, in terms of politics or ideology, there has been surprisingly little interest in even imagining a world with universal freedom of movement and shared prosperity. It is reasonable to think that this disinterest in part derives from deeply entrenched Malthusian beliefs and fears of a coming climate crisis. Malthusian discourse often portrays global climate change as ultimate evidence of irresponsibility, greed or even the “cancer stage of capitalism” (Barry, 2012:138). Such descriptions show little tolerance for learning or humility with regard to the difficulties of the task. There has never been a blueprint for how to build a prosperous planetary civilisation or for how to achieve technological maturity in a way that does not destroy the biosphere. Yet, in a world of seven billion actually existing people, the question is where to go from here? As discussed above, to try to reverse the great structural processes of modernity through intentional localisation does not only seem wholly politically unrealistic, it is also most unlikely to actually deliver greater resilience or environmental sustainability. Yet, the problem of lacking realism is just as acute for those advocating breakthrough innovation or seeking to more fully integrate the world (Karlsson, 2013). In a time of public austerity, rising xenophobia, and an almost complete absence of realistic yet transformative visions at the global level, it is not surprising that climate nationalist responses have emerged as the default policy orientation. While these responses may at best slow the rate of warming, they offer little hope for the 3.5 billion people who currently lack access to modern energy and, as such, they are likely to contribute to the creation of new patterns of climate injustice. They are also problematic in the sense that for every year that a more meaningful response is delayed, the need for CDR grows. Already now, such negative emissions technology has become more or less a necessity for achieving the two degree target according to the scenarios represented in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) database (Anderson, 2015). Whereas breakthrough energy innovation could potentially offer a source of sustained global growth as energy would become significantly cheaper, CDR is always going to come at a net cost. If CDR eventually becomes unaffordable due to prolonged political procrastination and generally inefficient mitigation policies, it is likely that the political momentum will shift towards solar radiation management (SRM) and other more risky forms of climate engineering. Instead of fearfully backing into a warming future, there is an obvious need for bold and proactive political action (Garibaldi, 2014; Karlsson, 2016). Yet, as long as mitigation is perceived as a cost and something that runs counter to broader socio-economic goals, such action is unlikely. While accelerating the transition to a high-energy planet would undoubtedly put strong upward pressure on global emissions in the short run, it would also open up a political opportunity space for effective climate action that does not exist today. In a more equal and integrated world, there would be greater financial and human resources to combat climate change. Most of all, by providing a progressive account of globalisation, there would be a meaningful counter-narrative to both nationalist and neoliberal thinking. For some time it has become obvious that the welfare state stands at a disruptive juncture. Either it can try to protect itself from the world by imposing an international apartheid system as it falters under growing migratory pressure, rising costs for retirement, and a self-inflicted energy crisis or it can confront those fears with a politics of radical engagement and accelerate the transition to a world of universal affluence with an abundance of clean energy and open borders. Doing so would require reviving the belief in the public as an active political subject and defeating both neoliberal passivity and the divisive identity politics of contemporary environmentalism. To bring back high growth rates in the mature economies would require a fundamental reconfiguration away from supply-side economics to real wage growth, broad social investments, and accelerated modernisation (rather than as today, artificially delayed urbanisation and subsidies for low-productive jobs in rural economies). Finally, by providing universal welfare services, in particular education but also health care, social trust can be strengthened and corruption reduced (Rothstein, 2011) at the same time as the economy’s long-term growth potential can be increased. Yet, despite the remarkable scientific advancements of the last centuries, or even decades, Malthusians tend to reject the very possibility of universal affluence and what they pejoratively refer to as a “techno-fix” (Huesemann & Huesemann, 2011). Instead of uncertain technological innovation they like to see deep social changes, essentially a far-reaching epistemological homogenisation by which people everywhere adopt strict regimes of frugality and simplicity. However, just as the solution to the contradictions of capitalism in the 1930’s was neither individual moral reform of the capital-owners nor a socialist revolution of society as a whole but rather the institutionalisation of welfare-capitalism and liberal democracy, it seems far wiser to accept the existence of a pluralist society with competing conceptions of the good life and rather focus on applying technology in a conscious way to overcome environmental determinism. Obviously, this is also a question of political tactics. While ecosocialist literature tends to think of capitalism in the 21st century as a mere elite project, it seems fair to say that the logic of capital accumulation has become almost universal today with widely shared material aspirations reaching from home ownership to international travel. Similarly, large groups in the OECD-economies either have retired already or will do so in the coming decades with considerable expectations in terms of retirement income. Failure to deliver on these pension expectations would probably create a state of political crisis in which the “immigrants” but also the “environment” would be easy targets. For these, and many other reasons, it is not surprising that political elites remain deeply wedded to the idea of economic growth. Yet, insufficient demand due to rising inequality and a lack of social investments have made it difficult to deliver that growth. In the best of worlds, the need for growth could hypothetically make policy-makers more willing to challenge the prevailing supply-side paradigm but also consider the benefits of accelerating globalisation (or at least keeping them away from enacting protectionist measures). While it is obvious that economic growth does not benefit everyone equally, and that it can be source of environmental destruction, the same can be said about the lack of growth. A secular stagnation or even degrowth is certainly no guarantee for environmental protection or greater equality. If anything, the rich are likely to try to isolate themselves even more from the rest of society in case they feel threatened, in particular by moving overseas. It is also not surprising that the literature on degrowth has had almost nothing to say about how such strategies would play out at the international level (including what mechanisms that would be needed to prevent other states from taking military advantage of countries pursuing degrowth) or how exactly economic growth is to be “unlearned” at the micro level. Recognising the difficulties associated with imagining degrowth as an effective way of saving the global environment is not the same as defending “status quo” or embracing neoliberalism. As discussed above, it is the rather the failure of laissez-faire thinking that has made government intervention necessary to ensure both climate stability and a world with more equal opportunities. One common objection against climate innovation is that the real problem is not about limitations of renewable energy sources but about overcoming the entrenched interests of fossil industries. Yet, the fact that large multinational corporations such as ExxonMobil have vast political influence can also be seen as one of the reasons why technological change must be disruptive and go beyond, for instance,the scenariosin the IPCC database. Only by shocking markets through breakthrough innovation does it seem possible to break with the path dependence of existing energy systems in a way that would rapidly displace fossil fuels globally. In terms of strategy, it is also likely that fossil industries will be far more successful in thwarting the deployment of existing inferior technologies than in preventing a more general acceleration of science and technology, which would span multiple fields reaching from nanotechnology to basic physics (Victor, 2011:144) that are not immediately related to energy R&D and as such not subject to the same political economic constraints. In mainstream thinking, globalisation is primarily seen as a driver of environmental destruction as it disconnects “those who make decisions that generate ecological risks” from “the ecological victims who suffer” (Christoff & Eckersley, 2013:189). While few would dispute that globalisation has indeed contributed to the displacement of environmental harms as polluting industries have moved from rich to poor countries, a number of authors including Arthur Mol have argued that globalisation also has the potential of fostering environmental reform and facilitating ecological modernisation throughout the global economy (Mol, 2003). The aim of this paper has been to take that argument further yet by suggesting that the hope of an adequate response to many global environmental risks, and climate change in particular, in fact hinges on an accelerated rate of globalisation leading to economic convergence. A more equal and richer world would not only have better resources to deal with environmental stress and the need for climate adaptation, it would also compel policy-makers to actively pursue the development of breakthrough technologies that would once and for all resolve the climate/energy/population dilemma from the supply-side (Brook et al., 2014:2). By working from the supply-side rather than the demand-side, climate politics can finally be depolarised and the current logical schism between “believers” and “sceptics” can be overcome. Yet, it would be naïve to think that all would welcome a radicalisation of the modern project and the transition to a fully integrated high-energy planet. While such a future would probably reflect widely shared public aspirations to freedom of movement, material security, and environmental protection, cultural perfectionists are likely to decry the blandness of diversity in a world of open borders, eco-socialists are likely to see any “techno-fix” as merely a way of ducking responsibility for what they consider to be necessary social reforms, and libertarians are likely to criticise the government “overreach” implicit in the very notion of taking active responsibility for the global future. Another common objection against breakthrough innovation is that time is too short for fundamentally uncertain research. Such an objection would make perfect sense if there was any faster or safer route to restoring a safe climate and protecting the world against broader Anthropocene risks. This paper has argued that there is no such route, at least as long as the interests of people outside the OECD-countries are to be taken seriously. While sustained poverty abroad may seem to temporarily reduce the urgency of action, it will also lead to further lock-in of existing yet inferior technologies and increase the long-term need for CDR/SRM. The fundamental problem here is the scale illusion by which signals of relative local progress towards perceived “sustainability” overshadow other signals of absolute global failure. Just as the example of Iceland that currently has a 100% renewable electricity supply has not taken the world as a whole any closer to fossil independence, little if anything would be achieved if a handful of the world’s richest countries succeed in their transition to a nonscalable soft energy path. Yet, unfortunately, renewable energy but also the idea of “energy savings” continue to occupy a moral high-ground in the public imagination in ways that make meaningful action extremely difficult and obscure how much energy supply, but also overall consumption rates, must increase in the coming decades to ensure that everyone in the world has a chance of achieving a dignified livelihood. Essentially, by turning the traditional environmental idea of “intentional localisation” on its head, this paper has suggested that what most of all will determine humanity’s future in the Anthropocene is to what extent it will be possible to craft a new progressive narrative of global economic convergence capable of simultaneously overcoming Malthusian determinism and neoliberal ignorance of environmental realities. As Bruno Latour has noted, humanity has to learn to “love its monsters” rather than running away in panic from science and technology out of fear for the world that it has created (Latour, 2011). Only through a more conscious and reflexive relationship to technology is there any hope for humanity to realise its axiological potential (Bostrom, 2003) while building a world in which emancipative values, pluralism, and diversity can flourish.

#### The alt confronts the history of western colonialism and economic exploitation. A global Fordian compromise ensures oppressed people around the world the resources necessary to resist exploitation and flourish.

Karlsson 09 [Rasmus, Senior lecturer in Political Science at Umea University, “A global Fordian compromise? – And what it would mean for the transition to sustainability,” *Environmental Science & Policy* 12, http://bit.ly/2kfrsg6]

Though it may be simple to refute the normative and prescriptive elements of traditional green thought, we should be careful to think that we can do the same with its empirical analysis. The environmental problems are real and should indeed warrant radical political action. But any such action must first and foremost be based on the righteous claims for a decent life expressed by the developing world. Instead of seeing these claims as a threat to sustainability, the expansion of the global economy to the world’s poor should be seen as unique historic opportunity. Along those lines I will now delineate the idea of a global Fordian compromise. I will do this in a number of steps. First I will recapitulate the circumstances of the original ‘‘Fordian compromise’’. Then I will argue that even if economic globalization has been responsible for undermining the original compromise, the same forces may now be capable of renewing its relevance. With this in mind I will turn specifically to the agricultural sector and the European Union as an empirical illustration of how a global version of the compromise could work. By the early 1930s, the industrial countries were going through a deep and worsening recession. It seems correct to say that the crisis, at least to a large part, was caused by the very success of industrialism. The use of machinery and the division of labour had lead to a dramatic increase in productive capacity worldwide. At the same time, overall demand remained low, simply because the larger population could not afford to buy the goods that were produced. Historically, it had appeared rational for capital owners to keep wages as low as possible, to try to squeeze out that little extra marginal productivity through ever harsher conditions. This was also the analysis of Marx who thought that the declining rate of profit would lead to an increasing immiseration of the proletariat. Hence, for the more anarchistically inclined, the obvious solution was to overthrow the capital owners and divide their resources among the people. The problem with that approach however, was that the capitalists, albeit rich, were relatively few and the workers amounted to millions. What ensued, and what Marx famously did not foresee, was a new kind of compromise between capital owners and workers (Gourevitch, 1986, p. 128). In different countries, this compromise of so called ‘‘welfare capitalism’’ took on different shapes (Esping-Andersen, 1990). In the U.S. it was initiated by the capital owners, most notably by Henry Ford, who realized that it would be in ~~his~~ [their] own self-interest to raise salaries and by doing so making it possible for his workers to buy what they produced in the factories. In the Scandinavian countries, the same compromise came about as industrialists and unionists agreed to a peace accord on the labour market under the condition that salaries would rapidly be increased. Whatever its manifestation, the different compromises were unified in that they gave both sides of the labour market a vested interest in the future by pointing towards the long-term benefits of co-operation. Though the full effects of this grand bargain could not be seen until the 1960s, the ‘‘Fordian compromise’’ of welfare capitalism was indisputable the engine behind one of the longest periods of economic growth ever experienced. As material conditions improved, extreme poverty became more or less eradicated in many Western countries. Especially the Scandinavian countries showed that it was possible to combine a growth oriented market economy with a strong welfare state, at least as long as the total economic product kept growing in real terms from year to year. By the 1970s however, belief in the compromise of welfare capitalism began to fade. Increasing economic globalization had meant that wage increases were only possible to the extent that they were matched by real gains in terms of productivity. As companies became more export oriented, the purchase power of the own population also became relatively less important. Beside these materialistic explanations, there was simultaneously an ideological shift to the right, a shift that left classical liberals morally corrupted by the perverse idea that their future wealth was dependent on having more poor people in their societies. A similar kind of perverse logic was also replicated onto the international level. As globalization and trade liberalization made it possible to buy electronics, textiles and other consumer goods for remarkably low prices, many people came to believe that their own good life was somehow dependent on the hard and underpaid work carried out in other parts of the world. What such a belief failed to recognize is that the global economy is not, and has never been, a zero-sum game. Though consumers in the rich countries may benefit in the short run from low salaries in the developing world, the same is not true if we look beyond the immediate present. Then their interest would be much better served if these countries were transformed into advanced industrial economies and billions of new consumers would enter the global market. If the historic experience from countries like Japan and South Korea has any bearing, this would translate into a ‘‘race to the top’’ as growing wealth would allow automation and the substitution of menial work, which would then even further increase overall productivity (and thus, overall demand). It is in particular this possibility of automation and robotization that dependency theorists have ignored when insisting that global capitalism, as a system, requires poverty to function. On a political level, protectionists have repeatedly failed to offer a compelling alternative to this progressive vision, especially for the longer run. Not only does it seem morally suspect to deny poor countries the possibilities of economic development, the effects of artificially high prices also have to be borne by the own population while the allocation of resources into uncompetitive industries means less room for overall economic growth even domestically. Nowhere is this more evident than in the agricultural sector. Though the European Union is not alone in this regard, I will here take the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Union as my main empirical example to illustrate what a global Fordian compromise could look like. Initiated in the early 1960s, the CAP today represents 44% of the EU budget with a total of 60 billion USD scheduled in spending for 2008 (EU, 2008). The principal problem motivating the different subsidies and programmes of the CAP has been the high productive capacity of the European farmers. Left to their own, they would easily produce an enormous surplus of for instance grain, milk products and olive oil. In a normal economy, the effect of such a surplus would be a sharp drop in prices, forcing enough farmers out of business until the market would reach an equilibrium point where supply is matched by demand. Since the political price of such a ‘‘reset’’ (be it in votes, landscape aesthetics or food security) has been considered too high, the surplus production has instead been continuously taken away from the European market. Though it would have been possible to simply burn the surplus (as actually has been done occasionally in the U.S. Midwest), much of the European surplus has instead been exported on to the world market. However, since prices on the world market historically have been dramatically lower than prices inside the EU, this has in practical terms meant a large scale dumping of agricultural products on the world’s poor. At first, this may seem like a good thing. The European agricultural surplus has enabled for instance the urban population along the coasts of Africa to buy farm products of good quality, products that they otherwise would not have been able to afford. But as the population of Lagos, Abidjan and other growing cities have turned to food from Europe (which has been sold according to the ‘‘Ryanair-logic’’; better to get at least something than nothing) they have also turned away from domestic producers who find themselves unable to compete. Again, if the agricultural market would have been any other normal market, these African producers would of course have turned to Europe or other industrial countries with their products. However, and here we see the true cynicism of the current regime, this is not possible since one of the core mechanisms of CAP is precisely high tariffs on agricultural products entering the union. The import tariffs are set at a level that raises the World market price up to a ‘‘target’’ price consistent with that inside the union. Though attempts to reform the CAP are nearly as old the policy itself, and moderate progress has indeed been made as in the recent ‘‘decoupling’’ of subsidies (giving farmers less of an incentive to overproduce), the overall picture remains bleak (Goodison, 2007). Unfortunately, even the recent surge in food prices has been insufficient to stimulate larger investments as long as the high import tariffs of the rich world remain intact. Deprived of any chance of entering the world economy from below, and from thereon start building a capital base of their own, the African countries have instead found themselves increasingly dependent on different forms of development aid. Obviously, such cash handouts cannot replace indigenous growth and history suggests that they may often do more harm than good (Easterly, 2006). What motivates the CAP and similar policies is the very high discount rate by which the future is weighted against the present. Even if nearly all of the world’s economists agree that it would bring tremendous benefits to every country, and especially to the developing world, if the CAP and other regimes preventing free trade were torn down, the current path dependency may seem overwhelming. Calculations suggest that global free trade could generate benefits of up to $2.4 trillion annually. Despite this, the industrial countries have been backing into every new agreement on agricultural products and other goods in which the developing world holds a competitive advantage, as mostly recently seen in the stalled talks of the Doha Development Round. Given the apparent lack of political leadership based on an alternative long-term vision, we repeatedly see well-organized concentrated interests (such as the French farmers) prevailing over broader but more diffused ones. We do not have to look further than to the shores of Europe to see the practical implications of this failure. There, every year thousands of impoverished people drown as they make their desperate attempts to enter the ‘‘free world’’. What is needed, more than anything else, is pro-active political action. We have to take seriously the environmentalists’ claim that the future matters, but employ that insight to supersede the cynical trade-off that they implicitly and silently project. Just as capital owners and workers eventually came to understand that it was in their mutual long-term interest to co-operate, so must the interests of global development and environmental protection be aligned in a manner that opens up an optimistic vision of the future. To some this may sound like the very idea of ‘‘sustainable development’’, as outlined in the so-called Brundtland report of 1987 (WCED, 1987). It is. But since then we have come to realize that in order to be successful, the scope of ecological modernization must be far greater, up to the extent that it will be able to challenge the fundamental axioms of sustainability (Karlsson, 2007). At the same time, the ‘‘low energy paths’’ of the original report have been outstripped by the overwhelming demand of billions in Asia and elsewhere. It is no longer a question (as it was then) if these parts of the world will become industrialized or not, the question is rather by what means they will industrialize. Both China and India possess abundant reserves of coal. In fact, China alone has enough coal to sustain its economic growth for a century or more (Fairley, 2007). Unless breakthrough technologies, such as nuclear fusion, are made readily available, it is most likely that these countries will start burning their coal reserves on a massive scale, rapidly undermining any effort to reduce carbon emissions. Already last year, China became the largest source of carbon emissions worldwide. These alarming trends, should if nothing else, emphasize the need for radical investment in research and development. This brings us back to the Fordian compromise and the present situation with regard to trade and development. Within the framework of forward-looking progressive politics, it should be recognized that the advanced industrial countries have a specific moral responsibility to reduce their environmental impact (Hayward, 2007). But unlike in traditional green thinking, that incurred ‘‘ecological debt’’ is not be paid through reduced economic activity or, as often has been suggested in more radical literature, by some sort of ‘‘wealth transfer’’. To play the historic parallel a bit further, that would be the equivalent of asking a capitalist in the 1930s to give out his money and join the working class in their suffering. Morally commendable as such an action certainly would have been, it would obviously be foolish to base the hope of social development on its realization. By the same token, we should not let the hope of environmental sustainability rest with environmental citizenship or some ‘‘great awakening’’ by the time a global climate catastrophe sets in. Instead, the moral responsibility consists in compelling the half-hearted liberals of Europe and elsewhere to actually live up to what they teach in the economic classes. Witnessing the raise of China, South Korea and the wider Pacific Rim, it should be beyond reasonable doubt that the liberal market economy is uniquely equipped to lift billions out of poverty. Considering the number of successful economic transformations that the advanced industrial countries themselves have gone through over the last century, it should also be clear that the path to the future should be one that embraces openness, innovation and competition. Applying this to the case of the CAP, we should see the unique chance of striking a grand bargain by which the rich countries accept to wither the storm as their markets are open to competition. Following a removal of all barriers preventing free trade, the developed economies could initiate the long overdue transfer of resources from agriculture to scientific research. At the same time, the poor countries of the world would finally be able to begin walking the long road towards modernization, a road on which they have been held back for centuries, first by colonialism and then by the collective clientelism encouraged by the international development aid establishment. In line with a global Fordian compromise, that economic development would raise the purchasing power of the poor. Part of that purchasing power would be directed towards the already rich countries, allowing them to reap the benefits of trade and put even more money into technological development and socially progressive politics. Combined, it is likely that the total amount of resources will be sufficient to open up advanced technological paths to global environmental sustainability. Further examining the bargaining situation, we see that failing to reach such a compromise would worsen international tensions, keeping the industrial countries in their oppressing role in which short-term gains are bought at the expense of long-term possibilities. Moreover, and if airy cosmopolitan arguments are insufficient to persuade us about our shared destiny, we have to remember that if poor states are allowed to fail they stand the risk of becoming breeding grounds for terror and extremism, all imposing skyrocketing costs for ‘‘security’’ on the developed world. Thus, though the analogy with the striking working class of the original compromise may not be perfect, the rich countries should have a strong incentive to listen to the warning sounds coming from the ‘‘lower decks’’.

## Case

### 1NC- Adversarialism

#### Vote neg on presumption. No risk of solvency – debate is structurally incapable of actualizing their method

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(Michael J Ritter, September 2013, National Journal of Speech & Debate, Volume II Issue I, “Overcoming the Fiction of ‘Social Change Through Debate’: What’s To Learn From 2PAC’s *Changes*”, Pages 19-38)//DZ

Introduction In his immortal Changes, the supposedly late Tupac (2PAC) Shakur lamented, “I see no changes.” 2PAC expresses in Changes both his frustration with social racism and his hope for change. Acknowledging that race-based social inequalities would likely never completely disappear, he provocatively presented a model for improved communication and understanding to minimize racial inequalities. In 1999, Changes was released, topped international charts, and for many years thereafter, impressed a global audience (including The Vatican). Many students who participate in competitive interscholastic debate in high school and college frequently argue during debates that their speech acts, performances, or presentations criticizing a particular concept in a debate round could, just like 2PAC’s Changes, actually affect social inequities or issues inside and outside of the debate community. To preserve the activity, coaches and judges should discourage debaters from attempting to use—or deceiving others that they are using—competitive interscholastic debate to create social change. Those in the debate community who believe (or argue) that competitive interscholastic debate can reach an audience beyond the debate room, and their opponents, coaches, and judges, should consider this question: “What can I learn from 2PAC’s success in communicating his message in Changes?” Those who have wed themselves to the fiction that in-round speech acts in a competitive interscholastic debate setting can and does create actual social change (due to either some strategic reasoning or simple denial) will have a difficult time reaching the honest answer to that question: “I am wrong.” The structure of competitive interscholastic debate renders any message communicated in a debate round virtually incapable of creating any social change, either in the debate community or in general society. And to the extent that the fiction of social change through debate can be proven or disproven through empirical studies or surveys, academics instead have analyzed debate with nonapplicable rhetorical theory that fails to account for the unique aspects of competitive interscholastic debate. Rather, the current debate relating to activism and competitive interscholastic debate concerns the following: “What is the best model to promote social change?” But a more fundamental question that must be addressed first is: “Can debate cause social change?” Despite over two decades of opportunity to conduct and publish empirical studies or surveys, academic proponents of the fiction that debate can create social change have chosen not to prove this fundamental assumption, which—as this article argues—is merely a fiction that is harmful in most, if not all, respects. The position that competitive interscholastic debate can create social change is more properly characterized as a fiction than an argument. A fiction is an invented or fabricated idea purporting to be factual but is not provable by any human senses or rational thinking capability or is unproven by valid statistical studies. An argument, most basically, consists of a claim and some support for why the claim is true. If the support for the claim is false or its relation to the claim is illogical, then we can deduce that the particular argument does not help in ascertaining whether the claim is true. Interscholastic competitive debate is premised upon the assumption that debate is argumentation. Because fictions are necessarily not true or cannot be proven true by any means of argumentation, the competitive interscholastic debate community should be incredibly critical of those fictions and adopt them only if they promote the activity and its purposes. Competitive Interscholastic Debate: The Break Down Competitive interscholastic debate is uniquely different from other types of persuasive activities. Each individual component of the term “competitive interscholastic debate” describes the essential structures of the activity from which very important precepts can be discerned. These precepts are fundamental to any application of any rhetorical theory regarding speech acts within a debate round because the precepts necessarily affect the scope of two crucial aspects of all communication: audience and purpose. The debate community’s members, many of whom are shorthand enthusiasts, simply refer to the activity as “debate.” But what that simple term omits, and what many frequently forget when uncritically accepting the “social change through debate” fiction, is any reference to the essential structures from which the community spawned: a competition of argumentation during which students from one school compete against students from other schools for the votes of judges. Therefore, before any plausible argument can be made concerning the purposes or benefits of debate, the assumptions upon which those arguments are based must be identified and explained. The following discussion (perhaps painstakingly) analyzes the essential components of competitive interscholastic debate to identify the essential precepts that debunk the assumptions relied upon by those endorsing the fiction that competitive interscholastic debate can create social change. “Debate” “Debate,” in its simplest and most basic form, is the presentation of seemingly inconsistent positions to convince an audience. A position could be a factual or empirical position that describes current or historical fact (e.g. A = B). The presentation of a seemingly inconsistent position to convince an audience (e.g. A ≠ B) would constitute an empirical debate about what facts are (or were) true or false (or neither). A position could also be a normative position (i.e. a position about how the way things should have been or should be (e.g. “A should not have been or should be A). The presentation of inconsistent normative positions to convince an audience (e.g. A should not or should be A) constitutes a normative debate. The intent-to-convince element is an indispensible part of any debate. Presenting apparently conflicting positions with the intent to convince requires an audience of some sort, as an audience is necessary for someone to be convinced. For instance, if a person writes an article on the propriety of the verdict in the Trayvon Martin trial to convince others that the verdict was wrong, but then no one reads it, there is no consideration of the position by the intended audience because no one (other than the author himself) could be persuaded. An audience can be as simple as a single person (e.g. having an internal debate with oneself to consider the validity of two seemingly inconsistent positions). An audience could constitute only one person when someone presents two seemingly inconsistent positions for that one-person audience to consider (e.g. an attorney advising his client that he has two options and presents the pros and cons of both for his client to make a decision). Two people could comprise an audience. For example, a debate could involve two people who present apparently inconsistent positions to try to convince each other of the rightness of their respective positions. A seeming or apparent inconsistency between positions is also a necessary component of a debate. If two positions are clearly consistent, then there is no debate. Conversely, an actual inconsistency is not necessary for a debate. The following hypothetical demonstrates why an actual inconsistency is not required for a debate: Two debaters go on a date appear to disagree over which movie, Django Unchained or Kill Bill, to see at Quinton Tarantino’s privately owned theater on Friday night at 10 p.m. This appears to be a conflict because the two cannot watch both in different theaters together at the same time. Both of them want to see the most violent Tarantino movie with a revenge theme at that time. During the exchange their arguments for why Django Unchained or Kill Bill is more violent, one debater mentions Inglorious Bastards and both agree that Inglorious Bastards is the most violent Tarantino movie with a revenge theme. Fortunately, Inglorious Bastards is also playing at the theater at the same time. Just because the two debaters did not decide between Kill Bill and Django Unchained does not mean that they did not have a debate. During their debate, they realized that their apparently conflicting positions were not actually conflicting; they had the same position—wanting to see the most violent Tarantino revenge movie. And in this example, neither audience member was convinced of either initial position. Therefore, in any “debate” there will be some audience that must resolve an apparent conflict of positions. In all communications, there is some audience. Sometimes the audience has a specific goal, such as being entertained, informed, or persuaded. The discussion about what debate “is” demonstrates that identifying the audience is essential to understanding how the context of a speech act can advance or hinder the speaker’s goals. A Competitive Activity A second component of competitive interscholastic debate is that it necessarily involves a competition. Not all debates must occur within the context of a competition, as the Tarantino example above suggests. But most—if not all— debates in the debate community occur either to win a debate round at a debate tournament or in preparation for winning a debate round at a debate tournament. The tournament structure is a sin qua non (a fundamental component) of the debate community. And in the very rare case that debaters host a public debate (and in the very fortunate case that an audience attends and does not leave during the first speech), the purpose is ordinarily not to convince the audience of a particular side, but to demonstrate what the school’s debate team does. At a typical tournament, there are a pre-determined number of preliminary rounds in which all entered schools’ debaters compete against debaters from other schools that have entered the tournament. The tournament usually determines beforehand the number of debaters that will advance to elimination rounds, and that number usually equals four to thirty-two teams divided into brackets (semifinals to double octafinals). If a team loses an elimination round, as the term suggests, then they are eliminated from the tournament. The prevailing team advances further into the tournament until the “winner” is left with no competitor. A hypothetically neutral critic will be assigned as a “judge.” The judge, or a panel of an odd number of judges, will vote for the debaters who they believe won the debate by doing [did] “the better debating.” Many judges have written paradigms; and the vast majority of written paradigms express a preference for how the debate should occur, but express little or no concern about what (in terms of content) is argued. In almost all debate rounds, the judge will make his decision based on how the debate occurs, not based on what persuaded the judge. A primary (and probably the best) example of this point is a “dropped” argument. Many debate rounds are won, not on the basis of the persuasiveness of an argument, but because the opponents failed to directly respond to the argument. Judges will ordinarily permit the opponent to then “blow up the impact” of this drop in the following speech. Thus, the competitive nature of debate causes, to a great degree, the how to precede the what (unless the point is immaterial or nonessential). As a result, many judges divorce their human experiences and logical reasoning skills of objectively evaluating the persuasiveness of an argument from the decision of which team to vote for. And even when there is a “point-for-point and warrant-for-warrant” debate, many judges will vote based on who does the better job (technically speaking) extending and explaining the argument (even if the argument is atrociously absurd). The target audience is solely the judge, and the sole issue the judge must decide is which side “did the better debating.” Mandatory switch-side debating confirms that the debaters themselves are not the audience for persuasion is mandatory switch-side debating. And because fair opportunity is valued when there are winners and losers in competitions, most judges approach their paradigms with an attempt to be objective. Tournaments hire judges to objectively evaluate debates based on direct language from the ballot, the ballot the judge must sign his or her name to: who did the “better debating” or who “won the round” (which is a rephrasing of who did the better debating). Competitive debate is a very narrow slice of “debate.” One could persuasively argue that competitive debate barely qualifies as “debate” because the target audience (the judge) is persuaded not by the truth of an argument, but who “does the better debating.” Hence, the only point on which the judge of a competitive debate is seeking to be persuaded of is who to vote for. This conclusion narrows the previous section’s conclusions regarding “debate” (generally) because the “competition” element narrows the audience in the debate to the judge, not the competitors. The debaters are not competing to be persuaded. They are competing to persuade. And the only issue on which the audience—the judge—is asked to resolve is which competitors did the better debating. The judges are not present to objectively evaluate the content of messages and arguments for their persuasive value outside of the narrow issue of who did the better debating. An Interscholastic Activity The final essential component of competitive interscholastic debate is that students from different schools compete at debate tournaments. Many academics who have spent decades competing in and coaching debate have probably never encountered an intrascholastic debate competition, at least not in any of the formats in the debate community. The interscholastic element further narrows “competitive debate” to a student activity that faces resource constraint (e.g. time, budget, rooms available, etc.). Perhaps, noting that the competitive debates are interscholastic highlights the more important point about what competitive student debate is not: “academic debate” or “public debate.” The interscholastic element determines how the competitive debates take place. Generally, several factors constrain interest in and participation on a school’s debate team. First, a school likely could not afford to send every enrolled student to travel to and register in debate tournaments. Even if some schools could afford this, not all could. But even the possibility of all schools’ students would be problematic in terms of one school making up more than half of the field. And even if all schools could afford to send all students to a debate competition, debate tournaments likely could not occur (perhaps, only during the summer) because debate tournaments would last several weeks. The tournament structure means that only a select few will be included in the first place to compete, and as tournaments progress, more and more debaters are excluded. Because only a limited number of teams can be sent to tournaments, coaches must decide who “makes the team” and which teams go to what tournaments. But these decisions (while they could be made for a good reason, bad reason, or no reason at all) will likely be influenced by a student’s natural ability or potential to become skilled at how to do our community’s particular formats of competitive debate. And because teams generally can and do not compete against other teams from their schools, a competitive interscholastic debate will result in one school advancing over the other whose chances of advancing then diminish if not disappear. Finally, the interscholastic nature of competitive interscholastic debate is a point of differentiation from other types of competitive debates: the debaters are all students from different schools. They are either in college or high school. This distinguishes competitive interscholastic debate from other types of debate— particularly academic debate. High schoolers are generally still developing physically and mentally, as well as start developing intellectually. Most college students continue their intellectual development as they obtain their associate’s or bachelor’s degrees. It is not until students begin studying for a master’s, law, or doctorate degree that they must study a particular field in depth, reading publications from academics in their respective fields. Many former competitive interscholastic debaters must, for the first time, become familiar with the academics in the particular field for the sole purpose of learning, not “cutting cards” for debate. It is at the end of a master’s studies or PhD program that students finally must contribute something novel within their particular field of study that contributes something to that field of study. This is the point at which students have made an academic contribution (assuming that what is written is selected for publication). Thus, competitive interscholastic debate is radically different from every other kind of debate. It is not “academic debate,” and it is not “public debate.” Because schools’ resources limit debate participation, it is necessarily an exclusive activity to which no students have the right to participate in. And without accounting for how the structures unique to competitive interscholastic debate—exclusion, competition, a limited audience, very narrow audience purpose, etc.—affect the application of a general communications or rhetorical theory in this specific context, the application should be reconsidered or viewed highly skeptically if not outright rejected. Let’s Talk 2PAC To illustrate many of the reasons why “social change through debate” is a fiction, consider the question posed in the introduction: “How did 2PAC’s Changes reach a substantial and diverse cross-section of a global audience?” Any reader who picked up on the humor of the “supposedly-late” descriptor above would immediately know that it is a trick question: 2PAC didn’t make any impression by releasing Changes in 1999; 2PAC died in 1996. 2PAC’s estate contracted with players in the music industry to produce Changes by splicing together several of 2PAC’s pre-death recordings, and released Changes in 1999. The song was advertised and played on the radio and CD players internationally. The similarities and differences between 2PAC when recording Changes and a student arguing that competitive interscholastic debate can create social change are informative. Although 2PAC wrote and recorded parts of Changes, several other individuals in a very complex series of transactions and communications were responsible for the song’s global successes. When 2PAC recorded the various parts of Changes, he merely spoke and sang words into a microphone in an Interscope Records studio where the audience was solely concerned with operating equipment for quality assurance purposes. Similarly, a debater who is asserting that debate can cause social change, like 2PAC in Interscope Records’ recording studio, is speaking to an audience who typically cares little (if at all) about the debater’s intended message and cares about recording it “on the flow.” But unlike 2PAC’s audience (the recording studio that likely had solely a financial interest in re-communicating 2PAC’s message), the judge generally does not re-communicate the debater’s message for any persuasive purpose, and the judge usually has little or no interest or incentive to do so. Changes’s commercial context is part of what allowed the song to spread worldwide. Those initially re-communicating 2PAC’s message did so for financial reasons; the fact that 2PAC’s message was concerned with minimizing racial inequalities likely contributed only a limited extent to the song’s success. Pys’s Gangnam Style had similar success at reaching a global audience, and it made fun of Korean culture. What Changes, Gangnam Style (both messages disseminated in a commercial context), and debate (a competitive activity and, yet ironically, one increasingly marked by anti-capitalist sentiments) have in common is that form is so much more important than substance. But the difference between the form of international hit songs and debate is that the form of musical productions—with a catchy tune, visually stimulating music video, and sometimes a valuable message—makes the message appealing to a general audience. The form of modern competitive interscholastic debate—with, at its worse, rapid fire spreading of dense philosophical verbiage or personal attacks tangentially related (at best) to the topic—is simply unappealing to a general audience. If anything, the form in which messages are communicated in competitive interscholastic debate repels audiences outside of the community. To the extent that Changes was made more popular by its message, the crucial difference between the message of Changes and messages communicated in a debate round is that the in original production of Changes, and the recommunication of that original message, the message has never changed (save some remixes) or contradicted itself. The original version of Changes was the same as it was when it was released until (and after) the time that it made the Pope’s playlist. Conversely, debaters who communicate messages in a debate round will, almost always, contradict their argument (again for persuasive reasons, not because they were convinced that they were wrong initially) in another round, read a different part of the card they were reading previously, reading different phrasings of the same argument by a different author, etc. Therefore, the message-repetition element is missing from competitive interscholastic debate. The multiple points of distinction between 2PAC’s Changes and messages made in debate rounds demonstrate why the dissemination of messages outside of a debate round for persuasive purposes is highly unlikely. The Kicker As the question, “How did 2PAC reach a substantial and diverse cross-section of that global audience?” was trick question, so (to some extent) was this article’s initial question: “What can I learn from 2PAC’s success in communicating his message in Changes?” While one lesson we can learn from the success 2PAC’s changes concerns the factors that make messages more likely to be disseminated worldwide, there is pretty much nothing else to learn in terms of persuasion in the context of competitive interscholastic debate. Up to this point, this article has shown how each of the essential components of “competitive interscholastic debate” makes it very different from any other kind of debate. But one thing that is persuasive in any kind of debate is some sort of properly conducted study (or even a mere survey) that provides empirical proof or even substantial anecdotal support. To date, none of the many academics who coach or participate in the debate community have published a study or survey to support the social change fiction. (Perhaps they have tried, and discovered they were just wrong.) But until such an empirical study of competitive interscholastic debate is conducted, students, judges, and coaches should not take it for granted. Similarly, no one has studied whether 2PAC’s Changes had any effect on people’s attitudes toward racial equality. (Thus, it would be equally supported to say that 2PAC’s Changes increased racial violence.) No survey or statistical studies have been conducted, constrained by academic standards, and then published, that suggest that 2PAC’s Changes had any real effect on anyone (other than the objectively measurable effect that purchasing the song had on the buyer’s wallet). Similarly, no one has studied whether any individual debate round, a team’s year-long “project,” or a debate team’s seemingly perpetual social campaign has created any social change regarding the position they support. While it is theoretically possible that someone has listened to 2PAC and thought to himself, “Hmm, perhaps I should not be so racist,” it is as equally possible that, according to the arguments of Judith Butler or Jacques Derrida (or insert any other philosophy academic or rhetorical theorist—from Aristotle to Slavoj Žižek—here), debate has created some sort of social change. The problem is that nothing supports that debate rounds can create social change other than the adage, “Anything is possible.” The reasoning that debate can create social change is circular at its best. The absurdity is that judges prefer specific, predictive, and empirical evidence over general theoretical possibilities in almost every single context except when it comes to attempts to use debate to create social change. Bald theoretical assertions with flowery language from philosophers are accepted over uncarded but logical analytical arguments. Any explanation for why coaches and students (at least pretend to) believe that debate can create social change would require an unacceptable degree of speculation. The bottom line is that the proposition that competitive interscholastic debate will (or more accurately, can) result in social change is merely speculation without any logical or empirical support. Overcoming the Fiction Merely labeling a proposition a fiction is insufficient to merit the proposition’s abandonment. This article uses the term “fiction” because the idea that debate rounds could likely create any social change is, in all meanings of the term, is a fiction. A fiction is a conclusion that is feigned, invented, or imagined. It is an imaginary thing or event, postulated for the purposes of argument or explanation. One can distinguish a fiction from a statement of fact (which can be determined true or false) or a scientific hypothesis (a falsifiable theory answering a posed question). A fiction, on the other hand, is something that is either false or has not been attempted to be proven true. A fiction is neither inherently good nor inherently bad. Rather, it is a tool to achieve some other purpose. Fictional stories frequently convey a moral to be extracted or lesson to be learned. In law, a legal fiction is a legal rule that is known to be factually false (such as the legal fiction that all people are presumed to know the law) that is endorsed for some greater public policy purpose (such as to avoid ignorance and discourage intentionally avoiding knowledge of the law). After identifying whether a proposition is a fiction (or a truth or hypothesis), determining whether the fiction is worthwhile requires weighing the pros and cons of the fiction against the purposes of the context in which it is used. The Fiction The idea or proposition that competitive interscholastic debate can result in social change is properly characterized as a fiction because it is false and has not been proven true. The proposition that debate rounds can create social change is a fiction because it is false on a theoretical level. Those who attempt to apply theories about academic debate (i.e. arguments published in books and journals by PhDs who argue about concepts within their respective fields of study), social movements, rhetorical acts, and performances are not discussing competitive interscholastic debate. Philosophers and rhetorical theorists have never written an article or book using competitive interscholastic debate as an example of their theory or position. Their theories draw upon historical (i.e. anecdotal) examples to demonstrate their theories. None of them have ever cited a debate round or “debate movement” as an example of their theories. Those who attempt to apply academic theories to competitive interscholastic debate (primarily communications academics, who also frequently happen to be participants in the debate community), decontextualize the broader theories to apply them to competitive interscholastic debate without adequately accounting for the competitive and interscholastic structures of competitive interscholastic debate. Although some “competition” is part of any debate, this part is more accurately described as the presence of seemingly conflicting positions, which is discussed above and exemplified by the Tarantino hypothetical. In social movements or public debate, there are two (or more) apparently conflicting positions. Competitive interscholastic debate is uniquely different because there is not a possibility for compromise on the ultimate question of who did the better debating; most tournaments prohibit double wins, and no debaters would agree to a double loss. The competition is absolute; one side must win and one side must lose. This is radically different from the ability of individuals to be persuaded by the other side of a social movement. The switching of sides outside of the debate context comes from a person’s willingness to be persuaded by a particular position; it is not forced by tournament rules. Thus, the competitive structures of competitive interscholastic debate render the applicability of philosophical or rhetorical theory inapplicable to the extent that it does not account for particular competitive interscholastic debate context. The unique structures of debate rounds rob all arguments or positions therein (or in a series of rounds) of any persuasive value beyond the very narrow issue of “which side did the better debating.” The competitive element and tournament structure of competitive interscholastic debate taint all positions proffered in a debate round to create social change with a stench of “I am actually lying about my goals; I am clearly just using this argument to win the ballot.” Even debates about how debates should proceed (i.e. theory arguments or arguments about the practices in debate, or “meta-debate” (debates about debate)) are not proffered for the truth of the proposition, but to win the debate. The audience—only the judge—is solely concerned with the ultimate question: “Which side did the better debating?” Competitive interscholastic debate is certainly a venue in which students can become aware of societal issues and topics of concern. But the persuasive value of arguments presented in a debate round to convince debaters of the truth of either side on a topic is virtually nil. Students will generally form opinions about issues they learn about in a debate round outside of their debate rounds. The issues debaters become aware of include issues external to debate (e.g. affirmative action, foreign policy) and issues internal to debate (e.g. theory, community issues). When debaters choose to bring those issues into a debate round, they necessarily use those issues as a competitive means to the ultimate end of convincing the judge that they did the better debating. This requires the opposing team to adopt a competitive counterstrategy to that position; it forecloses the option of the opposing team being fully persuaded by the other team’s position. Even an attempt to “compromise” via a permutation (as a competitive strategy rather than a persuasive position) will meet vigorous, usually-pre-scripted opposition. As a result, any in-round action (whether a speech act or the judge voting for one team or the other) will have no out-of-round effect consistent with or contemplated by any cited authors or postulated by the high school or college student making the assertion. Even arguments about competitive interscholastic debate—primarily theory and issues about inequalities in the debate community—will necessarily lose all persuasive value about those particular issues when they are raised in a debate round. Although more specific to competitive interscholastic debate and not general theories about academic debate, meta-debate loses its power to convince anyone in the round because the audience—only the judge—is solely concerned with the question of “which team did the better debating.” Theory and arguments about “social issues in debate” made in a debate inherently reek of disingenuousness. Most debaters and judges do not even consider adopting a position on the meta-debate until after the round in reflective discussion and thought about the issue, thought that never incorporates the truthfulness of an argument because “it was dropped” in a debate round. In the particular debate, the result is always based on who, in the judge’s opinion, did the better debating. It is not based on who convinced the judge of some proposition irrelevant to deciding which team did the better debating. The preceding discussion demonstrates why arguments about social change— even social change within the debate community—have persuasive value only outside of a debate round. The debate community has developed multiple forums in which members of the community engage in noncompetitive and, sometimes, academic debate on issues within the debate community. These include discussions before and after rounds with judges, teammates, and competitors; on forums or online message boards; or in academic publications. For the social issues external to the debate community, there are almost an unlimited number of ways that students form opinions. And, after students form their opinions and join causes and organizations, there are about an equal number of non-competitive ways that students can use techniques and modes of persuasion discussed by academics and rhetorical theories. Debate rounds, at the very most, operate as venue solely for raising awareness about social issues and debate practices. It would be illogical to conclude that, because issues were debated in a particular debate and out-of-round discussion about that practice followed, the in-round debate created a social change. Because coaches and students strategically consider their arguments and practices prior to a debate round, the social issues or the “concern” about a debate tactic initially spawns outside of debate rounds, not from within a singular debate round. And just because one event occurred before another does not make the former the cause of the latter. To the extent that the in-round practice causes a subsequent out-of-round discussion, debate is admittedly a form for raising awareness about practices and social issues for students. But the arguments presented in the debate round will lack persuasive value insofar as convincing the judge in the round of anything beyond the ultimate question of who did the better debating. But even if this article’s arguments up to this point have no validity, and creating social change through debate rounds is more likely than just theoretically possible, this is insufficient to adopt the proposition that competitive interscholastic debate creates social change. It remains a fiction because no academics—not even those who have remained in the debate community for decades—have attempted to prove its validity with any form of study or survey. No studies or surveys have been conducted on any particular application of philosophical or rhetorical theory to the practices within competitive interscholastic debate. Thus, competitive interscholastic debates and meta-debates therein claiming to create some sort of change either within the community or outside the community have no empirical support. They simply present the possibility, but fail to show any probability of success. Because any critically thinking person (in or out of the debate community) should be hesitant to presume probability based on mere possibility, the probability of the general theory being applicable in the competitive interscholastic debate context should be presumed to be zero, as no probability has been proven. Although practices have certainly evolved, no empirical study has causally linked this evolution to in-round arguments to the exclusion of out-of-round, non-competitive discussions. Why We Should Get Over This Fiction Fictions are neither inherently good nor inherently bad. Fictions must be judged based on whether they serve some relevant purpose to the context in which the fiction is adopted. The legal fiction that all people are presumed to know the law is one such fiction. If no one follows laws, then passing laws is pointless. Therefore, compliance with the law is fundamental. The fiction that people are presumed to know the law encourages individuals to know the law and increases compliance. If individuals can shield themselves from the ramifications of violating the law by not knowing the law, people would be encouraged to avoid learning about the law to excuse or justify non-compliance. The methodology for determining whether a fiction is good or bad must include: (1) an identification of whether the proposition is a fiction; (2) what the purposes of the context, field, or activity that is considering adoption of the fiction; and (3) whether the fiction advances or hinders those purposes. Up until this point, this article has argued why it is a fiction to believe that debate rounds cause social change. And, as was discussed at length in Nix the Nixonism: Identifying the Purposes of Debate by Understanding Constituency, Transparency & Accountability, the primary purposes of debate are self-preservation and to promote skills including public speaking, researching, and critical thinking as judged by the larger academic community and the general public. Thus, deciding whether to dispense with the fiction of “social change through debate” is a worthwhile endeavor will require determining whether this fiction promotes or hinders the self-preservation of the community and promotes skills including public speaking, research, and critical thinking. Although either maintaining or dispensing with the fiction would likely be neutral with respect to promoting public speaking, researching, and critical thinking skills, the fiction continues to deal damaging blows to the debate community. These damaging effects can be shown anecdotally. The fiction has damaged the legitimacy of the debate community by encouraging a race to the bottom in terms of debaters—in a competitive flurry—trying to outdo each other and themselves. The best examples of this are in college policy debate, which has existed for much longer than any other interscholastic debate format in the U.S. The development of the “kritik” opened possibilities for deployment of a new body of literature in rounds. The race to the bottom has caused the debate community’s acceptance of the following in-round tactics: stripping nude to de-mystify the female body; dance-offs; defecating into a bag to face our waste; simulating an abortion; actual in round violence between debate partners to illustrate and dramatize domestic violence; voting down white debaters because they were white in order to promote minority participation in competitive interscholastic debate; and debating with the lights off to performatively save energy. Those outside of the debate community in academic and professional circles have noticed this downward trend in competitive interscholastic debate. As a result of this trend, debate is currently viewed as having diminished educational value. This presents a very real threat to the existence of schools’ debate programs. A possible advantage of adopting the fiction is that if students believe in the persuasive power of their positions, then they would be more likely to recommunicate the message in non-competitive formats outside of the competitive interscholastic debate community. Not only has this argument been empirically disproven, the opposite has proven to be true. Most debaters are involved in few, if any, other extra-curricular activities. Sometimes debate programs discourage participation in other activities to hone skills unique to competitive interscholastic debate (e.g. spreading). Furthermore, to the extent that debaters are convinced of their own argument that debate can create social change, the fiction discourages participation in more effective methods of persuasion that do not require the participants to contradict themselves. Students are led to believe that they have accomplished something when, in fact, they have contributed nothing (except to the decline of the community). Additionally, arguing that debate can create social change by the judge voting for the argument is also unethical. The fiction of social change through debate is powerful because it abuses debate’s structures designed to ensure fairness and minimize arbitrariness in judges’ decision-making. One primary structure is the contractual requirement that when the judges sign their ballots, they are voting for the team that does the better debating, as they have contracted with the tournament to do so. When the judge agrees with the host school to judge, he has promised to vote for the debaters who do the better debating. An argument that voting for one team over the other solely because of some out-of-round benefit compromises the judge’s objectivity of evaluating who did the better debating through the arguments made in the particular debate round. In essence, it is a promise for a benefit outside of the debate round in exchange for the ballot that would outweigh the judge’s sense of duty to remain objective and decide the round on who did the better debating. In this sense, endorsing the fiction of social change through debate is, by definition, is endorsing bribery. The only way this ethical dilemma would not exist would be for debaters relying on the fiction to admit that there really is no out-of-round benefit, which is this article’s ultimate point. Not only does the fiction unfairly place the judge in an ethical dilemma, it is also unfair by asking the judge to consider and accept out-of-round benefits of voting for a particular team but ignore all of the judge’s and other debaters’ personal out of-round experiences. In debate rounds, judges attempt to adopt neutral, objective paradigms by not disregarding an argument simply because they personally disagree or do not like it. The general motivation for this is to be fair to the students and allow them an opportunity to succeed despite the judge’s idiosyncratic preferences, the full disclosure of which would take too long to explain prior to a debate or write in a paradigm (although some judges definitely try). The fiction of social change through debate invites the judge to insert his or her subjective preferences only to the extent the judge personally agrees. If the judge personally disagrees with the team’s particular social goals, the judge will be shunned by rejecting the team’s argument absent some argument that the opposing team wins “on the flow.” But if the judge personally agrees with the team’s particular social goals (or at least what the debaters purport their social goals to be), then the debaters relying on the fiction of social change through debate invites and attempts to justify judges’ intervention only to the extent it benefits them even if the argument is not won “on the flow.” This is true because arguments about what the ballot can would, if the argument is true (or dropped), outweigh a technically bad performance by the debaters relying on those arguments. By placing the judge in an ethical dilemma, bribing the judge, and inviting and justifying one-sided intervention, the fiction of social change through debate encourages debaters to commit the ultimate in-round abuse. Arguments and strategies are not, by themselves, properly considered unfair or abusive to another debater. There are always counter-arguments and counter-strategies. Tactics—or the in-round conduct of debaters—can be unfair and abusive. For example, card clipping (purporting to read the entirety of a card but only reading part of it), hiding the other team’s evidence, name-calling, promising the judge money or job in exchange for voting for a particular team, blanket refusal to answer questions in cross-examination, and other rule violations (meaning the actual rules of the debate tournament or the organization under which the tournament is conducted) are all examples of tactics that are unfair and abusive. These tactics and the fiction of social change through debate place the judge in an ethical dilemma, bribe the judge with out-of-round compensation to vote for a team who does not do the better debating, and invite and justify one-sided intervention. They compromise the integrity of the activity and are thus the ultimate unfair tactics and the worst forms of in round abuse. The fiction of social change through debate abuses the win–loss structure of debate and permits debaters to otherize, demonize, dehumanize, and exclude opponents. The win–loss structure of debate rounds requires a judge to vote for one side or the other, as judges generally cannot give a double win. This precludes the possibility of compromise on any major position in the debate when the resolution of the position would determine the ultimate issue of “which team did the better debating.” Thus, the fiction of social change through debate encourages debaters to construct narratives of good versus evil in which the other team is representative of some evil that threatens to bring about our destruction if it is endorsed (e.g. capitalism). The team relying on the fiction of social change through debate then paints themselves as agents of the good, and gives the judge a George W. Bush-like “option”: “You’re either with us or you’re against us.” The fiction of social change through debate—like Bush’s rhetorical fear tactics and creation of a false, polarizing, and exclusionary dichotomy to justify all parts of the War on Terror—enables the otherization, demonization, dehumanization, and exclusion of the opposing team. When the unfairness of this tactic is brought to light—particularly in egregious situations when a team is arguing that the other team should lose because of their skin color—all can see that the debate centers on personal attacks against opposing debaters. This causes tensions between debaters that frequently result in debaters losing interest or quitting. By alienating and excluding members of the competitive interscholastic debate community for the purpose of winning a debate, it also makes the reaching of any compromise outside of the debate—the only place where compromise is possible—much less likely. By bringing the social issue into a debate round, debaters impede out-of round progress on the resolution of social issues within and outside the debate community by prompting backlash.

#### Impacts about debate and the assumption that winning ballots has political force to solve rhetoric in debate is bourgeois ideology is inseparable from magical voluntarism

Cloud and Gunn 10 (Joshua Gunn & Dana L. Cloud, Department of Communication, University of Texas at Austin, "Agentic Orientation as Magical Voluntarism" Communication Theory 20 (2010) 50–78 © 2010 International Communication Association//shree)

Over a decade ago anthropologists Jean and John L. Comaroff (1999) advanced the provocative thesis that globalization in late capitalism has led to ‘‘a dramatic intensification . . . of appeals to enchantment,’’ often most discernable in industrializing countries such as South Africa (p. 282). From ‘‘get rich quick’’ pyramid schemes to e-mail promises from millionaire widows in Nigeria, ‘‘capitalism has an effervescent new spirit—a magical, neo-Protestant zeitgeist—welling up close to its core’’ (p. 281). Of course, over a half-century ago Theodor Adorno (1994) inveighed against astrology and soothsaying as indices of economic magic, underscoring the ability of capitalism to promote the ‘‘doctrine of the existence of spirit’’ so central to bourgeois consciousness. ‘‘In the concept of mind-in-itself,’’ argued Adorno, ‘‘consciousness has ontologically justified and perpetuated privilege by making it independent of the social principle by which it is constituted. Such ideology explodes in occultism: It is Idealism come full circle’’ (p. 133).What the Comaroffs point to is not the arrival of a new form of magical thinking, then, but the intensification and proliferation of postenlightenment gullibility via globalization—ironically in what is presumably the age of cynical reason (e.g., Sloterdijk, 1987). As human beings, academics are just as susceptible to magical thinking and narcissistic fantasies of omnipotence as everyone else. Perhaps because at some level of communication scholars tend to entertain a sense of the magical in the idea of communication (see Peters, 1999), we have been particularly prone to a philosophical belief in what we term ‘‘magical voluntarism,’’ the notion that human agency is better understood as the ability to control a given phenomenon through the proper manipulation of thoughts and symbols (e.g., language). Going well beyond the straightforward idea that our thoughts necessarily influence our actions in transforming the world around us, what we are calling magical voluntarism fosters a deliberate misrecognition of material recalcitrance, an inability to recognize the structural, political, economic, cultural, and psychical limits of an individual’s ability to act in her own interests. Furthermore, magical voluntarism refuses to acknowledge that there is a limit to the efficacy of symbolic action, beyond which persuasion and thought alone fail to shift existing social relations. In popular culture, magical voluntarism is typified by the bestselling book and DVD The Secret (Byrne, 2006; Heriot, 2006), which teach the reader/viewer that ‘‘[y]our life right now is a reflection of your thoughts. That includes all great things, and all the things you consider not so great. Since you attract to you what you think about most, it is easy to see what your dominant thoughts have been on every subject of your life, because that is what you experienced’’ (Byrne, 2006, p. 9). The ‘‘magical, neo-Protestant zeitgeist’’ typified by the raging success of The Secret (see McGee, 2007) indicates that enchantment is not limited to developing countries, but is also a crowning achievement of late capitalism in the postindustrial world. Nor is magical thinking limited to popular culture. As a recent essay in this journal by Sonja K. Foss, William J. Waters, and Bernard J. Armada (2007) demonstrates, magical thinking has some purchase in the field of communication studies (see also Geisler, 2005; Villadsen, 2008).1 According to Foss, Waters, and Armada, human agency is simply a matter of consciously choosing among differing interpretations of reality. We argue that the understanding of agency advanced by Foss, Waters, and Armada is informed by the same voluntarist ideology that has enchanted The Secret’s millions of readers. Below we advance a conception of agency as an open question in order to combat magical thinking in contemporary communication theory. Although we approach the concept of agency from different theoretical standpoints (one of us from the perspective of psychoanalysis, the other, classical Marxism), we are mutually opposed to the (bourgeois) idealism of magical voluntarism in recent work in communication and rhetorical studies on agency.2 Our primary vehicle of argument is a critique of Foss, Waters, and Armada’s essay, ‘‘Toward a Theory of Agentic Orientation: Rhetoric and Agency in Run Lola Run,’’ which represents a magical-voluntaristic brand of practical reason (phronesis) that is increasingly discredited among a number rhetorical scholars. We are particularly alarmed by the suggestion that even in ‘‘situations’’ such as ‘‘imprisonment or genocide . . . agents have choices about how to perceive their conditions and their agency . . . [which] opens up opportunities for innovating . . . in ways unavailable to those who construct themselves as victims’’ (p. 33). The idea that one can choose an ‘‘agentic orientation’’ regardless of context and despite material limitation not only ignores two decades of research within the field of communication studies on agency and its limitations (and is thus ‘‘regressive’’ in more than one sense), but tacitly promotes a belief in wish-fulfillment through visualization and the imagination, as well as a commitment to radical individualism and autonomy. As a consequence, embracing magical voluntarism leads to narcissistic complacency, regressive infantilism, and elitist arrogance.

### 1NC- Academy

#### Positioning within the structure of debate and the academy subverts the radical intentions of the Aff – their resistance becomes an object of surveillance and consumption.

Phillips 99 – Dr. Kendall R. Phillips, Professor of Communication at Central Missouri State University, PhD in Speech Communication from Pennsylvania State University, MA in Speech Communication from Central Missouri State University, BS in Psychology and Sociology from Southwest Baptist University, “Rhetoric, Resistance, and Criticism: A Response to Sloop and Ono”, Philosophy & Rhetoric, Volume 32, Number 1, p. 96-101

My concern with this movement centers around an issue that Sloop and Ono seem to take as a given, namely, the role of the critic. On one hand, calling for the systematic investigation of existing marginalized discourses is a natural extension both of critical rhetoric (see McKerrow 1989, 1991) and of the general ideological turn in criticism (see Wander 1983). On the other hand, the ease of transition from criticism in the service of resistance to criticism of resistance may obscure the need to address some fundamental issues regarding the general function of rhetorical criticism in an uncertain and contentious world. Beyond licensing the critic to engage in political struggle, Sloop and Ono advocate the pursuit of covert resistant discourses. Such a move not only stretches our understanding of rhetoric and criticism, but also alters significantly the relationship between critic and out- law. Critical interrogation of dominant discursive practices in the service of political/cultural reform is supplanted in favor of positioning covert out- law communities as objects of investigation. Invited to seek out subversive discourses, the critic is positioned as the active agent of change and the out-law discourse becomes merely instrumental. Rather than academic criticism acting in service of everyday acts of resistance, everyday acts of resistance are put into the service of academic criticism. Rhetorical resistance That we are "caught within conflicting logics of justice that are culturally struggled over" (Sloop and Ono 1997, 50) and that rhetoric is employed in these struggles seems an uncontroversial statement. Despite the theoretical miasma surrounding judgment, Sloop and Ono accurately note, the material process of rendering judgments (and of disputing the logics of litigation) continues in the world of actually practiced discourse. In the materially contested world, rhetoric is utilized both by those seeking to secure the grounds of dominant judgment and by those seeking to undermine or supplant dominant cultural logics with some out-law notion of justice. The distinction between these two cultural groups, "in-law" and out- law, however, deserves some consideration prior to any discussion of the role of the critic as implied in the out-law discourse project. The discourse of the dominant or those within the bounds of superordinate logics of litigation is reminiscent of Michel De Certeau's (1984) strategic discourse. For De Certeau, strategies are utilized by those who have authority by virtue of their proper position. Strategies exploit the institutionally guaranteed background consensus by which power relations (and litigations) are maintained and advanced. In contrast, tactics are utilized by those having no proper place of authority within the discursive economy who must seek opportunities whereby the discourse of the dominant might be undermined and contested. To extend Sloop and Ono's definition, out-law discourses are those that can (and, by their analysis, do) take advantage of situations (e.g., race riots) to disrupt the regularity of dominant cultural groups. The ongoing struggle between strategically instituted cultural dominants and the "out-law always lurk[ing] in the distance" (66) is acknowledged, even celebrated, by Sloop and Ono. What their acknowledgment fails to provide, however, is a clear need for critical intervention. Indeed, quite the reverse is presented: It is the critic (particularly the left-leaning critic) who needs out-law discourse. While the struggles over justice, equality, and freedom have gone on, the left-leaning critics are those who have theoretically excluded themselves from the disputes. The study of out-law dis- courses, then, provides a means to reinvigorate the intellectual and re-institute (academic) leftist thinking into popular political struggles (53-54). Thus, Sloop and Ono's project incorporates three types of rhetoric: the rhetoric of the in-law, presumably the traditional object of critical attention; the rhetoric of the out-law, the study of which may transform our understanding of judgment as well as reinvigorate leftist democratic critiques; and the rhetoric of the critics who, having lost their political po- tency, can exploit the discourse of the out-law to promote ideological struggles. It is to this critical rhetoric that I now turn. Resistance criticism Sloop and Ono (1997) clearly state the relationship they envision between the rhetorical critic and out-law discourse: "Ultimately, we will argue that the role of critical rhetoricians is to produce 'materialist conceptions of judgment,' using out-law judgments to disrupt dominant logics of judgment" (54; emphasis added). Here the critic seeks out vernacular discourse (60), focuses on the methods and values embodied in these communities (62), listens to and evaluates the out-law community (62-63), and chooses appropriate discourses for the purpose of disrupting dominant practices (63). Essentially, it is the critic who seeks out marginalized discourses and returns them to the center for the purpose of provoking dominant cultural groups (63). Despite acknowledging the efficacy of out-law discourses, Sloop and Ono assume that the critiques generated and presented by the out-law community have only minimal effect. The irony, and indeed arrogance, of this assumption is evident when they claim: "There are cases, however, when, without the prompting of academic critics, out-law discourses serve local purposes at times and at others resonate within dominant discourses, disrupting sedimented ways of thinking, transforming dominant forms of judgment" (60; emphasis added). Sloop and Ono seem to suggest that such locally generated critiques are the exception, whereas the political efficacy of the academic critic is the rule. This seems an odd claim, given that the justification for their out-law discourse project is the lack of politically viable academic critique and the perceived potency of out-law conceptions of judgment. Their suggestion that out-law communities are in need of the academic critic contradicts not only the already disruptive nature of existing out-law discourses (the grounds for using out-law discourse), but also the impotence of contemporary critical discourse (the warrant for studying out-law discourse). By this I do not mean that the critiques and theories generated by academically instituted intellectuals have not been incorporated into subversive discourses. Just as out-law discourses inevitably mount critiques of dominant logics, so, too, the perspectives on rhetoric and criticism generated by academics are used in resistance movements. Feminist critiques of patriarchy, queer theories of homophobia, postcolonial interrogations of race have found their way into the service of resistant groups. The key distinction I wish to make is that the existence of criticism (academic or self-generated) in resistance does not necessitate Sloop and Ono's move to a criticism of resistance. What Sloop and Ono fail to offer is an adequate argument for "taking public speaking out of the streets and studying it in the classroom, for treating it less as an expression of protest" (Wander 1983, 3) and more as an object for analysis and reproduction within the political economy of the academy. Philip Wander made a similar charge against Herbert Wicheln's early critical project, and this concern should remain at the forefront of any discussion aimed at expanding the scope and function of criticism. Sloop and Ono offer numerous directives for the critic without addressing whether the critic should be examining out-law discourses in the first place. While it is too early to suggest any definitive answer to the question of criticism of resistance, some preliminary arguments as to why critics should not pursue out-law discourses can be offered: (1) Hidden out-law discourses may have good reasons to stay hidden. Sloop and Ono specifically instruct us that "the logic of the out-law must constantly be searched for, brought forth" (66) and used to disrupt dominant practices. But are we to believe that all out-law discourses are prepared to mount such a challenge to the dominant cultural logic? Or, indeed, that the members of out-law communities are prepared to be brought into the arena of public surveillance in the service of reconstituting logics of litigation? It seems highly unlikely that all divergent cultural groups have developed equally, or that all members of these groups share Sloop and Ono's "imperial impulse" (51) to promote their conceptions and practices of justice. (2) Academic critical discourse is not transparent. Here I allude to the overall problem of translation (see Foucault 1994; Lyotard 1988; Lyotard and Thebaud 1985; Zabus 1995) as an extension of the previous concern. Critical discourse cannot become the medium of commensurability for divergent language games. Are we to believe that the "use" of out-law dis- course by critics to disrupt dominant practices can fail to do violence to these diverse/divergent logics? Are out-law discourses merely tools to be exploited and discarded in the pursuit of returning leftist academic dis- course to the center? (3) Perhaps the academic translation of out-law discourse could be true to the internal logic of the out-law community. And, perhaps the re-presentation of out-law logic within the academic community will bestow a degree of legitimacy on the out-law community. Nonetheless, the effect of legitimizing out-law discourse is unknown and potentially destructive. In an effort to siphon the political energy of out-law discourse into academic practice, we may ultimately destroy the dissatisfaction that serves as a cathexis for these out-law discourses. It seems possible that academic recognition might take the place of struggle for material opportunities (see Fraser 1997). But, will academic legitimation create any material changes in the conditions of out-law communities? I mean to suggest, not that it is better to allow the out-law community to suffer for its cause, but rather that incorporating the struggle into an (admittedly) impotent academic critique does not offer a prima facie alternative. (4) Criticism of resistance denies the practical and theoretical importance of opportunity. Returning to De Certeau's notion of tactics, the crucial element of these discursive moves is their use of opportunity to disrupt the proper authority of the dominant. The kairos of intervention provides the key to undermining "in-law" discourses. But when is the "right moment in time" for the academic reproduction of out-law discourse? Mapping the points of resistance (ala Foucault and Biesecker) entails interrogating "in-law" discourses for their incongruities and contradictions, not turning the academic gaze upon those communities waiting for an opportunity. Out-laws do not lurk in the forefront (66), hoping to be exposed by academic critics; they wait for the right moment for their disruption. Rhetoricians can provide rhetorical instructions for seeking opportunities and for exploiting these opportunities (literally making the culturally weaker argument the stronger), but this does not justify interrogating (intervening in) the cultural logics of the marginalized. The concerns raised here are not designed to dismiss Sloop and Ono's provocative essay. The divergent critical logic they outline deserves careful consideration within the critical community, and it is my hope that the concerns I raise may help to further problematize the relationship between resistance and rhetorical criticism. Rhetorical criticism As I have suggested, my purpose is to use the provocative nature of Sloop and Ono's project to extend disputes regarding the ends of rhetorical criticism. Diverging perspectives on the ends of criticism have been categorized by Barbara Warnick (1992) as falling along four general lines: artist, analyst, audience, and advocate. Leah Ceccarelli (1997) discerns similar categories around the aesthetic, epistemic, and political ends of rhetorical criticism. The out-law discourse project presents clear ties to the notion of critic as advocate. For Sloop and Ono, the critic is an interested party, discerning (and at times disputing) the underlying values and forces contained within a discourse. Additionally, however, the out-law discourse critic is an analyst focusing on the hidden, aberrant texts of the out-law and "rendering] an incoherent or esoteric text comprehensible" (Warnick 1992, 233). Now, I am not suggesting that a critic must serve only one function or that the roles of advocate and analyst are mutually exclusive; rather, these entanglings of power (political ends) and knowledge (epistemic ends) are inevitable. My concern is that we not neglect the complexity of these entanglements. Turning covert out-law discourses into objects of our analyses runs the risk of subjecting them both to the gaze of the dominant and to the power relations of the academy. As the works of Michel Foucault (especially 1979, 1980) aptly illustrate, practices presented as extending such noble goals as emancipation and humanity may endow institutions of confinement and objectification. Any justification for studying out-law dis- course because doing so may extend our political usefulness in the pursuit of emancipatory goals must not obscure the already existing power relations authorizing such studies. Our attempts to extend our domains of knowledge and expertise (authority) must not be pursued unreflexively.

#### The radical posturing of the Aff is the political capital of the Academy. These grand gestures produce no change, and are part of the very system that isolates the University from political relevance.

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

### 1NC-Microptx

#### No spillover solvency – there’s no internal link between micropolitical interruption and macropolitical change. The claim that it’s a “prerequisite” is the link to our arg

Carrabregu 13 (Gent Carrabregu, MA, PhD candidate in political science at Northwestern, “The Democratic Limits of the Ethical Turn-Myers's Worldly Ethics,” Theory & Event Volume 16, Issue 3, 2013)

In the hands of William Connolly's agonistic pluralism, the Foucauldian ethics of self-care is tied more explicitly to democratic practice, which is a most welcome move, even if it continues to beg the question. For Myers, **the problem is two-fold**. **First**, **what is the ground on the basis of which arts of self-craftsmanship aiming at micropolitical interventions on the self can provide an impetus to collective political mobilization**; and **secondly, why should we expect that**, in case they do, they will produce recognizable democratic effects instead of leading to **cynical withdrawal** or **narcissistic self-absorption**. In her view, when Connolly ties his analysis to actual political movements, such as the movement for the right to die, micropolitical interventions on the self will lead to democratic collective action because "they work in tandem" with political movements that engage something in the world by effecting its transformation from a matter of fact to a matter of common concern; but this is not something that can be conceptually underwritten, Myers insists, by his commitment to an ethics of self-care. Indeed, such a commitment puts Connolly at odds with the aims of a **political ethics oriented toward the world because**, more often than not, **it leads to a privileging of "action by the self on itself as a starting point and necessary prelude to macropolitical change"** (44). **This order of priority**, whether conceptual or chronological, **is not something that a conception of political ethics oriented toward care for the world,** such as Myers's "worldly ethics," **can possibly embrace.** On the other hand, the Levinasian conception of ethics, viewed through the lens of care for the world and the picture of associative democracy with which it seeks to captivate our political imagination, is just the other side of the ethical turn's coin. In addition to the similar questions already begged by Foucault's and Connolly's ethics of self-care, Levinasian ethics introduces yet another problematic and question-begging feature: namely, the "unequal dyadic model of charitable obligation" (62). This model that underwrites Levinas's conception of ethics as infinite responsibility to the singular Other is questionable before the bar of critical democratic reason for three interrelated reasons. First, it is anti-egalitarian insofar as it posits a hierarchical relationship between benefactor and recipient; second, it is mostly concerned with the direct fulfillment of basic needs (food, shelter, etc.); and finally, it is not clear whether there is anything political about it given that philanthropic altruism is quite a private affair (71-73). Levinas's later attention to the image of "the third," which some commentators point out to make the case for the political relevance of Levinasian ethics, does not seem convincing to Myers. While it might point to Levinas's acknowledgment that the world involves "multiple Others," this acknowledgment is not yet tied to politics in any recognizable way (68). Especially problematic, even in the face of acknowledging "the third," remains Levinas's rather Platonic view of ethics as the guardian of politics, regulating it by providing benchmarks for its evaluation (67). While certainly going beyond many aspects of Levinas's basic ethical project, Simon Critchley and Judith Butler remain bound to certain Levinasian prejudices that do not quite liberate democratic politics from the straightjacket of "ethics-as-first-philosophy." In the case of Critchley's attempt to link Levinasian ethical insights to democratic politics the main problem seems to be his "elision of the difference between charitable ethics and associative democracy" (71). Such an elision means that Critchley cannot provide an adequate answer to the basic problem of impetus: namely, why should an individual's acceptance of a radical demand to care for a singular Other lead to participation in the collective, democratizing efforts Critchley admires so much? In Myers's view, this lack of proper acknowledgment of the difference between ethics and politics is inherited from a Levinasian figure of thought-namely, the hierarchical relation between ethics and politics, which Critchley re-articulates by conceiving ethics as providing democracy with a "metapolitical moment," which it cannot provide if leftto its own resources (71). While certainly committed to admirable forms of democratic political action, such as the protest movement against the World Trade Organization, it is not clear that Critchley's anarchist politics can be abetted by a conception of ethics that remains heavily indebted to Levinasian tropes. If Critchley's loyalty to Levinas's "unequal dyadic model of charitable obligation" makes him subject to democratic deficits very similar to those of Levinas's original conception, Butler's ethics of universal vulnerability is a more complex elaboration precisely insofar as she departs from the letter of Levinas's ethics, if not exactly from its spirit. Most importantly for Myers, Butler's ethics avoids the hierarchical model of charity by making the singular Other into a generalizable Other standing for the universally shared human condition of vulnerability (78, 79). In addition to this egalitarian ontology of finitude, Butler's close attention to the way precariousness is politically distributed, and the way in which social norms that govern the intelligibility of suffering and pain may de-realize the sufferings of certain powerless groups of people, point clearly toward an admirable political awareness that adopts the right attitude toward the world that Myers wants us to always keep in mind (80). And yet this otherwise admirable reworking of Levinas does not convince her, mainly because no adequate answer is elaborated to address her recurring question of the precise link between this picture of human precariousness and the agency of democratic actors seeking to transform the world in praiseworthy ways. What exactly necessitates the movement from an "affirmation of vulnerability as an unavoidable existential truth" to the injunction to pursue an egalitarian distribution of precariousness is not a question that is answered by Butler (79). Neither is it clear to Myers, unless it might be a case of "cynicism or despair about the possibilities of democratic mobilization," why an ethical imperative beyond politics should be appealing to a thinker, such as Butler, otherwise so attuned to the political workings of normative violence (81). To think beyond the influential yet **problematic therapeutic and charitable models** offered by the ethical turn, Myers thinks we need to begin by **making ethical reflection subordinate to the needs of "associative democracy," understood as collaborative and contentious engagement in the informal political public sphere,** where it is **"a common object in the world" that connects and divides democratic actors**. We need, as it were, a gestalt switch from "ethics-as-first philosophy" to something like **"politics-as-first philosophy."** If we follow her on that front, a conception of ethics as **"care for the world" will begin to emerge.** Unlike the therapeutic and charitable models, this conception of ethics is based on Arendt's notion of love of the world (amor mundi). As a result, **democratic care for the world "is collaborative, expressed in joint action by plural participants"** (86). **In this conception of ethics, the agents and recipients also change. Instead of an individual self caring for himself or for an other singular self, we have an association of selves caring for the world**, understood as "the array of material and immaterial conditions under which human beings live," which is both our home and the mediating space (Arendt's Zwischenraum) between us. The payoff of this alternative for democratic politics, we are told, is consequential for instead of caring for the problem of hunger by engaging **only in therapeutic micropolitical interventions in one's self** (say, fasting) or only on the alleviation of the pain of the Other, worldly ethics makes us **turn to "the collective conditions, including worldly practices, habits, and laws, out of which hunger is born"** (109).

#### Prioritization of experience as the starting point for all political action is a dangerous epistemological move which elevates identity over deliberation—their methodology is a breeding ground for violent factionalism, not progressive politics.

Ireland 2002 [Craig , American Culture—Bilkent “The Appeal to Experience and its Consequences,” Cultural Critique 52 Fall 2002 p.87-89 //liam]

Once an arcane philosophical term, experience over the last three decades has become a general buzzword. By the 1970s, experience spilled over into the streets, so to speak, and it has since then become the stuff of programmatic manifestos and has been enlisted as the ground from which microstrategies of resistance and subaltern counterhistories can be erected. But for all the blows and counterblows that have carried on for over three decades between those who appeal to the counterhegemonic potential of experience and those who see such appeals as naive voluntarism, such debates show no signs of abating. On the contrary, they have become yet more strident, as can be seen by Michael Pickering's recent attempt to rehabilitate the viability of the term "experience" for subaltern historiography by turning to E. P. Thompson and Dilthey and, more recently still, by Sonia Kruks's polemical defense of experience for subaltern inquiry by way of a reminder that poststructuralist critics of experience owe much to those very thinkers, from Sartre to Merleau-Ponty, whom they have debunked as if in oedipal rebellion against their begetters. Such debates over experience have so far gravitated around issues of epistemology and agency, pitting those who debunk experience as the stuff of an antiquated philosophy of consciousness against those who argue that subaltern experience provides an enclave against strong structural determination. Lost in such debates, however, have been the potential consequences of appeals to immediate experience as a ground for subaltern agency and specificity. And it is just such potential consequences that will be examined here. These indeed demand our attention, for more is at stake in the appeal to experience than some epistemological faux pas. By so wagering on the perceived immediacy of experience as the evidence for subaltern specificity and counterhegemonic action, appeals to immediate experience, however laudable their goal, end up unwittingly naturalizing what is in fact historical, and, in so doing, they leave the door as wide-open to a progressive politics of identity as to a retreat to neoethnic tribalism. Most alarming about such appeals to [End Page 87] experience is not some failure of epistemological nerve—it is instead their ambiguous political and social ramifications. And these have reverberated beyond academia and found an echo in para-academia— so much so that experience has increasingly become the core concept or key word of subaltern groups and the rallying call for what Craig Calhoun calls the "new social movements" in which "experience is made the pure ground of knowledge, the basis of an essentialized standpoint of critical awareness" (468 n.64). The consequences of such appeals to experience can best be addressed not by individually considering disparate currents, but by seeking their common denominator. And in this regard, E. P. Thompson will occupy the foreground. It is safe to say that what started as an altercation between Thompson and Althusser has since spawned academic and para-academic "histories from below" and subaltern cultural inquiries that, for all their differences, share the idea that the identities and counterhistories of the disenfranchised can be buttressed by the specificity of a group's concrete experiences. Much theorizing on experience by certain cultural and historiographical trends, as many have already pointed out, has been but a variation on a persistent Thompsonian theme in which Thompson's "kind of use of experience has the same foundational status if we substitute 'women's' or 'black' or 'lesbian' or 'homosexual' for 'working class'" (Scott, 786).

### 1NC – Policy Educ Good

#### Policy education develops the tools to influence institutions – the K is sealed in the ivory tower

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Something is **seriously wrong** in the relationship between universities and the policy community in the field of **i**nternational **r**elations. The worlds of policy making and academic research should be in constant, productive conversation, and scholars and researchers should be an invaluable resource for policy makers, but they are not.¶ One hears perennial laments from those in **academe** that **their** valuable **work is being ignored by policy makers.** And, on the other hand, policy makers complain they can get nothing useful from the academy. They may all be right.¶ Now would be a good time for policy makers and scholars to be deeply engaged on some of the highest-priority issues for the United States and international security. Consider, for example:¶ The causes and implications—immediate and long term—of the Arab Spring for that region and for its relevance to future social and political change elsewhere.¶ The real consequences of an Iranian nuclear-weapons program for the political dynamics of the Middle East, as well as for the durability of the global norm against nuclear-weapons proliferation.¶ The complicated internal politics of Pakistan, how they relate to that country's political and economic development, and their importance to America's policies in South Asia.¶ Why are scholars and policy makers not engaging in the kind of interaction we all need—and we all say we want?¶ There has been a **theoretical turn** across the social sciences and humanities that has **cut off academic discourse** from the way **ordinary people** and working **professionals** speak and think. The validity and elegance of the models have become the focus, rather than whether those models can be **used to understand real-world situations.** Conferences and symposia are devoted to differences in **theoretical constructs**; topics are chosen for research based **not on their importance** but on their accessibility to a particular methodology. Articles and books are published to be read, **if at all**, only by colleagues who have the **same high regard for methodology and theory** and the same **disregard for practice.**¶ That has created a profession that is **inward-looking** and **concerned with arcane debate**—a result that provokes and deserves all the insults thrown at **the ivory tower** from the world of policy and practice.¶ Further, the incentive structure in universities and in disciplines has endorsed this emphasis on theory and methodology. When it comes to promotions and awarding tenure, departments are largely allowed to set their own standards. And, of course, departments are made up of people who have succeeded in the profession and will perpetuate its values. Thus, the university department can turn into a guild, favoring credentialing over relevance and orthodoxy over impact.¶ My concern is for the larger effects. Tenured professors construct courses and train the next generation of scholars. The best young minds and young researchers are encouraged to replicate what their mentors think is important, but what if those who work in the world of policy and practice do not agree with that choice? Students are then being prepared for careers that **do not exist outside of academe** and **given tools that are not useful except to their academic discipline**.¶ I would care much less if we were talking about literary theory or art history, important and rewarding though they may be. I care very much when we are talking about **i**nternational **r**elations, a discipline that is involved with **policies that could get people killed, in the real world, here and now.**¶ **Policy makers**, most of whom are trying to save lives and keep the peace, **need all the help they can get in order to make better decisions**. They are faced with irreducible complexity and radical uncertainty—and they must often rely on inadequate information. **Unsurprisingly, they think practically**, are prepared to do anything that looks as if it might succeed, and are reluctant to take big bets if not forced to do so. **If they fail, dire consequences are likely**, both for themselves and others.¶ So how can academic experts be more helpful?¶ Twenty years ago, Alexander George, in Bridging the Gap: Theory and Practice in Foreign Policy, made some good suggestions. First, he proposed interdisciplinary approaches—a common refrain in academe. But they are, in fact, hardly ever done. We talk the talk but don't walk the walk. Being really interdisciplinary is hard and requires deep engagement. The rub is that most academic experts are more interested in their theories than they are in interdisciplinary conversations or working together on problems.¶ Policy makers, by contrast, have to deal with **actual problems**. They would benefit from having multiple views of the same issue—and more so from seeing these views integrated—in order to see all the consequences and the likely interdependencies of a **line of action**.¶ Second, George suggests that researchers embrace what he calls second-best theory. Rather than concentrating on a grand theory that **explains everything**, scholars could help policy makers by providing ways to assess whether their **policies** are working in real time. Policy makers in the throes of a crisis do not much care whether a theory is being proved true or false, but they badly need evidence of progress on emerging problems. In simpler terms, they need management tools, and they need help connecting cause and effect. Scholars, who struggle with precisely that, could be of real help.¶ Lastly, George calls for mutual accountability. If academics are invited into the policy environment, decision makers need to be invited back into the academy, and their views on curriculum and research should be taken seriously.¶ To these recommendations, I would add two more: first, a robust embrace of regional studies. Nothing can replace the value of insights that emerge from the integration of knowledge and research on the history, economics, politics, culture, religion, and geography of a region. Second, **consideration of rigorous, policy-relevant theory and analysis should be among** the **requirements** for hiring, tenure, and promotion.¶ My organization, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, supports efforts in this regard, but it is incumbent upon all who teach and study **i**nternational **r**elations to **think about the problems we face** as a nation, and those humankind faces across the planet. Think about the needs of governments, and of the vast range of organizations at work in the world. Find practical ways to **prepare people to be useful and effective**. Our universities have the country's **intellectual firepower, trained expertise, and the careers** of the most promising young people in their hands. I am asking that they please **do something useful with them.**

# 2NC

## FW

#### You don’t control the meaning of your performance. Visibility is complicit with repression because it reproduces the same logic of representation that those systems rely on. The Aff only summons further surveillance and oppression.

Phelan 93 [Peggy, Chair of NYU’s Dept of Performance Studies, Unmarked: The Politics of Performance, p.2-4]

Employing psychoanalysis and feminist theories of representation, I am concerned with marking the limit of the image in the political field of the sexual and racial other. I take as axiomatic the link between the image and the word, that what one can see is in every way related to what one can say. In framing more and more images of the hitherto under-represented other, contemporary culture finds a way to name, and thus to arrest and fix, the image of that other. Representation follows two laws: it always conveys more than it intends; and it is never totalizing. The “excess” meaning conveyed by representation creates a supplement that makes multiple and resistant readings possible. Despite this excess, representation produces ruptures and gaps; it fails to reproduce the real exactly. Precisely because of representation’s supplemental excess and its failure to be totalizing, close readings of the logic of representation can produce psychic resistance and, possibly, political change. (Although rarely in the linear cause-effect way cultural critics on the Left and Right often assume.) Currently, however, there is a dismaying similarity in the beliefs generated about the political efficacy of visible representation. The dangerous complicity between progressives dedicated to visibility politics and conservatives patroling the borders of museums, movie houses, and mainstream broadcasting is based on their mutual belief that representations can be treated as “real truths” and guarded or championed accordingly. Both sides believe that greater visibility of the hitherto under-represented leads to enhanced political power. The progressives want to share this power with “others”; conservatives want to reserve this power for themselves. Insufficient understanding of the relationship between visibility, power, identity, and liberation has led both groups to mistake the relation between the real and the representational. Each representation relies on and reproduces a specific logic of the real; this logical real promotes its own representation. The real partakes of and generates different imagistic and discursive paradigms. There is, for example, a legal real in which concepts such as “the image” and “the claimant” are defended and decided through recourse to preestablished legal concepts such as copyright, trademark, property, the contract, and individual rights.3 Within the physical universe, the real of the quantum is established through a negotiation with the limitations of the representational possibilities of measuring time and space. To measure motion that is not predictable requires that one consider the uncertainty of both the means of measurement and the energy that one wants to measure. Within the history of theatre the real is what theatre defines itself against, even while reduplicating its effects.4 Within Lacanian psychoanalyis the Real is full Being itself. Freud’s mapping of the unconscious, as Lacan consistently insisted, makes the Real forever impossible to realize (to make real) within the frame of the Symbolic.5 Within the diverse genre of autobiography the real is considered the motivation for self-representation.6 Each of these concepts of the real contains within it a meta-text of exclusionary power. Each real believes itself to be the Real-real. The discourse of Western science, law, theatrical realism, autobiography, and psychoanalysis are alike in believing their own terms to be the most comprehensive, the most basic, the most fundamental route to establishing or unsettling the stability of the real. By employing each of them in Unmarked I hope to demonstrate that the very proliferation of discourses can only disable the possibility of a Real-real. I know this sounds oh-so-familiar to the ears of weary poststructuralists. But what is less familiar is the way in which the visible itself is woven into each of these discourses as an unmarked conspirator in the maintenance of each discursive real. I want to expose the ways in which the visible real is employed as a truth-effect for the establishment of these discursive and representational notions of the real. Moreover, I want to suggest that by seeing the blind spot within the visible real we might see a way to redesign the representational real. If the visible real is itself unable to constitute a reliable representational real its use-value must lie elsewhere.The pleasure of resemblance and repetition produces both psychic assurance and political fetishization. Representation reproduces the Other as the Same. Performance, insofar as it can be defined as representation without reproduction, can be seen as a model for another representational economy, one in which the reproduction of the Other as the Same is not assured.7 The relationship between the real and the representational, between the looker and the given to be seen, is a version of the relation between self and other. Cultural theory has thus far left unexamined the connection between the psychic theory of the relationship between self and other and the political and epistemological contours of that encounter. This relationship between self and other is a marked one, which is to say it is unequal. It is alluring and violent because it touches the paradoxical nature of psychic desire; the always already unequal encounter nonetheless summons the hope of reciprocity and equality; the failure of this hope then produces violence, aggressivity, dissent. The combination of psychic hope and political-historical inequality makes the contemporary encounter between self and other a meeting of profound romance and deep violence. While cultural theorists of the colonial subject and revisionary meta-anthropologists have thrown welcome light on the historical pattern of the violence of this encounter, we still have relatively little knowledge of the romance nestled within it. Unmarked concerns the relationship between the self and the other as it is represented in photographs, paintings, films, theatre, political protests, and performance art. While the notion of the potential reciprocal gaze has been considered part of the “unique” province of live performance, the desire to be seen is also activated by looking at inanimate art. Examining the politics of the exchange of gaze across these diverse representational mediums leads to an extended definition of the field of performance. The “politics” of the imagined and actual exchange of gaze are most clearly exposed in relation to sexual difference. At once an attempt to stabilize “difference” and an attempt to repress the “sexual” itself, cultural representation seeks both to conceal and reveal a real that will “prove” that sexual difference is a real difference.

She Continues…  
Phelan 93 [Peggy, Chair of NYU’s Dept of Performance Studies, Unmarked: The Politics of Performance, p.6-7]

The current contradiction between “identity politics” with its accent on visibility, and the psychoanalytic/deconstructionist mistrust of visibility as the source of unity or wholeness needs to be refigured, if not resolved.13 As the Left dedicates ever more energy to visibility politics, I am increasingly troubled by the forgetting of the problems of visibility so successfully articulated by feminist film theorists in the 1970s and 1980s. I am not suggesting that continued invisibility is the “proper” political agenda for the disenfranchised, but rather that the binary between the power of visibility and the impotency of invisibility is falsifying. There is real power in remaining unmarked; and there are serious limitations to visual representation as a political goal. Visibility is a trap (“In this matter of the visible, everything is a trap”: Lacan, Four Fundamental Concepts: 93); it summons surveillance and the law; it provokes voyeurism, fetishism, the colonialist/imperial appetite for possession. Yet it retains a certain political appeal. Visibility politics have practical consequences; a line can be drawn between a practice (getting someone seen or read) and a theory (if you are seen it is harder for “them” to ignore you, to construct a punitive canon); the two can be reproductive. While there is a deeply ethical appeal in the desire for a more inclusive representational landscape and certainly under-represented communities can be empowered by an enhanced visibility, the terms of this visibility often enervate the putative power of these identities. A much more nuanced relationship to the power of visibility needs to be pursued than the Left currently engages.14 Arguing that communities of the hitherto under-represented will be made stronger if representational economies reflect and see them, progressive cultural activists have staked a huge amount on increasing and expanding the visibility of racial, ethnic, and sexual “others.” It is assumed that disenfranchised communities who see their members within the representational field will feel greater pride in being part of such a community and those who are not in such a community will increase their understanding of the diversity and strength of such communities. Implicit within this argument are several presumptions which bear further scrutiny: 1 Identities are visibly marked so the resemblance between the African-American on the television and the African-American on the street helps the observer see they are members of the same community. Reading physical resemblance is a way of identifying community. 2 The relationship between representation and identity is linear and smoothly mimetic. What one sees is who one is. 3 If one’s mimetic likeness is not represented, one is not addressed. 4 Increased visibility equals increased power. Each presumption reflects the ideology of the visible, an ideology which erases the power of the unmarked, unspoken, and unseen.

# 1NR

## Strike-u-ary CP

### Solvency: Student Strikes

#### Student general strikes are an effective method of activism – the CP applies a proven political strategy to the debate community

Meyer 11-13-15 (Robinson. staff writer at The Atlantic. Why Don't American Students Go on Strike?

Undergrads and faculty boycott classes in Canada, Puerto Rico, and France. Why not in the U.S.? <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/11/why-dont-american-students-go-on-strike/415752/>)

Student protests are back in the news. The outcry against the treatment of students of color has spread from Yale and Missouri to Ithaca College and Claremont McKenna. On Facebook, students and young alumni around the country have asserted their solidarity with protestors. As Vox’s Libby Nelson puts it, it’s possible that a “long-overdue racial reckoning” on campuses has finally arrived—and that’s on top of the already-planned national protests against tuition hikes and rising debt.

So in the coming weeks and months, students nationwide may march, demonstrate, sit-in, and occupy quads and buildings. But they’re unlikely to rely on a tactic used elsewhere in the world: a general strike. Why is that?

Though there’s some dispute over the definition, a “student strike” is when the vast majority of a school boycotts class en masse on a certain day. Sometimes the faculty does not attend, either, effectively shutting down a university. Student strikes can happen on a national scale—hundreds of thousands of students skipping class—which, in turn, closes hundreds of campuses.

Student strikes are rarely the primary form of student activism, but they’re much more common in many places than they are in the United States. Some South African students, for instance, are currently striking to protest tuition hikes. Québécois students have been in and out of strike this year, though not to the levels seen in 2012, when about 250,000 young people participated in boycotts or demonstrations. And the past decade has seen large-scale strikes in Greece, Puerto Rico, and Chile.

Yet not in the States. “There has never been, in the last 40 years, a large scale, coordinated, national—or close to national—student strike,” says Angus Johnston, a historian of student activism and a professor at the City University of New York. He offered two broad reasons why that is the case.

First, Johnston says, many American students aren’t aware of striking as a protest maneuver. That would make it difficult for organizers to orchestrate the huge numbers of participants needed to make it work

“You need to have an awareness of it as a tactic, because it’s something you can’t just do with a small number of students,” he told me. “If it’s a small number of students, then you just fail your classes, because you’re marked as absent. It needs to be a tactic that can be adopted on a really, really wide scale the first time out.”

The few times it’s been attempted here, that happened. The most prominent postwar student strike in the United States came in the spring of 1970, after National Guardsmen shot and killed four undergraduates at Kent State. Students and faculty around the country—mourning those deaths as well as a similar shooting at Jackson State, and protesting the recent American invasion of Cambodia—struck. They shut down almost 450 campuses and demonstrated on nearly 400 more. A presidential commission from the period estimated that a third of all American campuses were involved somehow.

But even that incident revealed how little American colleges were prepared for strikers. “The reason why, honestly, the shootings happened at Kent State is that the university and the state refuses to shut down the campus when students went on strike,” Johnston says.

But in nations where students strike today, he told me, universities have different protocols: “In Canada, you have a situation where if you get to a certain level of student involvement, you can be confident that in most cases at least the university will be shut down—because that’s the protocol that’s followed.”

This is itself a function of local history and custom. Anglophone students in Canada, especially beyond Quebec, are much less likely to strike than their Francophone counterparts. Some European nations have strong traditions of strikes: Classes in Croatia were shut down as recently as 2009, and planned student boycotts famously helped set off the French civil unrest of May 1968. Yet in Britain, Johnston added by email, “marches and rallies and occupations are far more frequent.” And even in places like Quebec, “student strikes are often quite controversial even among activists.”

But law and history are not the only factors pushing students to avoid striking. Americans don’t strike today, Johnston also believes, in part because they can’t afford to miss class.

“Students in the United States today are living in conditions of economic precarity that didn’t exist in the 1960s,” he said. “As students have gotten poorer on average, tuition has gone up. And so they’re getting squeezed on both sides. They have a lot less ability to withstand the effects of … losing a semester, because if that happens, they’re gonna be screwed.”

In 2013, the Census Bureau found that more than half of students who live off-campus live in poverty, a cohort of young people so large that it elevates the national poverty rate by almost a percentage point. And a more recent study found that the vast majority of families who receive Pell Grants have no savings.

Johnston said that even in his own experience as an undergraduate, he’d seen the economic consequences of boycotting class threaten to splinter student solidarity.

“I remember at CUNY in the early 90s, there was a real tension,” he told me, between the liberal arts students and those in more pre-professional programs. “For instance, my mom was teaching nursing at the time. A lot of her students were like, ‘We gotta stay in class. You’re saying we’re going to shut the university down for the day, but I’ve got qualifying exams coming up and I can’t afford to lose this day.’ I think those pressures have only intensified in the 25 years since.”

Yet maybe American students have already found a way out of this conundrum. The protest tactic that rendered the Missouri protests so suddenly, stunningly effective was a de facto strike—first by many of the university’s black athletes, then by its entire football team. Some critics of student strikes point out that, unlike workers’s strikes, boycotting lectures doesn’t collectively strangle a revenue-generating corporation: They just keep tuition-paying kids out of class. But college athletics departments don’t call football (as well as men’s basketball) a “revenue sport” for nothing, and striking cuts to its core. For his part, Johnston said he couldn’t think of any players’s strike similar to the one Mizzou pulled off. Perhaps college athletic strikes will become a peculiarly American form of an international institution.

### Solvency: Praxis

#### Must discuss methodologies before we can discuss our politics – anything else cedes the political to the far right and locks in a new wave of fascism.

Beswick 21 (1/9/21, Spencer Beswick AKA Empty Hands is a PhD history student at Cornell University and the founder of the Empty Hands History project/commune, they focus on the histories and strategies of the left in the United States, might call them the CEO of antifa, “Democracy, Whiteness, and Fascism: Reflections on the Jan. 6 Capitol-Storming”, <https://emptyhandshistory.com/democracy-whiteness-and-fascism-reflections-on-the-jan-6-capitol-storming/>, accessed 1/21/21, fhs-cm)

Initial Thoughts on Tactics Vs. Politics

I have seen a lot of people say that the far right storming the capitol is a terrible assault on democracy and its institutions. Many of these comments conflate condemnation of the tactic with condemnation of the politics of the demonstrators. But I’m not sure that this is a good read of the situation.

Many (most?) of these people in DC actually truly believe that the election was stolen and that democracy is dead (though many of them are indeed straight up fascist opportunists). The protestors are totally wrong in the specifics of their conspiracy theories (but perhaps correct that US democracy is largely a sham)… But isn’t it true that storming a capitol building in defense of democracy against a real coup would actually be a good thing? At least arguably?

Let’s say that Trump was a more effective fascist and he managed to throw out the results of the election and install himself as the Great Eternal Leader, with support of the DC police and the national guard as well as most of the elite political institutions that might otherwise act against him. Might it not be a good idea to storm the capitol to try to remove him?

I guess what I’m really trying to say is that I think the left has been totally outmaneuvered here. Somehow many people on the left (we could say many socialists/socdems/progressives, rather than anarchists and communists) find themselves defending the sanctity of US democracy as Biden and Co. prepare for four more years of the status quo, while the far right has managed to position itself as the more radical opposition in the streets. This sets a dangerous precedent.

This is in many ways a reversal of the politics and street norms of how things played out last year with the George Floyd rebellion. How did this happen? What can be done to build a more effective left in the coming years?

Note: I probably overemphasized the fascists’ belief that they were indeed “saving democracy.” What follows are further thoughts on how to interrogate their relationship with democracy.

Saving White Democracy — or Abolishing It

I’ve been thinking about how to evaluate the far-right Capitol-stormers’ claim that they were “saving democracy” from being “stolen.” On the face of it, it’s ridiculous. The QAnon conspiracy theories are dumb and the many known fascists and neo-nazis photographed in the heart of the action are quite likely using “saving democracy” as a cover for what they really want: white power. But I think it’s not this simple, or rather, it is more accurate to say that in many ways “democracy” has always been a cover for white power and white supremacy in this country.

These reactionary white people have a very different understanding of what democracy means than we do. For many white people in the US, “democracy” has always meant “white capitalist democracy.” We know how this worked historically.

White (male) democracy has from the beginning rested on systematic exclusion of BIPOC, poor people, and women. Democracy and citizenship were originally conceived as the domain of only white male property owners. Only certain people were considered “fit” for self-government, and Black people in particular were understood to be constitutively unfit for self-government. Their exclusion was part of the foundation of republicanism (not meaning the GOP), democracy, and whiteness in the US. I’ve been reading David Roediger’s The Wages of Whiteness and Joel Olson’s The Abolition of White Democracy, which have helped me contextualize the historical interweaving of whiteness, citizenship, and democracy.

But democracy has always been a contested category, and it has changed over the years as BIPOC and women have fought for and won the right to vote. They have not simply expanded the electorate, but indeed expanded the very notion of democracy itself. In order to understand the current “stop the steal” mobilization, we have to see that for a certain sector of fascists and white supremacists, these changes have always been illegitimate. In their minds, Black people in particular are not and cannot be fit for self-government. They are not democratic citizens. They are necessarily the excluded Other, so their participation threatens white democracy itself.

This is why, Joel Olson argues, we must abolish white democracy. We need to abolish whiteness as a social category that produces hierarchy and racial oppression, and we need to abolish the system of white democracy that defends whiteness and capitalism.

But I do believe in democracy. My vision of it is similar to that old vision of “participatory democracy” that they talked about in the 1960s. Democracy is an active practice in which people make decisions about the things that affect them. It is about self-government, true equality, and true freedom. It is incompatible with the vision of white democracy that these fascists support. It is also incompatible with the settler empire called the United States.

Final Thoughts on Fascism’s Growing Threat

To be clear, I think that the storming of the Capitol is a Very Bad and Scary Thing and that fascism is a large and growing threat that must be taken very seriously. But I do think the danger is probably more in the medium to long term rather than in the short term. This gives us time to prepare so that we won’t continue to be outmaneuvered by them.

Short term: they are not well organized. They clearly had no idea what they were going to do in the event that they actually got into the capitol building. Trump is largely ineffective. Most Republican officials have repudiated them. The majority of the government and the majority of the population clearly found the whole thing awful and I don’t see a real possibility of any kind of actual coup before Biden takes office.

Medium term: the far right gets to claim a major win and this will embolden them. We will very likely see a major escalation in both street violence and lone wolf violence coming from fascists (and as a friend pointed out, likely further actions on inauguration day and future coordinated actions at state Capitols). I would not be surprised if this also functions as the beginning of the consolidation of a more significant mass fascist party/organization/movement. Which brings me to…

Long term: think of this as analogous to Hitler’s failed Beer Hall Putsch in 1923. A couple thousand Nazis led a doomed insurrection, some of them were killed, Hitler ended up in prison for treason. This is when he wrote Mein Kampf. Although the putsch was a total failure, it was a very important moment in the development of the Nazis, and we know what happened ten years later. Is this the most likely direction that history now heads in? Probably not. But this is the danger: that fascists successfully use this experience to help build a militant mass movement.

This is why we must continue to vigorously oppose fascists at every turn. Biden won’t save us. The Democrats won’t save us. The State won’t save us. Only sustained organization and action will.

#### Our thesis is that praxis juxtaposes discourse – language is not an intrinsic reality but a tool for influencing it – Words alone aren’t enough anymore, what we need to do is get organized.

The Invisible Committee 17 (The Invisible Committee is an anonymous French author; possibly authors, one could say a committee - also possibly terrorists - semiotext(e) intervention series 23 “NOW” – introduction, pages 7-11, fhs-cm)

One can watch a presidential election sink like a stone. The transformation of "the most important moment in French political life" into a big trashing fest only makes the soap opera more captivating. One couldn't imagine Koh-Lanta with such characters, such dizzying plot twists, such cruel tests, or so general a humiliation. The spectacle of politics lives on as the spectacle of its decomposition. Disbelief goes nicely with the filthy landscape. The National Front, that political negation of politics, that negation of politics on the terrain of politics, logically occupies the "center" of this chessboard of smoking ruins. The human passengers, spellbound, are watching their shipwreck like a first-rate show. They are so enthralled that they don't feel the water that's already bathing their legs. In the end, they'll transform everything into a buoy. The drowning are known for that, for trying to turn everything they touch into a life preserver.

This world no longer needs explaining, critiquing, denouncing. We live enveloped in a fog of commentaries and commentaries on commentaries, of critiques and critiques of critiques of critiques, of revelations that don't trigger anything, other than revelations about the revelations. And this fog is taking away any purchase we might have on the world. There's nothing to criticize in Donald Trump. As to the worst that can be said about him, he's already absorbed, incorporated it. He embodies it. He displays on a gold chain all the complaints that people have ever lodged against him. He is his own caricature, and he's proud of it. Even the creators of South Park are throwing in the towel: "It's very complicated now that satire has become reality. We really tried to laugh about what is going on but it wasn't possible to maintain the rhythm. What was happening was much funnier that what could be imagined. So we decided to let it go, to let them do their comedy, and we'll do ours." We live in a world that has established itself beyond any justification. Here, criticism doesn't work, any more than satire does. Neither one has any impact. To limit oneself to denouncing discriminations, oppressions, and injustices, and expect to harvest the fruits of that is to get one's epochs wrong. Leftists who think they can make something happen by lifting the lever of bad conscience are sadly mistaken. They can go and scratch their scabs in public and air their grievances hoping to arouse sympathy as much as they like; they'll only give rise to contempt and the desire to destroy them. "Victim" has become an insult in every part of the world.

There is a social use of language. No one still believes in it. Its exchange value has fallen to zero. Hence this inflationist bubble of idle talk. Everything social is mendacious, and everyone knows that now. It's no longer just the governing authorities, the publicists and public personalities who "do communication," it's every self-entrepreneur that this society wants to turn us into who practices the art of "public relations." Having become an instrument of communication, language is no longer its own reality but a tool for operating on the real, for obtaining effects in accordance with more or less conscious strategies. Words are no longer put into circulation except in order to distort things. Everything sails under false flags. This usurpation has become universal. One doesn't shrink from any paradox. The state of emergency is the rule of law. War is made in the name of peace. The bosses "offer jobs." The surveillance cameras are "video-protection devices." The executioners complain that they're being persecuted. The traitors profess their sincerity and their allegiance. The mediocre are everywhere cited as examples. There is actual practice on the one hand, and on the other, discourse, which is its relentless counterpoint, the perversion of every concept, the universal deception of oneself and of others. In all quarters it's only a question of preserving or extending one's interests. In return, the world is filling up with silent people. Certain ones of these explode into crazy acts of a sort that we've seen at briefer and briefer intervals. What is surprising about this? We should stop saying, "Young people don't believe in anything any more." And say instead: "Damn! They're not swallowing our lies any more." No longer say, "Young people are nihilistic," but "My lord, if this continues they're going to survive the collapse of our world."

Solv