## 1AC – Doubles NDT

### 1AC

#### After the end of two years, this is the last tournament ever for Michigan HM as a partnership. In our two years as partners, we have seen a whole hell of a lot of changes from what we knew before we started this journey---debating on camera over zoom, operating as a partnership while 700 miles apart for an entire season, spreading in masks, just to name a few. I mean, even within the intricacies of these debate rounds themselves we have experiences a lot of changes---reading a Philippines aff with overmatch impacts while going one off afropessimism on the neg, or reading affs about black transhumanism and the deterrence DA on the neg, or experimenting with every corner of critical race studies from Black Buddhism to Black Bataille to Black Cybernetics this year---shit, if anything it’s made filling out prefs sheets near-impossible.

#### But, within that history as a partnership, we’ve also had our fair share of roadblocks---last year, we talked about the racial effects of zoom debate on black voices, making it literally more difficult to understand black debaters compared to whites--this year, we tried to be a little less meta, but it didn’t help the racial effects of online debate---from being called racial slurs reminiscent of the Jim Crow era by other teams we thought were on our side to being mocked for our arguments because they were not Bataille, but Black Bataille. We never said anything, and still won’t, about those instances because that’s not why we do this. We’re here to learn, explore, and uncover new areas of the library, but everyone feels the need to keep reminding us that this is just a game, and telling us how we play the game means nothing.

#### Putting aside online debate, or even what people might say when they think they are muted on zoom, there is still one thing that we have seen every round this year and for every year since I started debate back in 2015---the misreading and misapplication of black scholarship as an argumentative grammar. Whether it’s reading afrofuturism to answer afropessimism, or the reading of radical black authors in the 2AC while defending US hegemony for 9 minutes in the 1AC. Debaters, particularly those looking to defend their state-centric scenario planning, have become adept at “repurposing” and taking out of context the field of black scholarship.

#### There is no better example of this in debate than Lewis Gordon, a phenomenological black existentialist who has become famous in our activity for saying there is a difference between “An Antiblack World” and “The Antiblack World”---though this claim is mediated in his work by broader claims about what blackness means or how the world actually negatively impacts black people, all people in this activity care about is that he 1) talks about Frank Wilderson and 2) vaguely disagrees with the endpoint of Afropess---for them, that’s enough to call it consistent with their rational for state-centered politics and move on to cutting FTC updates---

#### Yet, that method for maximizing consistency, where all things must have rational responses regardless of their effects, reproduces disciplinary decadence, where all arguments and evidence must be homogenized under the state-centric methodology at the expense of ethics---after all, we MUST have some stasis point, right?

Gordon, 14 – Lewis R. Gordon, Professor of Philisophy, African and Judaic studies, University of Connecticut; 2014(“Disciplinary Decadence and the Decolonisation of Knowledge,” Africa Development Vol. 39, No. 1, 2014, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24484677>, bam)

The subsequent unfolding story is familiar to most of us who study colonisation. Along with the expansion of Christian kingdoms into nation- states and their colonies, which resulted over the course of a few hundred years into European civilisation on a global scale, was also a series of epistemological developments that have literally produced new forms of life: new kinds of people came into being, while others disappeared, and whole groups of them occupy the age in an ambivalent and melancholic relationship by which they are indigenous to a world that, paradoxically, they do not belong to.8 These people have been aptly described by W.E.B. Du Bois as ‘problems’.9 They are a function of a world in which they are posited as illegitimate although they could exist nowhere else. I am speaking here primarily of blacks and Indians/Native Americans, and by blacks I also mean to include Australian Aboriginals and related groups in the South Pacific and Indian Ocean. Such people are treated by dominant organisations of knowledge, especially those falling under the human or social sciences, as problems instead of people who face problems. Their problem status is a function of the presupposed legitimacy of the systems that generate them. In effect, being perfect, the systems that produce their condition resist blame for any injustice or contradiction that may be avowed by such people. They become extraneous to those systems’ functions in spite of having already been generated by them. The contradictory nature of such assessments distorts the process of reasoning and the production of knowledge into doubled structures of disavowals and concealment, at times even with claims of transparency, and more problem people result. A consequence of such reflection is the proliferation of more kinds of problem people. Since 2001, when the US War on Terror was inaugurated, the production of such people has increased.

At this point, I should like to make some distinctions that may anchor some of the abstract terms of this discussion. That modes of producing knowledge can be enlisted in the service of colonisation is evident. Frantz Fanon, for instance, reflected, in Peau noire, masques blancs, that methods have a way of devouring themselves.10 In doing so, he brought into focus the problem of evaluating method itself, of assessing methodology. If the epistemic conditions of social life were colonised, would not that infection reach also the grammatical level, the very grounds of knowledge? Put differently, couldn’t there also be colonisation at the methodological level? If so, then, any presumed method, especially from a subject living within a colonised framework, could generate continued colonisation. To evaluate method, the best ‘method’ is the suspension of method. This paradox leads to a demand for radical anti-colonial critique. But for such a reflection to be radical, it must also make even logic itself suspect. Such a demand leads to a distinction between rationality and reason. The former cannot suspend logic, for to be what it is, it must, at minimum, demand consistency. The demand for consistency eventually collapses into maximum consistency, in order to be consistent. In effect, this means that rationality must presume its method, and it must resist straying from its generating grammar. Reason, however, offers a different story. To be maximally consistent, although logically commendable, is not always reasonable. Reasonability can embrace contradictions. Even more, it must be able to do so in order to evaluate even itself. This means that the scope of reason exceeds rationality.

Science is more at home with rationality than it is with reason. Departure from consistency-maximisation would disintegrate an important foundation of modern science, namely, the notion of a law of nature. A law in this sense cannot have exceptions. Since reason at times demands exceptions, a marriage between science and reason would be shortlived. The project of much of modern European philosophical thought, however, has been the effort to cultivate such a marriage. Toward such a goal, the instruments of rationality are often unleashed with the result of the effort to yoke reason to rationality. This effort could be reformulated as the effort to colonise reason.

The effort to colonise reason has had many productive consequences. Many disciplines have been generated by this effort. On one hand, there are the natural and exact theoretical sciences. On the other, there are the human sciences. The former set seems to behave in a more disciplined way than the latter. Although disciplining the latter has resulted in a variety of disciplines, the underlying goal of maximum rationalisation has been consistently strained. The source of such difficulty – reality – has been unremitting. Karl Jaspers, in Philosophy of Existence, summarised the circumstance well: reality is not always obedient to consciousness.11 Any discipline or generated system for the organisation of reality faces the problem of having to exceed the scope of its object of inquiry, but since it, too, must be part of that object (if it is to be something as grand as reality), it must contain itself in a logical relationship to all it is trying to contain, which expands the initial problem of inclusion. There is, in other words, always more to, and of, reality.

Failure to appreciate reality sometimes takes the form of recoiling from it. An inward path of disciplinary solitude eventually leads to what I call disciplinary decadence.12 This is the phenomenon of turning away from living thought, which engages reality and recognises its own limitations, to a deontologised or absolute conception of disciplinary life. The discipline becomes, in solipsistic fashion, the world. And in that world, the main concern is the proper administering of its rules, regulations, or, as Fanon argued, (self-devouring) methods.13 Becoming ‘right’ is simply a matter of applying, as fetish, the method correctly. This is a form of decadence because of the set of considerations that fall to the wayside as the discipline turns into itself and eventually implodes. Decay, although a natural process over the course of time for living things, takes on a paradoxical quality in disciplinary formation. A discipline, e.g., could be in decay through a failure to realise that decay is possible. Like empires, the presumption is that the discipline must outlive all, including its own purpose.

In more concrete terms, disciplinary decadence takes the form of one discipline assessing all other disciplines from its supposedly complete standpoint. It is the literary scholar who criticises work in other disciplines as not literary. It is the sociologist who rejects other disciplines as not sociological. It is the historian who asserts history as the foundation of everything. It is the natural scientist that criticises the others for not being scientific. And it is also the philosopher who rejects all for not being properly philosophical. Discipline envy is also a form of disciplinary decadence. It is striking, for instance, how many disciplines in the humanities and the social sciences are now engaged in intellectual history with a focus on the Western philosophical canon. And then there is decadence at methodological levels. Textualism, for example, infects historiography at the level of archival legitimacy. Or worse, in some forms of textualism, the expectation of everything being contained in the text becomes evident in work in the human sciences that announce studying its subject through an analysis exclusively of texts on the subject. There are scholars in race theory, e.g., who seem to think that theorising the subject is a matter of determining what has been said on it by a small set of canonical texts. When appearance is reduced to textuality, what, then, happens to inquiry? What are positivism and certain forms of semiological imitation of mathematical phenomena but science envy? When biologism, sociologism, psychologism, and many others assert themselves, to what, ultimately, are they referring? In the human sciences, the problem becomes particularly acute in the study of problem people. Such people misbehave also in disciplinary terms. The failure to squeeze them into disciplinary dictates, from a disciplinarily decadent perspective, is proof of a problem with the people instead of the discipline. It serves as further proof of the pathological nature of such people.

A response to disciplinary decadence (although not often identified as such) has been interdisciplinarity. A problem with this response is that it, too, is a decadent structure. This is because presumed disciplinary completeness of each discipline is compatible with disciplinary decadence. Disciplines could simply work alongside each other like ships passing in the night. A more hopeful route is transdisciplinarity, where disciplines work through each other; yet although more promising, such a route is still susceptible to decadence so long as it fails to bring reality into focus. But doing that raises questions of purpose. It raises considerations that may need to be addressed in spite of disciplinary dictates. I call this process a teleological suspension of disciplinarity. By that, I mean the willingness to go beyond disciplines in the production of knowledge. This ‘beyond’ is, however, paradoxical. In some instances, it revitalizes an existing discipline. In others, it generates a new one. For example, a teleological suspension of philosophy generates new philosophy in some instances, and in others, it may generate new social thought that may not be philosophical. A teleological suspension of topology, chemistry, and biology could offer much to genetics and other sequencing notions of life. Germane to this special forum, it could also transform ways in which one theorises the relationship of dependency to development.

Teleological suspensions of disciplines are also epistemic decolonial acts. The discussion I have offered thus far places such acts squarely in, although not exclusive to, Africana philosophy. By Africana philosophy, I mean the exploration of modern life as understood through contradictions raised by the lived-reality of African Diasporic people. Because such people are often linked to many other communities whose humanity has been challenged, Africana philosophy is also a philosophy that speaks beyond the Africana community. Among the pressing themes of Africana philosophy are: (1) philosophical anthropology, (2) freedom and liberation, and (3) metacritiques of reason. Their presence in this discussion is evident, but to summarise: The first is raised by the dehumanisation of people (making them into problems) in the modern world; the second pertains to the transformation of (emancipation from) that circumstance; and the third examines whether the first two, especially at the level of the reasons offered in their support, are justified. I cannot provide a detailed discussion of these thematics here because of limited space. Instead, I should like to close with several additional considerations.

The first is regarding the political significance of this critique. For politics to exist, there must be discursive opposition over relations of power. Such activity involves communicative possibilities that rely on the suspension of violent or repressive forces. In effect, that makes politics also a condition of appearance. To be political is to emerge, to appear, to exist. Colonisation involves the elimination of discursive opposition between the dominant group and the subordinated group. A consequence of this is the attempted elimination of speech (a fundamental activity of political life) with a trail of concomitant conditions of its possibility. It is not that colonised groups fail to speak. It is that their speaking lacks appearance or mediation; it is not transformed into speech. The erasure of speech calls for the elimination of such conditions of its appearance such as gestural sites and the constellation of muscles that facilitates speech – namely, the face. As faceless, problem people are derailed from the dialectics of recognition, of self and other, with the consequence of neither self nor other. Since ethical life requires others, a challenge is here raised against models of decolonial practice that centre ethics. The additional challenge, then, is to cultivate the options necessary for both political and ethical life. To present that call as an ethical one would lead to a similar problem of coloniality as did, say, the problem of method raised by Fanon. European modernity has, in other words, subverted ethics. As with the critique of epistemology as first philosophy, ethics, too, as first philosophy must be called into question. It is not that ethics must be rejected. It simply faces its teleological suspension, especially where, if maintained, it presupposes instead of challenging colonial relations. Even conceptions of the ethical that demand deference to the Other run into trouble here since some groups, such as blacks and Indians/Native Americans, are often not even the Other. This means, then, that the ethical proviso faces irrelevance without the political conditions of its possibility. This is a major challenge to liberal hegemony, which calls for ethical foundations of political life, in European modernity. It turns it upside down. But in doing so, it also means that ethics-centred approaches, even in the name of liberation, face a similar fate.

#### Those forms of stasis and “debate” devoid of ethics seek to define that was never definable, contingent, nor possible into a consistent, unwavering presupposition, regulating life via competition and recreating the very antiblackness they try to tear apart with black scholarship

Kelsie, 19 – Amber E. Kelsie, Associate Debate Coach at Wake Forest University and Assistant Professor of the Practice at Wake Forest University; 2019(“Blackened Debate at the End of the World,” Philosophy & Rhetoric Vol. 52, No. 1, 2019, Available to Subscribing Institutions via ProjectMUSE Online at muse.jhu.edu/article/721920, bam)

We are haunted by the specter of civil war. Liberal and conservative politicians and commentators openly express anxiety about the possibility of outright hostilities and the "unravelling [of] our national fabric" (Gambino 2017). Increasing polarization, identity politics that destroys persuasion, an atmosphere of conspiracy regarding the deep state or foreign puppet masters, apparent disenchantment with institutions, general mistrust in electoral politics, a gridlocked and weak congress, and open skirmishes between white nationalist and antifascists are put forth as signs of the end times (see, e.g., Blight 2017; Wright 2017; DeGroot 2018; Smith 2018). The looming crisis of the end of politics that everywhere drives the nostalgic desire for a return to a normalcy and civility invites us to rethink debate and to pose a different question that does not seek to redeem a past that never was and continues to come at too high a cost for the wretched of the earth. Rather than "make debate great again," I'd like to sit with the vertigo so as to consider debate's (im)possible outside. Such a quest for a horizon that is before-after-immanent to the End (of politics or history or the world) will require that we rethink the spatiotemporal coordinates of the entire liberal project that secures the parameters of debate as the dialectical and agonistic contestation of the possible. My central interlocutor here will be blackness: that (non-)ontological constitutive outside of the modern grammar that is relegated to the realm of absolute necessity, negativity, incapacity, and pathology that subtends the political and the rhetorical. As that which is always already outside the World/History, blackness provides an anoriginary nonplace from which to think crisis and a politics of actualizing the impossible.

Imminent civil war is an interesting but unsurprising anxiety; it is unsurprising because the U.S. Civil War informs so much of the popular narrative of the United States and its ethical position that confirms the progressive nature of time, and because liberal sovereignty was always a war waged against civil war.1 And it is interesting because the Greeks referred to civil war as "stasis." Today standing, state, and stability are also meanings of stasis, as it emerges from histemi. Stasis then doubles both as sovereignty and as sovereignty's undoing and evokes a constant permanence of war even in peace. Stasis in rhetorical studies takes on the meaning of "issue" and serves as a hermeneutic for coming to consensus on the point of contention from which debate proceeds. Stasis here also means standing in the sense that there is some "ground" in the form of prior consensus on the nature of the disagreement.2 The somewhat paradoxical relationship between consensus and dissensus found in stasis speaks to a kind of disavowal of ungroundedness that precedes even the point from which to begin speaking. Must one have a presupposed potentiality for a common ground to be able to proceed in argument? Refusing this disavowal of groundlessness as it emerges in contemporary figurations of agonistic debate might enable us to more accurately think of rhetoric in its modern inflection as the presupposition of a ground as a war against its own void via antiblackness. The inversion of Clausewitz's proposition is salient: rhetoric is the continuation of war by other means; rhetoric as a mode of war in an effort to ontologize itself against its groundless outside.3

The (im)possible is always at stake in debate since rhetoric regards the contingent as its necessary presupposition. According to Dilip Gaonkar, [End Page 64] this "key, but largely unnoticed, assumption in contemporary rhetorical theory" finds its basis in Aristotle's response to Plato's charge of the unspecifiability of rhetoric (2004, 5). Instead of freeing us to reflect explicitly on the nature of contingency, Aristotle's domestication of rhetoric by placing rhetoric within the domain of the "contingent, yet probable" has prompted most rhetorical scholars to forgo consideration of contingency in favor of the thematic of probability: doxa, constraints, norms, ideology. Contingency in these schemas tends to be considered as a property ascribed to statements, propositions, and rhetorical acts—to the ontic world that constitutes the context of the rhetor—rather than as a mode of the subject or the singular encounter that constitutes a rhetorical situation. The possibility of rhetorical dialectic, that exigency that provides the opportunity for agonistic argument that can be sublated into judgment, animates historical progress and places debate as the ground for civic life. In the liberal understanding of contemporary debate, contingency takes on an interior spatial dimension as the possible content through a disavowal of the contingency of debate's outside that is rendered impossible.

#### While I have talked this far in generalizations, this effect is not isolated nor is it a caricature of “policy” vs. “kritikal” debaters: Dartmouth themselves have engaged in these misrepresentations as well, starting with Gordon’s claims we have isolated above---the screenshot is inserted below, but these forms of misrepresentation deny the work of black scholars to actually advance claims in the field of critical race studies, instead homogenizing their understanding of anti-blackness into the yes/no question of “progress possible” or “progress impossible”

Graphical user interface, text, application

Description automatically generated

[Available for download at https://opencaselist.paperlessdebate.com/download/Dartmouth/Shankar-Vergho%20Aff/Dartmouth-Shankar-Vergho-Aff-1%20-%20Northwestern-Doubles.docx?rev=1.1]

#### But, it does reflect the long-standing deterioration of the activity as a “research” activity, with debates becoming overly shallow, incoherent, and reliant on the same outdated questions that have plagued the activity for decades

Hester, 13 – Mike Hester, Debate Coach at West Georgia University; 2013(“Letter from a Maryland Comfort Inn,” CEDA Forums, 11-13-2013, Available Online at <http://156.26.181.164/forum/index.php/topic,5407.0.html?PHPSESSID=643893f4cb48f8eb96e1d3e5e1a42426>, bam) \*given how often the server seems to change for the CEDA forums, this post is also available at <http://globaldebateblog.blogspot.com/2013/11/mike-hester-usa-policy-debate-in-hot.html>

To whom it may concern,   
CEDA-NDT Debate is a hot mess right now. There are so many things wrong, it can sometimes seem like they're all related. Maybe they are (reference Homer Simpson's "one big ball of lies" explanation to Marge), but a delineation may still provide some guidance as to what we can change, what we may have to accept, and where (if anywhere) we may go from here...  
the foundation  
We no longer have one, and haven't for more than two decades. Fewer and fewer debate coaches are communication scholars, which is fine because Communication Departments don't consider us anything more than the bastard cousins who show up at the family reunion piss-drunk and demanding more potato salad. Our activity long ago (40 years?) lost any resemblance to a public speaking event attracting outside audiences. The problem is we vacated that academic space without being able to find a home anywhere else. Despite the pious assumptions of some with "policy" in mind, we are not a legitimate "research" community of scholars. The "portable skills" we currently engrain in our students via practice are: all sources are equivalent, no need for qualifications; "quoting" a source simply means underlining ANY words found ANYWHERE in the document, context and intent are irrelevant; and we are the only group outside of Faux News that believes one's argument is improved by taking every point of logic to its most absurd extreme. Simply put, 99.9% of the speech docs produced in debates would receive no better than a C (more likely F) in any upper division undergraduate research-based class. Comically, we are the public speaking research activity that is atrocious at oral persuasion and woefully in violation of any standard research practices. But this letter is not intended to bury Debate, even though it's hard to praise it in its current state. Before any peace treaty ending the Paradigm Wars can be signed and ratified, an honest appraisal of where Debate fits in the Academy is necessary.

battle lines drawn in sinking sands

This letter will not include a call for unity. It's not clear that such a "coming together" is either possible or even beneficial. But it is necessary to take a moment to publicly correct those who believe there defecation products are odorless.

First, we all should feel ashamed for running Gary Larson off. Yes, all of us. If you think you're not responsible, and it's those other people who are to blame, you are wrong. Honestly, we don't deserve a person of Gary's talents and integrity right now. If we manage to improve our activity to the point where one day, we do deserve such a person, hopefully that person will be around to be the kind of positive force Gary has been. Every single one of us owes him a debt of gratitude.

Second, contrary to what your friends may have told you in your secret meeting or special Facebook page, there is no faction which has avoided doing and saying stupid things in this craptastrophe. Devolving our disagreements into a "but they did it first" shows just how low we have sunk in terms of bad arguments. Hateful and ignorant statements have been made by nearly everyone who has felt the need to express themselves, especially in the heat of competition (which includes not just the rounds themselves, but more likely the times before and after rounds). This is not to say that feelings should always be spared. When issues of discrimination and structural inequality are in play, discomfort isn't just inevitable, it is frequently required in order to make the needed changes. Sadly, because we are imperfect, we have used our rightful indignation to rationalize behavior that is counterproductive if we are interested in resolving conflicts and hypocritical if we are claiming to advocate for social justice.

Ultimately, everyone has to ask themselves this: are you interested in being a part of a functioning community of scholarship with people who are different than you (however defined)? If the answer is 'no', then it makes no sense to stick around throwing stink bombs - you don't have to go home, but you oughta leave the place you call hell. If the answer is 'yes', then it makes no sense to stick around throwing stink bombs - advocate solutions that can attract enough support to become actionable reforms.

a growing To-Do List

We have a lot that needs fixing. Here's an incomplete list, in no particular order:

- our debates are incoherent. There were at least four instances of card-clipping at Wake. And an honest assessment of our practices would likely reveal more. If we could actually understand what debaters were saying. Reading regularly unqualified sources at incomprehensible speeds is hardly the foundation upon which to build any academic co-curricular activity, let alone one that couches its own credentials in public policy deliberation. If we want to be taken seriously as contributing to public discourse over public policy, we have to come to grips with how bad we have become at oral presentation of argument and scholarly presentation of quality research.

- our debates are too shallow and stale given the time commitment we make. Debating Heg every round every topic doesn't further our understanding of the resolution any more, nor is it any less intellectually lazy, than turning fights about the latest Facebook conspiracy theories into a 1AC. Debaters have wrongly conflated winning ballots with confirmation that their arguments make any sense. MPJ has allowed us to "preach to the choir" so often, we have wrongly concluded that we're cute when we're preachy.

- our community has a current imbalance between the diversity of its student body and the makeup of its coaching/judging pool. Current efforts to increase minority representation in judge placement are seriously limited by the lack of numbers in underrepresented demographic categories. Until we have more people of color in the grad assistant and director ranks, these efforts will have very low ceilings of accomplishment. But in order to increase those numbers, those who have refused to acknowledge the connection between HOW we debate WHAT we debate and WHO wants to debate (and judge/coach) will have to put down their "but some of my best friends who like plan-focus debates are black" rationalization and be prepared to compromise more than they've been willing to so far.

- we lack the trust required for voluntary goodwill and a foundation of "best practices" required to have a "code of conduct" that makes any sense. When an allegation of card-clipping can be refuted by saying "that wasn't clipping, it was just incomprehensible spreading" it's time to acknowledge our standards have sunk too low. When incompetence is the alibi to deny cheating, you have forfeited any moral high ground upon which to tell others they are playing the game wrong. Likewise, if you believe students and coaches of a particular program have committed "racist" or "sexist" acts, then contact the appropriate authorities and file a lawsuit. Otherwise, stop alleging things that should trigger such responses. If our debaters don't know the rhetorical difference between claiming "our opponent has made a sexist argument that warrants a voting issue" and "our opponents are irredeemably sexist", then we have failed as communication scholars to educate them and need to do a better job. This is not a denial of some messed up shit having occurred in our interactions, but the folks who are employed at universities need to wake up and smell the liability - we should either be bringing people before the appropriate authorities or toning down our venom. Otherwise, the notion that allegations are being thrown around just to win debates begins to gain credence, and any real chance to improve the activity is reduced as real problems are trivialized as competitive tactics.

And it's this last point that precludes any demand to "come together." Debate is extra-curricular and we all work for and/or attend different institutions. We have no obligation to "get along." If some of us truly believe others of us are evil or incapable of being peers, then we should cleave, go our own ways and find a group of people /institutions with which we can commune in mutual respect. Because the nerves are so raw right now, it may seem that mutual respect is impossible. It will certainly require a willingness on all sides to stop acting like victims of wrongdoing (even where such feelings are warranted). Because that seems impossible at this time, it is not the focus of this letter.

Rather, what has been laid out is an outline of some of the main questions we must confront. What defines our activity as a worthwhile endeavor deserving of university support? What parameters of how we best practice "debate" help reinforce those definitional criteria? What responsibilities do each of us have as members of our activity to maintain and nurture the activity itself? What obligations do we have to the other members of this activity, and to those who - if given the chance - would like to be a member?

The paradigmatic disruptions occurring have given us a crisi-trinity to address these questions with deep self-reflection and comprehensive conversation. It would behoove all of us to remember that none of us - either individually or as a group - is so important as to be "too big to fail." Debate does not need us, not any of us. What we have to determine is whether we need debate, and if so, how do we keep it going in the ways that fulfill those needs.

#### While some things in this influential CEDA post have been addressed and resolved, most of that has been done at the administrative realm---but, the fact that conversations about our research practices in a “research” activity are still relevant 8 years later shows we have a long way to go---fuck, CSU Fullerton has been winning debates for over a year on the fact that people are blatantly misrepresenting evidence. Yet, when it comes to the actual applicability of evidence itself, its still enough to claim “spin” and get away with egregiously out of context evidence, something that even Hester didn’t address.

#### Thus, Michigan HM challenges college policy debate’s evidence practices regarding black scholarship. While the first step is addressing the types of research we actually do in debate, that is only a starting point for changing the academic practice of how debate operates within the academy---

Reid-Brinkley, 12 – Dr. Shanara Reid-Brinkley, Co-Director of CSU Fullerton Forensics and College of Communications professor, Ph.D; interviewed by Scott Odekirk; 2012(“The Dr. Shanara Reid-Brinkley Interview,” PuttingTheKInDebate, 04-08-2012, Available Online from <https://puttingthekindebate.wordpress.com/2012/04/02/the-dr-shanara-reid-brinkley/>, bam)

Odekirk: What do you think, if you had an idea, if you had one wish of what you could do with scholarship in debate rounds that could come to terms with these kind of like structural, the creation of scapegoats, the ostracization of structures, the symbolization of power, the reinforcement of power through different structural things. What can we do with our scholarship, or is there anything, maybe there’s not. What can we do in terms of our debating, to come to terms with this [ed]?

Dr. Reid-Brinkley: Well, step one is do some [ed] research. If your answers to Wilderson’s afro-pessimism argument is a Wilderson indict from somebodies book review, and that’s all you got to say to Wilderson you’re an [ed] idiot. You’re an idiot. You are an idiot. And so I’m astounded looking at debate coaches who I know who do nothing but cut cards who are refusing to do research! What the!? Where are we? I thought we were good at debate. I thought we are in debate. I thought we did research, I thought that’s what sort of defined our community. So you’re telling me you can’t go find the afro-optimists who answer the afro-pessimists? It astounds me. I don’t get it. So I think step one is; shut up about complaining about framework and do some [ed] research. There is black literature being produced every moment of every day. There is a whole area of the library, sections of the stacks, with relevant information that might be useful for you. Go read some African American history, go find the little out about Africa and Chattel Slavery and the slave trade. It is so simple to me that I don’t understand why the debate community is refusing to do research.

Odekirk: Yeah, fair.

Dr. Reid-Brinkley: So how about we just start there? Step 1: do some research.

Odekirk: Yeah.

Dr. Reid-Binkley: Now here is the fear. If that was the only answer, the debate community would do research, but it would be just to cut cards and nothing really would change. So it can’t stop at research, but that is literally step one: go do some reading. That would really help you have a language and a vocabulary for talking when you are engaging these teams that will produce very good debates. So when people say that they don’t think that what performance/movement teams are doing is intellectual, it’s because they have already decided that they are anti-intellectual. Whereas they are very much so intellectuals, as a matter of fact they are few of the debaters in our community producing scholarship rather than regurgitating it. Our very frame of reference on how to engage in debate is about the regurgitation of information, rather than the production of it. That is where I think we have gone wrong, which is also why we are not having good – we are not able to advertise to our administrations in a way that makes debate something that administrations really really want to support and fully fund. And the reason is because we made it such this isolated solipsistic game that people who are really interested in knowledge production don’t necessarily see their relationship to it. We are losing tenure stream jobs for debate directors in our community. The reason is because our community is becoming more and more disconnected from the academy. What we can do in terms of how we produce scholarship for debate, in debate rounds, is that we need to change our focus from the regurgitation of information that is already produced in the academy to an engagement with it so that we are producing new knowledge. So rather than saying the only way you can have a plan for what to do different with democracy assistance is to find what the USFG has already defined it as, and get authors who, you have to find a solvency advocate for whatever change you are going to make. So somebody has already produced that idea and gotten it into print. Stupid! Stupid. We are so smart, this community of people, I have never been around smarter people than the people in the debate community. That’s why I find it exciting. Because I’m really smart, so I enjoy talking to other smart people. And, we are just not making use of the intelligence, the intellectual power that is at a debate tournament, especially when you get to the top of the game, it is amazingly powerful. I have met graduate students and professors that are nowhere near as smart as some of our undergraduates their senior year at the height of their ability to compete. Just have not.

Odekirk: Amen.

Dr. Reid-Brinkley: Given that this is the case, why are we not producing knew knowledge? Rather than coming at a plan as I have to have a solvency advocate who has already defined this, and I have to define this in the context of exactly how the USFG has previously defined it. I think we should be producing new arguments about what democracy assistance should look like and be like through the USFG. So rather than having a solvency advocate you would have evidentiary support to change parts of your argument. Just like writing an academic paper. If all academic papers were was regurgitation of someone else’s argument, it would never get published. The whole point of academic scholarship is for you to identify what’s being said in the field or around a particular issue and what’s missing from that, and then you do something to demonstrate why that thing that’s missing in that scholarship should be there, and you make an argument about how we need to expand our understanding of this situation. Does that make sense to you? So it doesn’t make sense that the ways we in which we engage in policy making is to simply chain it out to what something else someone has already thought of. When we have all this intellectual power, we should be producing new policy. That would be the change. That would change our very way of thinking about what the game is that we are playing, and what its potential connection is to both the academy but also politics. And that would create the space for teams who want to talk about anti-blackness or teams that want to talk about the defining nature of gender and how we engage in policy. It would allow all these different things because our very frame of reference for understanding what the game is that we are engaging in would change, it would open up fields of literature, it would make sense that people are saying we need a three tier methodology where we look at organic intellectuals we look at other scholars and we look at our personal experience, guess what, that’s how you write a [ed] academic paper now.

#### The role of the ballot in this debate is to vote for the team that provides the best response to grievances about evidence misrepresentation of black scholars in debate. The role of the negative is to rejoin the 1AC as a call for submissions to address the problem of misrepresentation of black scholarship in debate

Regnier, 12 – Jason Regnier, Debate Coach at Gonzaga University; 2012(“Re: Information wants to be free, or how I learned to stop worrying and love edebate,” CEDA Forums, 11-14-2012, Available Online from <http://156.26.181.164/forum/index.php/topic,4149.15.html?PHPSESSID=643893f4cb48f8eb96e1d3e5e1a42426>, bam) \*given how often the server seems to change for the CEDA forums, this link might be broken if you are looking for this in future years. The pathname for this thread is College Policy Debate Forum » DISCUSSION » Open Topic -- Any issue » Information wants to be free, or how I learned to stop worrying and love edebate (on the 7th page when I accessed this in Spring 2022)

Here's what seems pretty clear to me:

1. Grievances about diversity in debate have been voiced for at least a decade (technically longer, but the Louisville project marked an important turning point for contemporary debate).

2. These grievances have won a lot of debate rounds.

3. They have had an important but limited effect on accessibility in high school debate.

4. However, the response from the mainstream of college debate has been more reactive than proactive. The "I agree, but..." rhetorical strategy has largely been demonstrated to be facile because it is used to end/forestall discussion rather than push it forward (just like most other perms).

Given this, the burden of proof should no longer be put on those airing the grievances, but on those who say "I agree, but..." It seems to me that there is general agreement in the abstract that there is a problem, but nevertheless the burden is still constantly being put on minority members of the community to prove that their solutions work. Why is this legitimate? It's time for the "but" crowd to bear the burden of proving that what they're doing is aimed at rectifying the situation. At this point, "guilty until proven innocent" seems like a fair presumption (similar to how the Voting Rights Act dictates that states with a history of discrimination have to actively \*prove\* that their districting practices are not racist, not the other way around).

I genuinely believe Sarah is trying to move in the right direction. It's unfortunate that her reaction was prompted by a reactive disapproval of somebody else's counter-hegemonic strategy rather than a proactive effort that was self-motivated. However, I do think that this is a conversation that she wants to have (indeed, knowing her personality, the fact that she hasn't blown a gasket yet is, I think, proof of her sincerity). There are some others who have proposed concrete possibilities for what can be done (i.e. Joel's modified MPJ), but this has been very limited. They usually only pop up at moments when the issue is forced by an "outburst" from the aggrieved group. I think we have to ask what, beyond recruiting a few black debaters or helping out an urban debate team, we have done or plan to do to confront the problem that we all (mostly) recognize as existing. Failure to do so belies the claim that we really care all that much.

This post is written with the full knowledge that much of this applies to me as well. The "view from nowhere" that the Yancy evidence describes is an experience with which I can intimately identify. I am prone to abstractly and distantly thinking about ideas a lot, but the stakes are low for me. And I have not adequately raised the stakes. It seems to me that those of us occupying privileged positions have the obligation to raise the stakes on ourselves.