## FW

#### Your decision should answer the resolutional question: Is the enactment of topical action better than the status quo or a competitive option?

#### 1. “Resolved” before a colon reflects a legislative forum

Army Officer School ’04 (5-12, “# 12, Punctuation – The Colon and Semicolon”, <http://usawocc.army.mil/IMI/wg12.htm>)

The colon introduces the following: a.  A list, but only after "as follows," "the following," or a noun for which the list is an appositive: Each scout will carry the following: (colon) meals for three days, a survival knife, and his sleeping bag. The company had four new officers: (colon) Bill Smith, Frank Tucker, Peter Fillmore, and Oliver Lewis. b.  A long quotation (one or more paragraphs): In The Killer Angels Michael Shaara wrote: (colon) You may find it a different story from the one you learned in school. There have been many versions of that battle [Gettysburg] and that war [the Civil War]. (The quote continues for two more paragraphs.) c.  A formal quotation or question: The President declared: (colon) "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." The question is: (colon) what can we do about it? d.  A second independent clause which explains the first: Potter's motive is clear: (colon) he wants the assignment. e.  After the introduction of a business letter: Dear Sirs: (colon) Dear Madam: (colon) f.  The details following an announcement For sale: (colon) large lakeside cabin with dock g.  A *formal* resolution, after the word "resolved:"

Resolved: (colon) That this council petition the mayor.

#### 2. “USFG should” means the debate is solely about a policy established by governmental means

Ericson ’03 (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.

#### They claim to win the debate for reasons other than the desirability of topical action. That undermines preparation and clash. Changing the question now leaves one side unprepared, resulting in shallow, uneducational debate. Requiring debate on a communal topic forces argument development and develops persuasive skills critical to any political outcome.

#### Debate over a controversial point of action creates argumentative stasis—that’s key to avoid a devolution of debate into competing truth claims, which destroys the decision-making benefits of the activity

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Debate is a means of settling differences, so there must be a controversy, a difference of opinion or a conflict of interest before there can be a debate. If everyone is in agreement on a feet or value or policy, there is no need or opportunity for debate; the matter can be settled by unanimous consent. Thus, for example, it would be pointless to attempt to debate "Resolved: That two plus two equals four,” because there is simply no controversy about this state­ment. Controversy is an essential prerequisite of debate. Where there is no clash of ideas, proposals, interests, or expressed positions of issues, there is no debate. Controversy invites decisive choice between competing positions. Debate cannot produce effective decisions without clear identification of a question or questions to be answered. For example, general argument may occur about the broad topic of illegal immigration. How many illegal immigrants live in the United States? What is the impact of illegal immigration and immigrants on our economy? What is their impact on our communities? Do they commit crimes? Do they take jobs from American workers? Do they pay taxes? Do they require social services? Is it a problem that some do not speak English? Is it the responsibility of employers to discourage illegal immigration by not hiring undocumented workers? Should they have the opportunity to gain citizenship? Does illegal immigration pose a security threat to our country? Do illegal immigrants do work that American workers are unwilling to do? Are their rights as workers and as human beings at risk due to their status? Are they abused by employers, law enforcement, housing, and businesses? How are their families impacted by their status? What is the moral and philosophical obligation of a nation state to maintain its borders? Should we build a wall on the Mexican border, establish a national identification card, or enforce existing laws against employers? Should we invite immigrants to become U.S. citizens? Surely you can think of many more concerns to be addressed by a conversation about the topic area of illegal immigration. Participation in this “debate” is likely to be emotional and intense. However, it is not likely to be productive or useful without focus on a particular question and identification of a line demarcating sides in the controversy. To be discussed and resolved effectively, controversies are best understood when seated clearly such that all parties to the debate share an understanding about the objec­tive of the debate. This enables focus on substantive and objectively identifiable issues facilitating comparison of competing argumentation leading to effective decisions. Vague understanding results in unfocused deliberation and poor deci­sions, general feelings of tension without opportunity for resolution, frustration, and emotional distress, as evidenced by the failure of the U.S. Congress to make substantial progress on the immigration debate. Of course, arguments may be presented without disagreement. For exam­ple, claims are presented and supported within speeches, editorials, and advertise­ments even without opposing or refutational response. Argumentation occurs in a range of settings from informal to formal, and may not call upon an audi­ence or judge to make a forced choice among competing claims. Informal dis­course occurs as conversation or panel discussion without demanding a decision about a dichotomous or yes/no question. However, by definition, debate requires "reasoned judgment on a proposition. The proposition is a statement about which competing advocates will offer alternative (pro or con) argumenta­tion calling upon their audience or adjudicator to decide. The proposition pro­vides focus for the discourse and guides the decision process. Even when a decision will be made through a process of compromise, it is important to iden­tify the beginning positions of competing advocates to begin negotiation and movement toward a center, or consensus position. It is frustrating and usually unproductive to attempt to make a decision when deciders are unclear as to what the decision is about. The proposition may be implicit in some applied debates (“Vote for me!”); however, when a vote or consequential decision is called for (as in the courtroom or in applied parliamentary debate) it is essential that the proposition be explicitly expressed (“the defendant is guilty!”). In aca­demic debate, the proposition provides essential guidance for the preparation of the debaters prior to the debate, the case building and discourse presented during the debate, and the decision to be made by the debate judge after the debate. Someone disturbed by the problem of a growing underclass of poorly educated, socially disenfranchised youths might observe, “Public schools are doing a terri­ble job! They' are overcrowded, and many teachers are poorly qualified in their subject areas. Even the best teachers can do little more than struggle to maintain order in their classrooms." That same concerned citizen, facing a complex range of issues, might arrive at an unhelpful decision, such as "We ought to do some­thing about this” or, worse, “It’s too complicated a problem to deal with." Groups of concerned citizens worried about the state of public education could join together to express their frustrations, anger, disillusionment, and emotions regarding the schools, but without a focus for their discussions, they could easily agree about the sorry state of education without finding points of clarity or potential solutions. A gripe session would follow. But if a precise question is posed—such as “What can be done to improve public education?”—then a more profitable area of discussion is opened up simply by placing a focus on the search for a concrete solution step. One or more judgments can be phrased in the form of debate propositions, motions for parliamentary debate, or bills for legislative assemblies, The statements "Resolved: That the federal government should implement a program of charter schools in at-risk communities” and “Resolved; That the state of Florida should adopt a school voucher program" more clearly identify specific ways of dealing with educational problems in a manageable form, suitable for debate. They provide specific policies to be investigated and aid discussants in identifying points of difference. This focus contributes to better and more informed decision making with the potential for better results. In aca­demic debate, it provides better depth of argumentation and enhanced opportu­nity for reaping the educational benefits of participation. In the next section, we will consider the challenge of framing the proposition for debate, and its role in the debate. To have a productive debate, which facilitates effective decision making by directing and placing limits on the decision to be made, the basis for argument should be clearly defined. If we merely talk about a topic, such as ‘"homeless­ness,” or “abortion,” Or “crime,” or “global warming,” we are likely to have an interesting discussion but not to establish a profitable basis for argument. For example, the statement “Resolved: That the pen is mightier than the sword” is debatable, yet by itself fails to provide much basis for dear argumen­tation. If we take this statement to mean *Iliad* the written word is more effec­tive than physical force for some purposes, we can identify a problem area: the comparative effectiveness of writing or physical force for a specific purpose, perhaps promoting positive social change. (Note that “loose” propositions, such as the example above, may be defined by their advocates in such a way as to facilitate a clear contrast of competing sides; through definitions and debate they “become” clearly understood statements even though they may not begin as such. There are formats for debate that often begin with this sort of proposition. However, in any debate, at some point, effective and meaningful discussion relies on identification of a clearly stated or understood proposition.) Back to the example of the written word versus physical force. Although we now have a general subject, we have not yet stated a problem. It is still too broad, too loosely worded to promote weII-organized argument. What sort of writing are we concerned with—poems, novels, government documents, web­site development, advertising, cyber-warfare, disinformation, or what? What does it mean to be “mightier" in this context? What kind of physical force is being compared—fists, dueling swords, bazookas, nuclear weapons, or what? A more specific question might be, “Would a mutual defense treaty or a visit by our fleet be more effective in assuring Laurania of our support in a certain crisis?” The basis for argument could be phrased in a debate proposition such as “Resolved: That the United States should enter into a mutual defense treaty with Laurania.” Negative advocates might oppose this proposition by arguing that fleet maneuvers would be a better solution. This is not to say that debates should completely avoid creative interpretation of the controversy by advo­cates, or that good debates cannot occur over competing interpretations of the controversy; in fact, these sorts of debates may be very engaging. The point is that debate is best facilitated by the guidance provided by focus on a particular point of difference, which will be outlined in the following discussion.

#### Decisionmaking is the most portable and flexible skill—key to all facets of life and advocacy

Steinberg and Freeley ‘13

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*Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making*, Thirteen Edition

In the spring of 2011, facing a legacy of problematic U.S, military involvement in Bosnia, Iraq, and Afghanistan, and criticism for what some saw as slow sup­port of the United States for the people of Egypt and Tunisia as citizens of those nations ousted their formerly American-backed dictators, the administration of President Barack Obama considered its options in providing support for rebels seeking to overthrow the government of Muammar el-Qaddafi in Libya. Public debate was robust as the administration sought to determine its most appropriate action. The president ultimately decided to engage in an international coalition, enforcing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 through a number of measures including establishment of a no-fly zone through air and missile strikes to support rebels in Libya, but stopping short of direct U.S. intervention with ground forces or any occupation of Libya. While the action seemed to achieve its immediate objectives, most notably the defeat of Qaddafi and his regime, the American president received both criticism and praise for his mea­sured yet assertive decision. In fact, the past decade has challenged American leaders to make many difficult decisions in response to potentially catastrophic problems. Public debate has raged in chaotic environment of political division and apparent animosity, The process of public decision making may have never been so consequential or difficult. Beginning in the fall of 2008, Presidents Bush and Obama faced a growing eco­nomic crisis and responded in part with '’bailouts'' of certain Wall Street financial entities, additional bailouts of Detroit automakers, and a major economic stimu­lus package. All these actions generated substantial public discourse regarding the necessity, wisdom, and consequences of acting (or not acting). In the summer of 2011, the president and the Congress participated in heated debates (and attempted negotiations) to raise the nation's debt ceiling such that the U.S. Federal Govern­ment could pay its debts and continue government operations. This discussion was linked to a debate about the size of the exponentially growing national debt, gov­ernment spending, and taxation. Further, in the spring of 2012, U.S. leaders sought to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapon capability while gas prices in the United States rose, The United States considered its ongoing military involvement in Afghanistan in the face of nationwide protests and violence in that country1 sparked by the alleged burning of Korans by American soldiers, and Americans observed the actions of President Bashir Al-Assad and Syrian forces as they killed Syrian citizens in response to a rebel uprising in that nation and considered the role of the United States in that action. Meanwhile, public discourse, in part generated and intensified by the cam­paigns of the GOP candidates for president and consequent media coverage, addressed issues dividing Americans, including health care, women's rights to reproductive health services, the freedom of churches and church-run organiza­tions to remain true to their beliefs in providing (or electing not to provide) health care services which they oppose, the growing gap between the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans and the rest of the American population, and continued high levels of unemployment. More division among the American public would be hard to imagine. Yet through all the tension, conflict was almost entirely ver­bal in nature, aimed at discovering or advocating solutions to growing problems. Individuals also faced daunting decisions. A young couple, underwater with their mortgage and struggling to make their monthly payments, considered walking away from their loan; elsewhere a college sophomore reconsidered his major and a senior her choice of law school, graduate school, or a job and a teenager decided between an iPhone and an iPad. Each of these situations called for decisions to be made. Each decision maker worked hard to make well-reasoned decisions. Decision making is a thoughtful process of choosing among a variety of options for acting or thinking. It requires that the decider make a choice. Life demands decision making. We make countless individual decisions every day. To make some of those decisions, we work hard to employ care and consider­ation: others scorn to just happen. Couples, families, groups of friends, and co­workers come together to make choices, and decision-making bodies from committees to juries to the U.S. Congress and the United Nations make deci­sions that impact us all. Every profession requires effective and ethical decision making, as do our school, community, and social organizations. We all engage in discourse surrounding our necessary decisions every day. To refinance or sell one’s home, to buy a high-performance SUV or an eco­nomical hybrid car, what major to select, what to have for dinner, what candi­date to vote for, paper or plastic, all present us with choices. Should the president deal with an international crisis through military invasion or diplomacy? How should the U.S. Congress act to address illegal immigration? Is the defendant guilty as accused? Should we watch The Daily Show or the ball game? And upon what information should I rely to make my decision? Certainly some of these decisions are more consequential than others. Which amendment to vote for, what television program to watch, what course to take, which phone plan to purchase, and which diet to pursue—all present unique challenges. At our best, we seek out research and data to inform our decisions. Yet even the choice of which information to attend to requires decision making. In 2006, Time magazine named YOU its "Person of the Year.” Congratulations! Its selection was based on the participation not of “great men” in the creation of his­tory, but rather on the contributions of a community of anonymous participants in the evolution of information. Through blogs, online networking, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Wikipedia, and many other “wikis," and social networking sites, knowledge and truth are created from the bottom up, bypassing the authoritarian control of newspeople, academics, and publishers. Through a quick keyword search, we have access to infinite quantities of information, but how do we sort through it and select the best information for our needs? Much of what suffices as information is not reliable, or even ethically motivated. The ability of every decision maker to make good, reasoned, and ethical deci­sions' relies heavily upon their ability to think critically. Critical thinking enables one to break argumentation down to its component parts in order to evaluate its relative validity and strength, And, critical thinking offers tools enabling the user to better understand the' nature and relative quality of the message under consider­ation. Critical thinkers are better users of information as well as better advocates. Colleges and universities expect their students to develop their critical thinking skills and may require students to take designated courses to that end. The importance and value of such study is widely recognized. The executive order establishing California's requirement states; Instruction in critical thinking is designed to achieve an understanding of the relationship of language to logic, which would lead to the ability to analyze, criticize and advocate ideas, to reason inductively and deductively, and to reach factual or judgmental conclusions based on sound inferences drawn from unambigu­ous statements of knowledge or belief. The minimal competence to be expected at the successful conclusion of instruction in critical thinking should be the ability to distinguish fact from judgment, belief from knowledge, and skills in elementary inductive arid deductive processes, including an under­standing of die formal and informal fallacies of language and thought. Competency in critical thinking is a prerequisite to participating effectively in human affairs, pursuing higher education, and succeeding in the highly com­petitive world of business and the professions. Michael Scriven and Richard Paul for the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking Instruction argued that the effective critical thinker: raises vital questions and problems, formulating them clearly and precisely; gathers and assesses relevant information, using abstract ideas to interpret it effectively; comes to well-reasoned conclusions and solutions, testing them against relevant criteria and standards; thinks open-mindedly within alternative systems of thought, recognizing, and assessing, as need be, their assumptions, implications, and practical con­sequences; and communicates effectively with others in figuring our solutions to complex problems. They also observed that critical thinking entails effective communication and problem solving abilities and a commitment to overcome our native egocentrism and sociocentrism,"1 Debate as a classroom exercise and as a mode of thinking and behaving uniquely promotes development of each of these skill sets. Since classical times, debate has been one of the best methods of learning and applying the principles of critical thinking. Contemporary research confirms the value of debate. One study concluded: The impact of public communication training on the critical thinking ability of the participants is demonstrably positive. This summary of existing research reaffirms what many ex-debaters and others in forensics, public speaking, mock trial, or argumentation would support: participation improves die thinking of those involved,2 In particular, debate education improves the ability to think critically. In a com­prehensive review of the relevant research, Kent Colbert concluded, "'The debate-critical thinking literature provides presumptive proof ■favoring a positive debate-critical thinking relationship.11'1 Much of the most significant communication of our lives is conducted in the form of debates, formal or informal, These take place in intrapersonal commu­nications, with which we weigh the pros and cons of an important decision in our own minds, and in interpersonal communications, in which we listen to argu­ments intended to influence our decision or participate in exchanges to influence the decisions of others. Our success or failure in life is largely determined by our ability to make wise decisions for ourselves and to influence the decisions of’ others in ways that are beneficial to us. Much of our significant, purposeful activity is concerned with making decisions. Whether to join a campus organization, go to graduate school, accept a job offer, buy a car or house, move to another city, invest in a certain stock, or vote for Garcia—these are just a few Of the thousands of deci­sions we may have to make. Often, intelligent self-interest or a sense of respon­sibility will require us to win the support of others. We may want a scholarship or a particular job for ourselves, a customer for our product, or a vote for our favored political candidate. Some people make decision by flipping a coin. Others act on a whim or respond unconsciously to “hidden persuaders.” If the problem is trivial—such as whether to go to a concert or a film—the particular method used is unimportant. For more crucial matters, however, mature adults require a reasoned methods of decision making. Decisions should be justified by good reasons based on accurate evidence and valid reasoning.

#### And independently a voting issue for fairness---monopolizing strategy makes discussion one-sided and subverts inclusion of the neg---it’s a prior question and means they shouldn’t get to weigh the aff

Galloway 7—Samford Comm prof (Ryan, Contemporary Argumentation and Debate, Vol. 28, 2007)

Debate as a dialogue sets an argumentative table, where all parties receive a relatively fair opportunity to voice their position. Anything that fails to allow participants to have their position articulated denies one side of the argumentative table a fair hearing. The affirmative side is set by the topic and fairness requirements. While affirmative teams have recently resisted affirming the topic, in fact, the topic selection process is rigorous, taking the relative ground of each topic as its central point of departure.¶ Setting the affirmative reciprocally sets the negative. The negative crafts approaches to the topic consistent with affirmative demands. The negative crafts disadvantages, counter-plans, and critical arguments premised on the arguments that the topic allows for the affirmative team. According to fairness norms, each side sits at a relatively balanced argumentative table.¶ When one side takes more than its share, competitive equity suffers. However, it also undermines the respect due to the other involved in the dialogue. When one side excludes the other, it fundamentally denies the personhood of the other participant (Ehninger, 1970, p. 110). A pedagogy of debate as dialogue takes this respect as a fundamental component. A desire to be fair is a fundamental condition of a dialogue that takes the form of a demand for equality of voice. **Far from** being **a banal request for links** to a disadvantage, fairness is a demand for respect, a demand to be heard, a demand that a voice backed by literally months upon **months of preparation**, research, and critical thinking not be silenced.¶ Affirmative cases that suspend basic fairness norms **operate to exclude** particular negative strategies. Unprepared, one side comes to the argumentative table unable to meaningfully participate in a dialogue. They are unable to “understand what ‘went on…’” and are left to the whims of time and power (Farrell, 1985, p. 114). Hugh Duncan furthers this line of reasoning:¶ Opponents not only tolerate but honor and respect each other because in doing so they enhance their own chances of thinking better and reaching sound decisions. Opposition is necessary because it sharpens thought in action. We assume that argument, discussion, and talk, among free an informed people who subordinate decisions of any kind, because it is only through such discussion that we reach agreement which binds us to a common cause…If we are to be equal…relationships among equals must find expression in many formal and informal institutions (Duncan, 1993, p. 196-197).¶ **Debate compensates for the exigencies of the world by offering a framework that maintains equality for the sake of the conversation** (Farrell, 1985, p. 114).¶ For example, an affirmative case on the 2007-2008 college topic might defend neither state nor international action in the Middle East, and yet claim to be germane to the topic in some way. The case essentially denies the arguments that state action is oppressive or that actions in the international arena are philosophically or pragmatically suspect. Instead of allowing for the dialogue to be modified by the interchange of the affirmative case and the negative response, the affirmative subverts any meaningful role to the negative team, preventing them from offering effective “counter-word” and undermining the value of a meaningful exchange of speech acts. **Germaneness and other substitutes for topical action do not accrue the dialogical benefits** of topical advocacy.

## K

#### Starting politics from the standpoint of an excluded identity-group is a vengeful politics of resentment—it can only position itself reactively against a universal like whiteness, inevitably re-instantiating the terms of oppression.

Bhambra ‘10

Gurminder K Bhambra, University of Warwick, and Victoria Margree, University of Brighton, “Identity Politics and the Need for a ‘Tomorrow,” academia.edu

2 The Reification of Identity

We wish to turn now to a related problem within identity politics that can be best described as the problem of the reification of politicised identities. Brown (1995) positions herself within the debate about identity politics by seeking to elaborate on “the wounded character of politicised identity’s desire” (ibid: 55); that is, the problem of “wounded attachments” whereby a claim to identity becomes over-invested in its own historical suffering and perpetuates its injury through its refusal to give up its identity claim. Brown’s argument is that where politicised identity is founded upon an experience of exclusion, for example, **exclusion** itself **becomes perversely valorised** in the continuance of that identity. In such cases, group activity operates to **maintain and reproduce** the identity created by injury (exclusion) **rather than** – and indeed, often in opposition to – **resolving the injurious** **social relations** **that generated claims around that identity in the first place**. If things have to have a history in order to have a future, then the problem becomes that of how history is constructed in order to make the future. To the extent that, for Brown, identity is associated primarily with (historical) injury, the future for that identity is then **already determined by the injury “as both bound to the history that produced it and as a reproach to the present which embodies that history**” (ibid 1995: 73). Brown’s suggestion that as it is not possible to undo the past, the focus backwards entraps the identity in reactionary practices, is, we believe, too stark and we will pursue this later in the article. Politicised identity, Brown maintains, “emerges and obtains its unifying coherence through the politicisation of exclusion from an ostensible universal, as a protest against exclusion” (ibid: 65). Its continuing existence **requires** both **a belief in** the **legitimacy of the universal ideal** (for example, ideals of opportunity, and reward in proportion to effort) and enduring exclusion from those ideals. Brown draws upon Nietzsche in arguing that such identities, produced in **reaction** to conditions of disempowerment and inequality, then **become invested in their own impotence through practices of**, for example, **reproach, complaint, and revenge**. These are “reactions” in the Nietzschean sense since they are s ubstitutes for actions or can be seen as negative forms of action. Rather than acting to remove the cause(s) of suffering, that suffering is instead ameliorated (to some extent) through “the **establishment of suffering** as the measure of social virtue” (ibid 1995: 70), and is compensated for by the **vengeful pleasures of recrimination**. Such practices, she argues, stand in sharp distinction to – in fact, provide obstacles to – **practices that would seek to dispel the conditions of exclusion.** Brown casts the dilemma discussed above in terms of a choice between past and future, and adapting Nietzsche, exhorts the adoption of a (collective) will that would become **the “redeemer of history”** (ibid: 72) through its focus on the possibilities of creating different futures. As Brown reads Nietzsche, the one thing that the will cannot exert its power over is the past, the “it was”. Confronted with its impotence with respect to the events of the past, the will is threatened with becoming simply **an “angry spectator”** mired in bitter recognition of its own helplessness. The one hope for the will is that it may, instead, achieve a kind of mastery over that past such that, although “what has happened” cannot be altered, the past can be denied **the power** of continuing to determine the present and future. It is only this **focus on the future**, Brown continues, and the capacity to make a future in the face of human frailties and injustices that **spares us** **from** a rancorous **decline into despair**. Identity politics structured by ressentiment – that is, by suffering caused by past events – can **only** break out of the cycle of “slave morality” by remaking the present **against the terms of the past**, a remaking that requires a “forgetting” of that past. An act of liberation, of self-affi rmation, this “forgetting of the past” requires an “overcoming” of the past that offers identity in relationship to suffering, in favour of a future in which identity is to be defi ned differently. In arguing thus, Brown’s work becomes aligned with a position that sees the way forward for emancipatory politics as residing in a movement away from a “politics of memory” (Kilby 2002: 203) that is committed to articulating past injustices and suffering. While we agree that investment in identities premised upon suffering can function as an obstacle to alleviating the causes of that suffering, we believe that Brown’s argument as outlined is problematic. First, following Kilby (2002), we share a concern about any turn to the future that is fi gured as a complete abandonment of the past. This is because for those who have suffered oppression and exclusion, the injunction to give up articulating a pain that is still felt may seem cruel and impossible to meet. We would argue instead that the “turn to the future” that theorists such as Brown and Grosz call for, to revitalise feminism and other emancipatory politics, need not be conceived of as a brute rejection of the past. Indeed, Brown herself recognises the problems involved here, stating that [since] erased histories and historical invisibility are themselves such integral elements of the pain inscribed in most subjugated identities [then] the counsel of forgetting, at least in its unreconstructed Nietzschean form, seems inappropriate if not cruel (1995: 74). She implies, in fact, that the demand exerted by those in pain may be no more than the demand to exorcise that pain through recognition: “all that such pain may long for – more than revenge – is the chance to be heard into a certain release, recognised into self-overcoming, incited into possibilities for triumphing over, and hence, losing itself” (1995: 74-75). Brown wishes to establish the political importance of remembering “painful” historical events but **with a crucial caveat**: that the purpose of remembering pain is to enable its release. The challenge then, according to her, is to create a political culture in which this project does not mutate into one of **remembering pain for its own sake**. Indeed, if Brown feels that this may be “a pass where we ought to part with Nietzsche” (1995: 74), then Freud may be a more suitable companion. Since his early work with Breuer, Freud’s writings have suggested the (only apparent) paradox that remembering is often a condition of forgetting. The hysterical patient, who is doomed to repeat in symptoms and compulsive actions a past she cannot adequately recall, is helped to remember that traumatic past in order then to move beyond it: she must remember in order to forget and to forget in order to be able to live in the present.7 This model seems to us to be particularly helpful for the dilemma articulated by both Brown (1995) and Kilby (2002), i nsisting as it does that “forgetting” (at least, loosening the hold of the past, in order to enable the future) cannot be achieved without first remembering the traumatic past. Indeed, this would seem to be similar to the message of Beloved, whose central motif of haunting (is the adult woman, “Beloved”, Sethe’s murdered child returned in spectral form?) dramatises the tendency of the unanalysed traumatic past to keep on returning, constraining, as it does so, the present to be like the past, and thereby, disallowing the possibility of a future different from that past. As Sarah Ahmed argues in her response to Brown, “in order to break the seal of the past, in order to move away from attachments that are hurtful, we must first bring them into the realm of political action” (2004: 33). We would add that the task of analysing the traumatic past, and thus opening up the possibility of political action, is unlikely to be achievable by individuals on their own, but that this, instead, **requires** **a “community” of participants** dedicated to the serious epistemic work of remembering and interpreting the objective social conditions that made up that past and continue in the present. The “pain” of historical injury is not simply an individual psychological issue, but stems from **objective social conditions which perpetuate**, for the most part, forms of **injustice and inequality into the present.**

#### This reactionary impulse is the condition of possibility for all violence—we must transcend exclusive identities and victimization.

Enns 12

Dianne, Professor of Philosophy at McMaster University, The Violence of Victimhood

These are responses to suffering that may at the same time prevent the conditions that lead to further suffering, opening **possibilities rather than burning bridges,** crossing over to the other, like the acrobat refusing to look at "the separation." These individuals and groups reject the worldview of the victim, literally or figuratively laying down their arms. This is not a passive refusal but an act of political will, ignited by the very pragmatic need for a bearable life. To lay down our arms means **to refuse the dictated terms of the fight**, **exit the ring**, **reject the means of defense provided**. While this appears to leave us powerless or defenseless—the other cheek turned in a display of utter passivity—it only does so if we haven't rejected the binary terms on which the power struggle is waged. **It is not the power of the sword that the victimized need**, **or the power of a moral authority** granted to the victim, but the power of political will—a power that can arise spontaneously out of shared vulnerability. It may be an act of civil disobedience, dissent, or the slow, patient work of changing attitudes—of "reviving the person inside the suit of armor"°7—in any case, the operative principle is a refusal to march blindly to the drummer's beat without reflection**, collective deliberation**, or judgment. This is the political work that we must never "neutralize": the cultivation of civil coexistence—**of communities** of fate—**that refuse violent solutions to conflict. To prevent the conditions that lead to war**—**and** the **normalization of** politics as **violence**—we need to elaborate alternatives that embrace neither consensus and unity as **Utopian peace nor dissensus and conflict** as violence. As Balibar puts it, we have to defend politics against "the twin enemies of extreme violence and consensus."00 Obedience could be worse than intolerance in situations of rising political unrest, and disobedience more important than reconciliation. In a discussion of what peoples of the former Yugoslavia need, for example, Boris Buden states unequivocally that it isn't truth commissions or reconciliation programs. The region has undergone a "depoliticization” that no truth of the past will eradicate. To repoliticize would mean to "invent a new form of political solidarity" that transcends their national, ethnic, and religious identities—a public life that includes political argument and contestation,43 not merely, as Buruma puts it, "the soothing rhetoric of healing.'"11 Disagreement, disobedience, conflict— these are indispensable ingredients in the practical work of politics and its necessary conditions. This claim does not contradict the demand to lay down one's arms. Conflict need not lead to violence. But to be vigilant against the incursion of a politics defined by the terms of war requires above all a vigilance against becoming immune to empathy and its effects. For Remarque's Paul Baumer, restoring his enemy to humanity occurs too late. We need to ward off the process of dehumanizing one's enemy before it begins. **We are already too late** **when identities are formed on the basis of** political **ideologies and** when **victims are granted an unquestioned moral authority**. To prevent the conditions of war, we must learn to see ourselves through the eyes of others.

#### Identity is only ever a confirmation of contingent relationships, not metaphysics. A politics that places a shared commitment to remedying injustice can avoid securitizing difference and reactionary politics that culminate in passivity.

Bhambra ‘10

Gurminder K Bhambra, University of Warwick, and Victoria Margree, University of Brighton, “Identity Politics and the Need for a ‘Tomorrow”

1 Exclusionary Politics

It is **inexcusable** to build analyses of historical experience around exclusions, exclusions that stipulate, for instance, that only women can understand feminine experience, only Jews can understand Jewish suffering, only formerly colonial subjects can understand colonial experience (Said 1993: 35). The idea of a politics underpinned by solidarities based on “sameness” has a long history in the critical tradition. Marx’s initial conceptualisation of the standpoint of the proletariat (albeit, significantly different from those of subsequent developments of standpoint epistemology) has been used by feminist theorists as well as those arguing for a post-colonial perspective in terms of the subaltern, and, more recently, for a dalit standpoint (Hartsock 1984, Guha 1983, Rege 1998, 2000). However, while using identity as the basis of political action has been seen to be powerful (and effective), it has also increasingly become seen as problematic. The exclusionary politics of movements such as **black** **power**, much **radical and lesbian feminism**, and latterly, movements for **ethnic purity** and/or religious integrity, for example, have yielded a deep concern with the programme of separation and isolationism that such movements are often seen to be based upon. For many critics, more troubling still has been the usually accompanying claim that only women can be feminists, or only black people can work against racism, or only dalits against caste oppression, and so on. A position which states that **only those who have experienced an injustice can understand and thus act effectively** up**on** **it** seems to rest upon an **essentialist theory of identity** which assumes that the possibility of knowledge about particular situations is restricted to one’s possession of the relevant (seemingly) irreducible traits (being female, black, dalit, and so forth). Arguably, one consequence of these separatist tendencies is that they perpetuate the individualist fallacy that oppressive social relationships can be reformed **by particular subjects** **without** the **broader** **agreement** of others who, together, constitute the **social relations** within which the injustices are embedded. But even where the limitations of a purely exclusionary form of identity politics are recognised, many theorists continue, nevertheless, to argue for a form of “strategic essentialism” (Fuss 1989, Spivak 2003) suggesting that where structures of inequality overlap with categories of identity, then a politics based on those identities is both liberatory and necessary (Bramen 2002). In our view, however, the claim for a “strategic essentialism” remains fraught with problems, for at least three reasons. First, it establishes an epistemological division between those who assert a particular identity in advancing political claims and the observer who is sympathetic to those claims but “recognises” the limitations of basing such claims on a putative identity.1 There is something highly problematic in claiming to support a political movement from the basis of being able to “see” something that the individuals constituting the movement do not see, and in then not engaging with them with regard to this. This sets the observer up in a privileged position vis-à-vis other members of the movement and thus makes solidarity difficult to achieve.2 Second, the claim for “strategic essentialism” posits solidarity, that is, collective identification around a particular standpoint, as a prerequisite for collective action to address perceived injustices. This is as against recognising that solidarities can also emerge through the actions taken to correct particular injustices and can include those who recognise the injustice as the reason for action while not directly being disadvantaged themselves. Third, the assertion of “strategic essentialism” generally occurs in the context of claiming justice through an appeal to the wider community but with no explanation as to why the wider community ought to honour this claim for justice, especially when it is often not deemed possible for them to constitute a part of the movement itself. There is a requirement of inclusivity then – in terms of demanding acceptance of the validity of the claims made – at the same time, as an assertion of its impossibility across what are posited as irreducible, essential traits (for a fuller discussion see Holmwood 1995). The arguments of this paper start out from a broad agreement that developing a politics from the basis of occupying a **particular social position** or having a **specific** (singular) **identity** is problematic for the reasons identified above, as well as for covertly legitimating – “absolving and forgiving”, in Said’s (1993: 35) words – the **ignorance of those whose understanding and actions are** necessary **for countering social injustices**. It has to be recognised that issues exist between people and are not in people: that is, problems of social injustice occur in the relationships through which subjectivities are produced and thus, all those implicated in those relationships are involved in their address. For example, sexism is not a problem for women to deal with alone, but is a problem situated in the contemporary relationships of **social and material inequalities** and requires mutual engagement for its address. This is an address which we consider is best served by the solidarities generated as a consequence of the activities around perceived injustices (that is, solidarities generated through the political movements of people working towards equality, justice) as opposed to those activities having to rely on **assumed preexisting solidarities** (that is, being female, gay, black, dalit, etc). This is **not** an argument for movements against specific injustices or inequalities to be subsumed within a wider (say, socialist) movement but, rather, an argument for movements to be **conceived** inclusively as movements where membership is not restricted to those presumed to suffer the injustice or inequality. As such, a question arises as to what would happen if the “identity” in “identity politics” were rethought along the lines of the solidarities that are generated around the address of injustices rather than the solidarity that is presumed to ensue from being the victim of an injustice. Defending “identity” against a variety of critiques from the academic left, Bramen (2002) asserts that identity can also be productive in its construction of moral and other communities. Our question, however, would be why such communities – sites of resistance and the discovery of political agency – need to be constructed around **essentialising rhetoric and restricted** (this is the implication) to those who suffer the injustice. Indeed, Bramen herself recognises that “identity politics certainly has its limitations, primarily in terms of prescribing modes of behaviour that pressure individuals to conform to certain standards of authenticity” (2002: 7-8). And this surely is a real problem; that essentialist rhetoric establishes belonging to a community, and thus identity, on the basis of presumed shared attributes or experiences that are imagined to be irreducible. As such, not only may the **community itself become oppressive** to those who do not share those attributes, or who wish to articulate experiences that differ from those expressed by the majority, but the community itself may be weakened in its resistance to **other forms of oppression** by the distraction of its **internal policing against difference.** We suggest that **alternative models of identity and community are required** from those put forward by essentialist theories, and that these are offered by the work of two theorists, Satya M ohanty and Lynn Hankinson Nelson. Mohanty’s ([1993] 2000) post-positivist, realist theorisation of identity suggests a way through the impasses of essentialism, while avoiding the excesses of the postmodernism that Bramen, among others, derides as a proposed alternative to identity politics. For Mohanty ([1993] 2000), identities must be understood as **theoretical constructions** that enable subjects to read the world in particular ways; as such, substantial claims about identity are, in fact, implicit explanations of the social world and its constitutive relations of power. Experience – that from which identity is usually thought to derive – **is not something that simply occurs**, or announces its meaning and signifi cance in a self-evident fashion: rather, experience is always a work of interpretation that is collectively produced (Scott 1991). Mohanty’s work resonates with that of Nelson (1993), who similarly insists upon the communal nature of meaning or knowledge-making. Rejecting both foundationalist views of knowledge and the postmodern alternative which announces the “death of the subject” and the impossibility of epistemology, Nelson argues instead that, it is not individuals who are the agents of epistemology, but **communities**. Since it is not possible for an individual to know something that another individual could not also (possibly) know, it must be that the ability to make sense of the world proceeds from shared conceptual frameworks and practices. Thus, it is the community that is the generator and repository of knowledge. Bringing Mohanty’s work on identity as theoretical construction together with Nelson’s work on epistemological communities therefore suggests that, “identity” is one of the knowledges that is produced and enabled for and by individuals in the context of the communities within which they exist. The post-positivist reformulation of “experience” is necessary here as it privileges understandings that emerge through the processing of experience in the context of **negotiated premises** about the world, over experience itself producing self-evident knowledge (self-evident, however, only to the one who has “had” the experience). This distinction is crucial for, if it is not the experience of, for example, sexual discrimination that “makes” one a feminist, but rather, the paradigm through which one attempts to **understand acts of sexual discrimination**, then it is not necessary to have actually had the experience oneself in order **to make the identification “feminist”**. If being a “feminist” is not a given fact of a particular social (and/or biological) location – that is, being designated “female” – but is, in Mohanty’s terms, an “achievement” – that is, something worked towards through a process of analysis and interpretation – then two implications follow. First, that not all women are feminists. Second, that feminism is something that is “achievable” by men.3 While it is accepted that experiences are not merely theoretical or conceptual constructs which can be transferred from one person to another with transparency, we think that there is something **politically self-defeating** about insisting that one can only understand an experience (or then comment upon it) if one has actually had the experience oneself. As Rege (1998) argues, to privilege knowledge claims on the basis of direct experience, or then on claims of authenticity, can lead to a **narrow identity politics** that **limits** the **emancipatory potential** of the movements or organisations making such claims. Further, if it is not possible to understand an experience one has not had, then **what point is there in listening to each other?** Following Said, such a view seems to authorise privileged groups to **ignore** the **discourses of disadvantaged ones, or,** we would add, to **place exclusive responsibility for addressing injustice with the oppressed themselves**. Indeed, as Rege suggests, reluctance to speak about the experience of others has led to an assumption on the part of some white feminists that “confronting racism is the sole responsibility of black feminists”, just as today “issues of caste become the sole responsibility of the dalit women’s organisations” (Rege 1998). Her argument for a dalit feminist standpoint, then, is not made in terms solely of the experiences of dalit women, but rather a call for others to “educate themselves about the histories, the preferred social relations and utopias and the struggles of the marginalised” (Rege 1998). This, she argues, allows “**their cause**” to become “**our cause**”, not as a form of appropriation of “their” struggle, but through the transformation of subjectivities that enables a recognition that **“their” struggle is also “our” struggle**. Following Rege, we suggest that social processes can facilitate the understanding of experiences, thus making those experiences the possible object of analysis and action for all, while recognising that they are not **equally** available or **powerful for all subjects**.4 Understandings of identity as **given and essential**, then, we suggest, need to give way to understandings which accept them as **socially constructed** and **contingent** on the work of particular, overlapping, epistemological communities that agree that this or that is a viable and recognised identity. Such an understanding avoids what Bramen identifi es as the postmodern excesses of “post-racial” theory, where in this “world without borders (“racism is real, but race is not”) one can be anything one wants to be: a black kid in Harlem can be Croatian-American, if that is what he chooses, and a white kid from Iowa can be Korean-American” (2002: 6). Unconstrained choice is not possible to the extent that, as Nelson (1993) argues, the concept of the epistemological community requires any individual knowledge claim to sustain itself in relation to standards of evaluation that already exist and that are social. Any claim to identity, then, would have to be recognised by particular communities as valid in order to be successful. This further shifts the discussion beyond the limitations of essentialist accounts of identity by recognising that the communities that confer identity are constituted through their shared epistemological frameworks and not necessarily by shared characteristics of their members conceived of as irreducible.5 Hence, the epistemological community that enables us to identify ourselves as feminists is one that is built up out of a broadly agreed upon paradigm for interpreting the world and the relations between the sexes: it is not one that is premised upon possessing the physical attribute of being a woman or upon sharing the same experiences. Since at least the 1970s, a key aspect of black and/or postcolonial feminism has been to identify the problems associated with such assumptions (see, for discussion, Rege 1998, 2000). We believe that it is the identification of injustice which calls forth action and thus allows for the construction of healthy solidarities. 6 While it is accepted that there may be important differences between those who recognise the injustice of disadvantage while being, in some respects, its beneficiary (for example, men, white people, brahmins), and those who recognise the injustice from the position of being at its effect (women, ethnic minorities, dalits), we would privilege the importance of a **shared political commitment to equality** as the basis for negotiating such differences. Our argument here is that thinking through identity claims from the basis of understanding them as epistemological communities **militates against exclusionary politics** (and its associated problems) since the emphasis comes to be on participation in a shared epistemological and political project as **opposed to** notions of **fixed characteristics** – the focus is on the activities individuals participate in rather than the characteristics they are deemed to possess. Identity is thus defined further as a function of activity located in particular social locations (understood as the complex of objective forces that influence the conditions in which one lives) rather than of nature or origin (Mohanty 1995: 109-10). As such, the communities that enable identity should not be conceived of as “imagined” since they are produced by very real actions, practices and projects.

#### Our alternative is to recognize debate as a site of contingent commonality in which we can forge bonds of argumentation beyond identity---the affirmative’s focus on subjectivity abdicates the flux of politics and debate for the incontestable truth of identity

Brown ‘95

Wendy, professor at Berkeley, *States of Injury POWER AND FREEDOM IN LATE MODERNITY, 47-51*

The postmodern exposure of the imposed and created rather than dis- covered character of all knowledges—of the power-surtuscd, struggle-¶48¶produced quality of all truths, including reigning political and scientific ones—simultaneously exposes the groundlessness of discovered norms or visions. It also reveals the exclusionary and regulatory function of these norms: white women who cannot locate themselves in Nancy Hartsock’s account of women’s experience or women s desires, African American women who do not identify with Patricia Hill Collinss account of black women’s ways of knowing, **are once again excluded from** the Party of **Humanism**—this time in its feminist variant. ¶**Our** **alternative to reliance** up**on** such **normative claims** **would seem to be engagement in political struggles in which there are no trump cards** such as “morality” or “truth."Our alternative, in other words, is to struggle within an amoral political habitat for temporally bound and fully contestable visions of who we are and how we ought to live. Put still another way, postmodernity unnerves feminist theory not merely because it deprives us of uncomplicated subject standing, as Christine Di Stefano suggests, or of settled ground for knowledge and norms, as Nancy Hartsock argues, or of "centered selves and “emancipatory knowledge," as Seyla Bcnhabib avers. Postmodernity unsettles feminism because it erodes the moral ground that the subject, truth, and normativity coproduce in modernity. When contemporary feminist political theorists or analysts complain about the antipolitical or unpolitical nature of postmodern thought—thought that apprehends and responds to this erosion—they are protesting, inter' aha, a Nietzschean analysis of truth and morality as fully implicated in and by power, and thereby delegitimated qua Truth and Morality Politics, including politics with passion- ate purpose and vision, can thrive without a strong theory of the subject, without Truth, and without scientifically derived norms—one only need reread Machiavelli, Gramsci, or Emma Goldman to see such a politics flourish without these things. The question is whether feminist politics can prosper without a moral apparatus, whether feminist theorists and activists will give up substituting Truth and Morality for politics. Are we willing to engage in struggle rather than recrimination, to develop our faculties rather than avenge our subordination with moral and epistemological gestures, to fight for a world rather than conduct process on the existing one? Nietzsche insisted that extraordinary strengths of character and mind would be necessary to operate in the domain of epistemological and religious nakedness he heralded. But in this he excessively individualized a challenge that more importantly requires the deliberate development of postmoral and antirelativist political spaces, practices of deliberation, and modes of adjudication.¶49¶The only way through a crisis of space is to invent a **new space** —Fredric Jameson. “Postmodernism"¶ Precisely because of its incessant revelation of settled practices and identities as contingent, its acceleration of the tendency to melt all that is solid into air. What is called postmodernity poses the opportunity to radically sever the problem of the good from the problem of the true, **to decide “what we** **want”** rather than derive it from assumptions or arguments about “who we are.” Our capacity to exploit this opportunity positively will be hinged to our success in developing new modes and criteria for political judgment. It will also depend upon our willingness to break certain modernist radical attachments, particularly to Marxism’s promise (however failed) of meticulously articulated connections between a comprehensive critique of the present and norms for a transformed future—a science of revolution rather than a politics of one. Resistance, the practice most widely associated with postmodern political discourse, **responds to** **without fully meeting the** normativity challenge of postmodernity. A vital tactic in much political work as well as for mere survival, resistance by itself **does not contain a critique, a vision, or grounds for organized collective efforts to enact either**. Contemporary affection for the politics of resistance issues from postmodern criticism’s perennial authority problem: our heightened consciousncss of the will to power in all political “positions” and our weariness about totalizing analyses and visions. Insofar as it eschews rather than revises these problematic practices, **resistance-as-politics does not raise the dilemmas of responsibility and justification entailed in “affirming” political projects** and norms. In this respect, like identity politics, and indeed sharing with identity politics an **excessively local viewpoint** and tendency toward **positioning without mapping**, the contemporary vogue of resistance is more a symptom of postmodernity’s crisis of political space than a coherent response to it. **Resistance goes nowhere in particular,** **has no inherent attachments**, **and hails no particular vision**; as Foucault makes clear, resistance is an effect of and reaction to power, not an arrogation of it.¶ What postmodernity disperses and postmodern feminist politics requires are cultivated political spaces for posing and questioning feminist political norms, for discussing the nature of “**the good”** for women. Democratic political space is quite undertheorized in contemporary feminist thinking, as it is everywhere in late-twentieth-century political theory, primarily because it is so little in evidence. Dissipated by the increasing technologizing of would-be political conversations and processes, by the erosion of boundaries around specifically political domains¶50¶and activities, and by the decline of movement politics, **political spaces are scarcer and thinner today than even in most immediately prior epochs of Western history**. In this regard, their condition mirrors the splayed and centrifuged characteristics of postmodern political power. Yet precisely because of postmodernity’s disarming tendencies toward political disorientation, fragmentation, and technologizing, the creation of spaces where political analyses and norms can be proffered and contested is **supremely important**.¶ Political space is an old theme in Western political theory, incarnated by the polis practices of Socrates, harshly opposed by Plato in the Republic, redeemed and elaborated as metaphysics by Aristotle, resuscitated as salvation for modernity by Hannah Arendt, and given contemporary spin in Jurgen Habermas's theories of ideal speech situations and communicative rationality. The project of developing feminist postmodern political spaces, while enriched by pieces of this tradition, necessarily also departs from it. In contrast with Aristotle’s formulation, feminist political spaces cannot define themselves against the private sphere, bodies, reproduction and production, mortality, and all the populations and is- sues implicated in these categories. Unlike Arendt’s, these spaces cannot be pristine, ratified, and policed at their boundaries but are necessarily cluttered, attuned to earthly concerns and visions, incessantly disrupted, invaded, and reconfigured. Unlike Habermas, we can harbor no dreams of nondistorted communication unsullied by power, or even of a ‘com- mon language,’\* but we recognize as a permanent political condition partiality of understanding and expression, cultural chasms whose nature may be vigilantly identified but rarely “resolved,” and the powers of words and images that evoke, suggest, and connote rather than transmit meanings.42 Our spaces, while requiring some definition and protection, cannot be clean, sharply bounded, disembodied, or permanent: to engage postmodern modes of power and honor specifically feminist knowledges, they must be **heterogenous, roving**, **relatively noninstitutionalized**, **and democratic** to the point of exhaustion. ¶Such spaces are **crucial for developing the skills and practices** of post- modern judgment, addressing the problem of “how **to produce** a discourse on **justice** . . . when one no longer relies on ontology or epistemology.”43 Postmodemity’s dismantling of metaphysical foundations for justice renders us quite vulnerable to domination by technical reason ¶51¶unless we seize the opportunity this erosion also creates to develop democratic processes for formulating postepistemelogical and postontological judgments. Such judgements require learning how to have public conversations with each other, arguing from a vision about the common (“what I want for us") rather than from identity (“who I am”), and from explicitly postulated norms and potential **common values** rather than **false essentialism** **or unreconstructed private interest**.44 Paradoxically, such public and comparatively impersonal arguments carry potential for **greater accountability** **than arguments from identity** or interest. While the former may be interrogated to the ground by others, the latter are **insulated from such inquiry** with the mantle of truth worn by identity-based speech. Moreover, post identity political positions and conversations potentially replace a politics of **difference** with a politics of **diversity**—differences grasped from a perspective larger than simply one point in an ensemble. Postidentity public positioning **requires** an outlook that discerns structures of dominance within diffused and disorienting orders of power, thereby stretching toward a more politically potent analysis than that which our individuated and fragmented existences can generate. In contrast to Di Stefano's claim that 'shared identity” may constitute a more psychologically and politically reliable basis for “attachment and motivation on the part of potential activists,” I am suggesting that **political conversation oriented toward diversity and the common**, **toward world rather than self**, and involving a conversion of ones knowledge of the world from a situated (subject) position into a public idiom, offers us the greatest possibility of countering postmodern social fragmentations and political disintegrations.¶ Feminists have learned well to identify and articulate our "subject positions —we have become experts at politicizing the “I” that is produced through multiple sites of power and subordination. **But the very practice so crucial to making these elements of power visible** **and subjectivity political** may be partly at odds with the requisites for developing political conversation **among a complex and diverse “we.”** We may need to learn public speaking and the pleasures of public argument not to overcome our situatedness, but in order **to assume responsibility for our situations and to mobilize a collective discourse that will expand them**. For the political making of a feminist future that does not reproach the history on which it is borne, we may need to loosen our attachments to subjectivity, identity, and morality and to redress our underdeveloped taste for political argument.

## Suffering K

#### The aff commodifies the suffering of the people of Juarez in exchange for your ballot in the debate economy---playing a game where we move scenarios of suffering around like chess pieces for our own personal enjoyment is the most unethical form of intellectual imperialism

Baudrillard 94 [Jean, “The Illusion of the End” p. 66-71]

We have long denounced the capitalistic, economic exploitation of the poverty of the 'other half of the world' [['autre monde]. We must today denounce the moral and sentimental exploitation of that poverty - charity cannibalism being worse than oppressive violence. The extraction and humanitarian reprocessing of a destitution which has become the equivalent of oil deposits and gold mines. The extortion of the spectacle of poverty and, at the same time, of our charitable condescension: a worldwide appreciated surplus of fine sentiments and bad conscience. We should, in fact, see this not as the extraction of raw materials, but as a waste-reprocessing enterprise. Their destitution and our bad conscience are, in effect, all part of the waste-products of history- the main thing is to recycle them to produce a new energy source.¶ We have here an escalation in the psychological balance of terror. World capitalist oppression is now merely the vehicle and alibi for this other, much more ferocious, form of moral predation. One might almost say, contrary to the Marxist analysis, that material exploitation is only there to extract that spiritual raw material that is the misery of peoples, which serves as psychological nourishment for the rich countries and media nourishment for our daily lives. The 'Fourth World' (we are no longer dealing with a 'developing' Third World) is once again beleaguered, this time as a catastrophe-bearing stratum. The West is whitewashed in the reprocessing of the rest of the world as waste and residue. And the white world repents and seeks absolution - it, too, the waste-product of its own history.¶ The South is a natural producer of raw materials, the latest of which is catastrophe. The North, for its part, specializes in the reprocessing of raw materials and hence also in the reprocessing of catastrophe. Bloodsucking protection, humanitarian interference, Medecins sans frontieres, international solidarity, etc. The last phase of colonialism: the New Sentimental Order is merely the latest form of the New World Order. Other people's destitution becomes our adventure playground . Thus, the humanitarian offensive aimed at the Kurds - a show of repentance on the part of the Western powers after allowing Saddam Hussein to crush them - is in reality merely the second phase of the war, a phase in which charitable intervention finishes off the work of extermination. We are the consumers of the ever delightful spectacle of poverty and catastrophe, and of the moving spectacle of our own efforts to alleviate it (which, in fact, merely function to secure the conditions of reproduction of the catastrophe market ); there, at least, in the order of moral profits, the Marxist analysis is wholly applicable: we see to it that extreme poverty is reproduced as a symbolic deposit, as a fuel essential to the moral and sentimental equilibrium of the West.¶ In our defence, it might be said that this extreme poverty was largely of our own making and it is therefore normal that we should profit by it. There can be no finer proof that the distress of the rest of the world is at the root of Western power and that the spectacle of that distress is its crowning glory than the inauguration, on the roof of the Arche de la Defense, with a sumptuous buffet laid on by the Fondation des Droits de l'homme, of an exhibition of the finest photos of world poverty. Should we be surprised that spaces are set aside in the Arche d' Alliance. for universal suffering hallowed by caviar and champagne? Just as the economic crisis of the West will not be complete so long as it can still exploit the resources of the rest of the world, so the symbolic crisis will be complete only when it is no longer able to feed on the other half's human and natural catastrophes (Eastern Europe, the Gulf, the Kurds, Bangladesh, etc.). We need this drug, which serves us as an aphrodisiac and hallucinogen. And the poor countries are the best suppliers - as, indeed, they are of other drugs. We provide them, through our media, with the means to exploit this paradoxical resource, just as we give them the means to exhaust their natural resources with our technologies. Our whole culture lives off this catastrophic cannibalism, relayed in cynical mode by the news media, and carried forward in moral mode by our humanitarian aid, which is a way of encouraging it and ensuring its continuity, just as economic aid is a strategy for perpetuating under-development. Up to now, the financial sacrifice has been compensated a hundredfold by the moral gain. But when the catastrophe market itself reaches crisis point, in accordance with the implacable logic of the market, when distress becomes scarce or the marginal returns on it fall from overexploitation, when we run out of disasters from elsewhere or when they can no longer be traded like coffee or other commodities, the West will be forced to produce its own catastrophe for itself , in order to meet its need for spectacle and that voracious appetite for symbols which characterizes it even more than its voracious appetite for food. It will reach the point where it devours itself. When we have finished sucking out the destiny of others, we shall have to invent one for ourselves. The Great Crash, the symbolic crash, will come in the end from us Westerners, but only when we are no longer able to feed on the hallucinogenic misery which comes to us from the other half of the world.¶ Yet they do not seem keen to give up their monopoly. The Middle East, Bangladesh, black Africa and Latin America are really going flat out in the distress and catastrophe stakes, and thus in providing symbolic nourishment for the rich world. They might be said to be overdoing it: heaping earthquakes, floods, famines and ecological disasters one upon another, and finding the means to massacre each other most of the time. The 'disaster show' goes on without any let-up and our sacrificial debt to them far exceeds their economic debt. The misery with which they generously overwhelm us is something we shall never be able to repay. The sacrifices we offer in return are laughable (a tornado or two, a few tiny holocausts on the roads, the odd financial sacrifice) and, moreover, by some infernal logic, these work out as much greater gains for us, whereas our kindnesses have merely added to the natural catastrophes another one immeasurably worse: the demographic catastrophe, a veritable epidemic which we deplore each day in pictures.

#### Translating misery into capital is a perverse system of neoimperial academia---vote negative to reject their cherry-picking of misery and refuse to engage in the trauma economy

Tomsky 11 (Terri, Ph.D in English from U-British Columbia, postdoctoral fellow in cultural memory at the University of Alberta From Sarajevo to 9/11: Travelling Memory and the Trauma Economy, Parallax Volume 17, Issue 4, 2011)

In contrast to the cosmopolitization of a Holocaust cultural memory,1 there exist experiences of trauma that fail to evoke recognition and subsequently, compassion and aid. What is it exactly that confers legitimacy onto some traumatic claims and anonymity onto others? This is not merely a question of competing victimizations, what geographer Derek Gregory has criticized as the process of ‘cherry-picking among [ . . . ] extremes of horror’, but one that engages issues of the international travel, perception and valuation of traumatic memory.2 This seemingly arbitrary determination engrosses the e´migre´ protagonist of Dubravka Ugresic’s 2004 novel, The Ministry of Pain, who from her new home in Amsterdam contemplates an uneven response to the influx of claims by refugees fleeing the Yugoslav wars: The Dutch authorities were particularly generous about granting asylum to those who claimed they had been discriminated against in their home countries for ‘sexual differences’, more generous than to the war’s rape victims. As soon as word got round, people climbed on the bandwagon in droves. The war [ . . . ] was something like the national lottery: while many tried their luck out of genuine misfortune, others did it simply because the opportunity presented itself.3¶ Traumatic experiences are described here in terms analogous to social and economic capital. What the protagonist finds troubling is that some genuine refugee claimants must invent an alternative trauma to qualify for help: the problem was that ‘nobody’s story was personal enough or shattering enough. Because death itself had lost its power to shatter. There had been too many deaths’.4 In other words, the mass arrival of Yugoslav refugees into the European Union means that war trauma risks becoming a surfeit commodity and so decreases in value. I bring up Ugresic’s wry observations about trauma’s marketability because they enable us to conceive of a trauma economy, a circuit of movement and exchange where traumatic memories ‘travel’ and are valued and revalued along the way.¶ Rather than focusing on the end-result, the winners and losers of a trauma ‘lottery’, this article argues that there is, in a trauma economy, no end at all, no fixed value to any given traumatic experience. In what follows I will attempt to outline the system of a trauma economy, including its intersection with other capitalist power structures, in a way that shows how representations of trauma continually circulate and, in that circulation enable or disable awareness of particular traumatic experience across space and time. To do this, I draw extensively on the comic nonfiction of Maltese-American writer Joe Sacco and, especially, his retrospective account of newsgathering during the 1992–1995 Bosnian war in his 2003 comic book, The Fixer: A Story From Sarajevo.5 Sacco is the author of a series of comics that represent social life in a number of the world’s conflict zones, including the Palestinian territories and the former Yugoslavia. A comic artist, Sacco is also a journalist by profession who has first-hand experience of the way that war and trauma are reported in the international media. As a result, his comics blend actual reportage with his ruminations on the media industry. The Fixer explores the siege of Sarajevo (1992–1995) as part of a larger transnational network of disaster journalism, which also critically, if briefly, references the September eleventh, 2001 attacks in New York City. Sacco’s emphasis on the transcultural coverage of these traumas, with his comic avatar as the international journalist relaying information on the Bosnian war, emphasizes how trauma must be understood in relation to international circuits of mediation and commodification. My purpose therefore is not only to critique the aesthetic of a travelling traumatic memory, but also to call attention to the material conditions and networks that propel its travels.¶ Travelling Trauma Theorists and scholars have already noted the emergence, circulation and effects of traumatic memories, but little attention has been paid to the travelling itself. This is a concern since the movement of any memory must always occur within a material framework. The movement of memories is enabled by infrastructures of power, and consequently mediated and consecrated through institutions. So, while some existing theories of traumatic memory have made those determining politics and policies visible, we still don’t fully comprehend the travel of memory in a global age of media, information networks and communicative capitalism.6 As postcolonial geographers frequently note, to travel today is to travel in a world striated by late capitalism. The same must hold for memory; its circulation in this global media intensive age will always be reconfigured, transvalued and even commodified by the logic of late capital.¶ While we have yet to understand the relation between the travels of memory (traumatic or otherwise) and capitalism, there are nevertheless models for the circulation of other putatively immaterial things that may prove instructive. One of the best, I think, is the critical insight of Edward W. Said on what he called ‘travelling theory’.7 In 1984 and again in 1994, Said wrote essays that described the reception and reformulation of ideas as they are uprooted from an original historical and geographical context and propelled across place and time. While Said’s contribution focuses on theory rather than memory, his reflections on the travel and transformation of ideas provide a comparison which helpfully illuminates the similar movements of what we might call ‘travelling trauma’. Ever attendant to the historical specificities that prompt transcultural transformations, the ‘Travelling Theory’ essays offers a Vichian humanist reading of cultural production; in them, Said argues that theory is not given but made. In the first instance, it emanates out of and registers the sometimes urgent historical circumstances of its theorist.¶ Subsequently, he maintains, when other scholars take up the theory, they necessarily interpret it, additionally integrating their own social and historical experiences into it, so changing the theory and, often, authorizing it in the process. I want to suggest that Said’s bird’s eye view of the intellectual circuit through which theory travels, is received and modified can help us appreciate the movement of cultural memory. As with theory, cultural memories of trauma are lifted and separated from their individual source as they travel; they are mediated, transmitted and institutionalized in particular ways, depending on the structure of communication and communities in which they travel.¶ Said invites his readers to contemplate how the movement of theory transforms its meanings to such an extent that its significance to sociohistorical critique can be drastically curtailed. Using Luka´ cs’s writings on reification as an example, Said shows how a theory can lose the power of its original formulation as later scholars take it up and adapt it to their own historical circumstances. In Said’s estimation, Luka´ cs’s insurrectionary vision became subdued, even domesticated, the wider it circulated. Said is especially concerned to describe what happens when such theories come into contact with academic institutions, which impose through their own mode of producing cultural capital, a new value upon then. Said suggests that this authoritative status, which imbues the theory with ‘prestige and the authority of age’, further dulls the theory’s originally insurgent message.8 When Said returned to and revised his essay some ten years later, he changed the emphasis by highlighting the possibilities, rather than the limits, of travelling theory.¶ ‘Travelling Theory Reconsidered’, while brief and speculative, offers a look at the way Luka´ cs’s theory, transplanted into yet a different context, can ‘flame [ . . . ] out’ in a radical way.9 In particular, Said is interested in exploring what happens when intellectuals like Theodor Adorno and Franz Fanon take up Luka´ cs: they reignite the ‘fiery core’ of his theory in their critiques of capitalist alienation and French colonialism. Said is interested here in the idea that theory matters and that as it travels, it creates an ‘intellectual [ . . . ] community of a remarkable [ . . . ] affiliative’ kind.10 In contrast to his first essay and its emphasis on the degradation of theoretical ideas, Said emphasizes the way a travelling theory produces new understandings as well as new political tools to deal with violent conditions and disenfranchized subjects. Travelling theory becomes ‘an intransigent practice’ that goes beyond borrowing and adaption.11 As Said sees it, both Adorno and Fanon ‘refuse the emoluments offered by the Hegelian dialectic as stabilized into resolution by Luka´ cs’.12 Instead they transform Luka´ cs into their respective locales as ‘the theorist of permanent dissonance as understood by Adorno, [and] the critic of reactive nationalism as partially adopted by Fanon in colonial Algeria’.13¶ Said’s set of reflections on travelling theory, especially his later recuperative work, are important to any account of travelling trauma, since it is not only the problems of institutional subjugation that matter; additionally, we need to affirm the occurrence of transgressive possibilities, whether in the form of fleeting transcultural affinities or in the effort to locate the inherent tensions within a system where such travel occurs. What Said implicitly critiques in his 1984 essay is the negative effects of exchange, institutionalization and the increasing use-value of critical theory as it travels within the academic knowledge economy; in its travels, the theory becomes practically autonomous, uncoupled from the theorist who created it and the historical context from which it was produced. This seems to perfectly illustrate the international circuit of exchange and valuation that occurs in the trauma economy.¶ In Sacco’s The Fixer, for example, it is not theory, but memory, which travels from Bosnia to the West, as local traumas are turned into mainstream news and then circulated for consumption. By highlighting this mediation, The Fixer explicitly challenges the politics that make invisible the maneuvers of capitalist and neoimperial practices. Like Said, Sacco displays a concern with the dissemination and reproduction of information and its consequent effects in relation to what Said described as ‘the broader political world’.14 Said’s anxiety relates to the academic normativization of theory (a ‘tame academic substitution for the real thing’15), a transformation which, he claimed, would hamper its uses for society.¶ A direct line can be drawn from Said’s discussion of the circulation of discourse and its (non)political effects, and the international representation of the 1992–1995 Bosnian war. The Bosnian war existed as a guerre du jour, the successor to the first Gulf War, receiving saturation coverage and represented daily in the Western media. The sustained presence of the media had much to do with the proximity of the war to European cities and also with the spectacular visibility of the conflict, particularly as it intensified. The bloodiest conflict to have taken place in Europe since the Second World War, it displaced two million people and was responsible for over 150,000 civilian casualties.16 Yet despite global media coverage, no decisive international military or political action took place to suspend fighting or prevent ethnic cleansing in East Bosnia, until after the massacre of Muslim men and boys at Srebrenica in 1995. According to Gregory Kent, western perceptions about the war until then directed the lack of political will within the international community, since the event was interpreted, codified and dismissed as an ‘ethnic’, ‘civil’ war and ‘humanitarian crisis’, rather than an act of (Serbian) aggression against (Bosnian) civilians.17¶ The rather bizarre presence of a large international press corps, hungry for drama and yet comfortably ensconced in Sarajevo’s Holiday Inn amid the catastrophic siege of that city, prompted Jean Baudrillard to formulate his theory of the hyperreal. In an article for the Paris newspaper Libe´ration in 1993, Baudrillard writes of his anger at the international apathy towards the Bosnian crisis, denouncing it as a ‘spectral war’.18 He describes it as a ‘hyperreal hell’ not because the violence was in a not-so-distant space, but because of the way the Bosnians were ‘harassed by the [international] media and humanitarian agencies’.19 Given this extensive media coverage, it is important to evaluate the role of representative discourses in relation to violence and its after effects. To begin with, we are still unsure of the consequences of this saturation coverage, though scholars have since elaborated on the racism framing much of the media discourses on the Yugoslav wars.20 More especially, it is¶ the celebrity of the Bosnian war that makes a critical evaluation of its current status in today’s media cycle all the more imperative. Bosnia’s current invisibility is fundamentally related to a point Baudrillard makes towards the end of his essay: ‘distress, misery and suffering have become the raw goods’ circulating in a global age of ‘commiseration’.21 The ‘demand’ created by a market of a sympathetic, yet selfindulgent spectators propels the global travel of trauma (or rather, the memory of that trauma) precisely because Bosnian suffering has a ‘resale value on the futures markets’.22 To treat traumatic memory as currency not only acknowledges the fact that travelling memory is overdetermined by capitalism; more pertinently, it recognizes the global system through which traumatic memory travels and becomes subject to exchange and flux. To draw upon Marx: we can comprehend trauma in terms of its fungible properties, part of a social ‘relation [that is] constantly changing with time and place’.23 This is what I call the trauma economy. By trauma economy, I am thinking of economic, cultural, discursive and political structures that guide, enable and ultimately institutionalize the representation, travel and attention to certain traumas.¶ The Trauma Economy in Joe Sacco’s The Fixer Having introduced the idea of a trauma economy and how it might operate, I want to turn to Sacco because he is acutely conscious of the way representations of trauma circulate in an international system. His work exposes the infrastructure and logic of a trauma economy in war-torn Bosnia and so echoes some of the points made by Said about the movement of theory. As I examine Sacco’s critical assessment of the Bosnian war, I want to bear in mind Said’s discussion about the effects of travel on theory and, in particular, his two contrasting observations: first, that theory can become commodified and second, that theory enables unexpected if transient solidarities across cultures. The Fixer takes up the notion of trauma as transcultural capital and commodity, something Sacco has confronted in his earlier work on Bosnia.24 The Fixer focuses on the story of Neven, a Sarajevan local and the ‘fixer’ of the comic’s title, who sells his services to international journalists, including Sacco’s avatar. The comic is¶ set in 2001, in postwar Sarajevo and an ethnically partitioned and economically devastated Bosnia, but its narrative frequently flashes back to the conflict in the mid- 1990s, and to what has been described as ‘the siege within the siege’.25 This refers not just to Sarajevo’s three and a half year siege by Serb forces but also to its backstage: the concurrent criminalization of Sarajevo through the rise of a wartime black market economy from which Bosniak paramilitary groups profited and through which they consolidated their power over Sarajevan civilians. In these flashbacks, The Fixer addresses Neven’s experience of the war, first, as a sniper for one of the Bosniak paramilitary units and, subsequently, as a professional fixer for foreign visitors, setting them up with anything they need, from war stories and tours of local battle sites to tape recorders and prostitutes. The contemporary, postwar scenes detail the ambivalent friendship between Neven and Sacco’s comic avatar. In doing so, The Fixer spares little detail about the economic value of trauma: Neven’s career as a fixer after all is reliant on what Sacco terms the ‘flashy brutality of Sarajevo’s war’.26 Even Neven admits as much to his interlocutor, without irony, let alone compassion: ‘“When massacres happened,” Neven once told me, “those were the best times. Journalists from all over the world were coming here”’.27¶ The Fixer never allows readers to forget that Neven provides his services in exchange for hard cash. So while Neven provides vital – indeed for Sacco’s avatar often the only – access to the stories and traumas of the war, we can never be sure whether he is a reliable witness or merely an opportunistic salesman. His anecdotes have the whiff of bravura about them. He expresses pride in his military exploits, especially his role in a sortie that destroyed several Serb tanks (the actual number varies increasingly each time the tale is told). He tells Sacco that with more acquaintances like himself, he ‘could have broken the siege of Sarajevo’.28 Neven’s heroic selfpresentation is consistently undercut by other characters, including Sacco’s avatar, who ironically renames him ‘a Master in the School of Front-line Truth’ and even calls upon the reader to assess the situation. One Sarajevan local remembers Neven as having a ‘big imagination’29; others castigate him as ‘unstable’30; and those who have also fought in the war reject his claims outright, telling Sacco, ‘it didn’t happen’.31¶ For Sacco’s avatar though, Neven is ‘a godsend’.32 Unable to procure information from the other denizens of Sarajevo, he is delighted to accept Neven’s version of events: ‘Finally someone is telling me how it was – or how it almost was, or how it could have been – but finally someone in this town is telling me something’.33 This discloses the true value of the Bosnian war to the Western media: getting the story ‘right’ factually is less important than getting it ‘right’ affectively. The purpose is to extract a narrative that evokes an emotional (whether voyeuristic or empathetic) response from its audience. Here we see a good example of the way a traumatic memory circulates in the trauma economy, as it travels from its site of origin and into a fantasy of a reality. Neven’s mythmaking – whether motivated by economic opportunism, or as a symptom of his own traumatized psyche – reflects back to the international community a counter-version of mediated events and spectacular traumas that appear daily in the Western media. It is worth adding that his mythmaking only has value so long as it occurs within preauthorized media circuits.¶ When Neven attempts to bypass the international journalists and sell his story instead directly to a British magazine, the account of his wartime ‘action against the 43 tanks’ is rejected on the basis that they ‘don’t print fiction’.34 The privilege of revaluing and re-narrating the trauma is reserved for people like Sacco’s avatar, who has no trouble adopting a mythic and hyperbolic tone in his storytelling: ‘it is he, Neven, who has walked through the valley of the shadow of death and blown things up along the way’.35¶ Yet Neven’s urge to narrate, while indeed part of his job, is a striking contrast to the silence of other locals. When Sacco arrives in Sarajevo in 2001 for his follow-up story, he finds widespread, deliberate resistance to his efforts to gather first-hand testimonies. Wishing to uncover the city’s ‘terrible secrets’, Sacco finds his ‘research has stalled’, as locals either refuse to meet with him or cancel their appointments.36 The suspiciousness and hostility Sacco encounters in Sarajevo is a response precisely to the international demand for trauma of the 1990s. The mass media presence during the war did little to help the city’s besieged residents; furthermore, international journalists left once the drama of war subsided to ‘the last offensives grinding up the last of the last soldiers and civilians who will die in this war’.37 The media fascination¶ with Sarajevo’s humanitarian crisis was as intense as it was fleeting and has since been described as central to the ensuing ‘compassion fatigue’ of Western viewers.38 In contrast to this coverage, which focused on the casualties and victims of the war, The Fixer reveals a very different story: the rise of Bosniak paramilitary groups, their contribution (both heroic and criminal) to the war and their ethnic cleansing of non- Muslim civilians from the city. Herein lies the appeal of Neven, a Bosnian-Serb, who has fought under Bosnian- Muslim warlords defending Sarajevo and who considers himself a Bosnian citizen first before any other ethnic loyalty. For not only is Sacco ignorant about the muddled ethnic realities of the war, its moral ambiguities and its key players but he also wants to hear Neven’s shamelessly daring and dirty account of the war, however unreliable. As Sacco explains, he’s ‘a little enthralled, a little infatuated, maybe a little in love and what is love but a transaction’.39 Neven – a hardened war veteran – provides the goods, the first-hand experience of war and, for Sacco’s avatar, that is worth every Deutschemark, coffee and cigarette. He explains in a parenthetical remark to his implied reader: ‘I would be remiss if I let you think that my relationship with Neven is simply a matter of his shaking me down. Because Neven was the first friend I made in Sarajevo . . . [he’s] travelled one of the war’s dark roads and I’m not going to drop him till he tells me all about it’.40 Sacco’s assertion here suggests something more than a mutual exploitation. The word ‘friend’ describing Sacco’s relationship to Neven is quickly replaced by the word ‘drop’. Having sold his ‘raw goods’, Neven finds that the trauma economy in the postwar period has already devalued his experience by disengaging with Bosnia’s local traumas. As Sacco suggests, ‘the war moved on and left him behind [ . . . ] The truth is, the war quit Neven’.41 The Neven of 2001 is not the brash Neven of old, but a pasty-looking unemployed forty-year old and recovering alcoholic, who takes pills to prevent his ‘anxiety attacks’.42 His wartime actions lay heavily on his conscience, despite his efforts to ‘stash [ . . . ] deep’ his bad memories.43 The Fixer leaves us with an ironic fact: Neven, who has capitalized on trauma during the war, is now left traumatized and without capital in the postwar situation.¶ Juxtaposing Traumas in a Global Age¶ Sacco’s depiction of the trauma economy certainly highlights the question of power and exploitation, since so many of the interactions between locals and international visitors are shaped by the commodity market of traumatic memories. And while The Fixer provides a new perspective of the Bosnian war, excoriating the profit-seeking objectives of both the media and the Bosnian middle-men amid life-altering events, its general point about the capitalistic vicissitudes of the trauma economy is not significantly different from that sustained in the narratives of Aleksandar Hemon, Rajiv Chandrasekaran or Art Spiegelman.44What distinguishes Sacco’s work is the way it also picks up the possibility described in Edward Said’s optimistic re-reading of travel: the potential for affiliation. As I see it, Sacco’s criticism isn’t leveled merely at the moral grey zone created during the Bosnian war: he is more interested in the framework of representations themselves that mediate, authorize, commemorate and circulate trauma in different ways. been described as central to the ensuing ‘compassion fatigue’ of Western viewers.38 In contrast to this coverage, which focused on the casualties and victims of the war, The Fixer reveals a very different story: the rise of Bosniak paramilitary groups, their contribution (both heroic and criminal) to the war and their ethnic cleansing of non- Muslim civilians from the city. Herein lies the appeal of Neven, a Bosnian-Serb, who has fought under Bosnian- Muslim warlords defending Sarajevo and who considers himself a Bosnian citizen first before any other ethnic loyalty. 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As I see it, Sacco’s criticism isn’t leveled merely at the moral grey zone created during the Bosnian war: he is more interested in the framework of representations themselves that mediate, authorize, commemorate and circulate trauma in different ways. suffering’.48 Instead, the panel places Sacco’s (Anglophone) audience within the familiar, emotional context of the September 11, 2001 attacks, with their attendant anxieties, shock and grief and so contributes to a blurring of the hierarchical lines set up between different horrors across different spaces. Consequently, I do not see Sacco’s juxtaposition of traumas as an instance of what Michael Rothberg calls, ‘competitive memory’, the victim wars that pit winners against losers.49 Sacco gestures towards a far more complex idea that takes into account the highly mediated presentations of both traumas, which nonetheless evokes Rothberg’s notion of multidirectional memory by affirming the solidarities of trauma alongside their differences. In drawing together these two disparate events, Sacco’s drawings echo the critical consciousness in Said’s ‘Travelling Theory’ essay. Rather than suggesting one trauma is, or should be, more morally legitimate than the other, Sacco is sharply attentive to the way trauma is disseminated and recognized in the political world. The attacks on theWorld Trade Centre, like the siege of Sarajevo, transformed into discursive form epitomize what might be called victim narratives. In this way, the United States utilized international sympathy (much of which was galvanized by the stunning footage of the airliners crashing into the towers) to launch a retaliatory campaign against Afghanistan and, later, Iraq. In contrast, Bosnia in 1992 faced a precarious future, having just proclaimed its independence. As we discover in The Fixer, prior to Yugoslavia’s break-up, Bosnia had been ordered to return its armaments to the Yugoslav National Army (JNA), which were then placed ‘into the hands of the rebel Serbs’, leaving the Bosnian government to ‘build an army almost from scratch’.50 The analogy between 9/11 and 1992 Sarajevo is stark: Sarajevo’s empty landscape in the panel emphasizes its defencelessness and isolation. The Fixer constantly reminds the reader about the difficulties of living under a prolonged siege in ‘a city that is cut off and being starved into submission’.51 In contrast, September 11, 2001 has attained immense cultural capital because of its status as a significant U.S. trauma. This fact is confirmed by its profound visuality, which crystallized the spectacle and site of trauma. Complicit in this process, the international press consolidated and legitimated the event’s symbolic power, by representing, mediating and dramatizing the trauma so that, as SlavojZ ˇ izˇek writes, the U.S. was elevated into ‘the sublime victim of Absolute Evil’.52 September 11 was constructed as an exceptional event, in terms of its irregular circumstances and the symbolic enormity both in the destruction of iconic buildings and in the attack on U.S. soil. Such a construction seeks to overshadow perhaps all recent international traumas and certainly all other U.S. traumas and sites of shock. Sacco’s portrayal, which locates September eleven in Sarajevo 1992, calls into question precisely this claim towards the singularity of any trauma. The implicit doubling and prefiguring of the 9/11 undercuts the exceptionalist rhetoric associated with the event. Sacco’s strategy encourages us to think outside of hegemonic epistemologies, where one trauma dominates and becomes more meaningful than others. Crucially, Sacco reminds his audience of the cultural imperialism that frames the spectacle of news and the designation of traumatic narratives in particular.¶ Postwar Bosnia and Beyond 2001 remains, then, both an accidental and a significant date in The Fixer. While the (Anglophone) world is preoccupied with a new narrative of trauma and a sense of historical rupture in a post 9/11 world, Bosnia continues to linger in a postwar limbo. Six years have passed since the war ended, but much of Bosnia’s day-to-day economy remains coded by international perceptions of the war. No longer a haven for aspiring journalists, Bosnia is now a thriving economy for international scholars of trauma and political theory, purveyors of thanotourism,53 UN peacekeepers and post-conflict nation builders (the ensemble of NGOs, charity and aid workers, entrepreneurs, contractors, development experts, and EU government advisors to the Office of the High Representative, the foreign overseer of the protectorate state that is Bosnia). On the other hand, many of Bosnia’s locals face a grim future, with a massive and everincreasing unemployment rate (ranging between 35 and 40%), brain-drain outmigration, and ethnic cantonments. I contrast these realities of 2001 because these circumstances – a flourishing economy at the expense of the traumatized population – ought to be seen as part of a trauma economy. The trauma economy, in other words, extends far beyond the purview of the Western media networks. In discussing the way traumatic memories travel along the circuits of the global media, I have described only a few of the many processes that transform traumatic events into fungible traumatic memories; each stage of that process represents an exchange that progressively reinterprets the memory, giving it a new value. Media outlets seek to frame the trauma of the Bosnian wars in ways that are consistent with the aims of pre-existing political or economic agendas; we see this in Sacco just as easily as in Ugresic’s assessment of how even a putatively liberal state like the Netherlands will necessarily inflect the value of one trauma over another. The point is that in this circulation, trauma is placed in a marketplace; the siege of Sarajevo, where an unscrupulous fixer can supply western reporters with the story they want to hear is only a concentrated example of a more general phenomenon. Traumatic memories are always in circulation, being revalued in each transaction according to the logic of supply and demand. Victim and witness; witness and reporter; reporter and audience; producer and consumer: all these parties bargain to suit their different interests. The sooner we acknowledge the influence of these interests, the closer we will come to an understanding of how trauma travels.

#### Resistance via the ballot can only instill an adaptive politics of being and effaces the institutional constraints that reproduce the violent underside of liberalism

Brown 95—prof at UC Berkeley (Wendy, States of Injury, 21-3)

For some, fueled by **opprobrium toward** **regulatory norms** or other mo- dalities of domination, the language of "resistance" has taken up the ground vacated by a more expansive practice of freedom. For others, it is the discourse of “empowerment” that carries the ghost of freedom's valence ¶ 22¶. Yet as many have noted, insofar as resistance is an effect of the regime it opposes on the one hand, and insofar as its **practitioners often seek to void it of normativity to differentiate it** from the (regulatory) nature of what it opposes on the other, it is **at best** politically rebellious; **at worst**, politically amorphous. Resistance stands **against**, **not for**; it is re-action to domination, rarely willing to admit to a desire for it, and it is **neutral** with regard to possible political direction. Resistance is in no way constrained to a radical or emancipatory aim. a fact that emerges clearly as soon as one analogizes Foucault's notion of resistance to its companion terms in Freud or Nietzsche. Yet in some ways this point is less a critique of Foucault, who especially in his later years made clear that his political commitments were not identical with his theoretical ones (and un- apologetically revised the latter), than a sign of his misappropriation. For Foucault, resistance **marks the presence of power** and expands our under- standing of its mechanics, but it is in this regard an analytical strategy rather than an expressly political one. "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet. or rather consequently, **this resistance is never in a position of exteriority to power**. . . . (T]he strictly relational character of power relationships . . . depends upon a multiplicity of points of resis- tance: these play the role of adversary, target, support, or handle in power relations.\*39 This appreciation of the extent to which resistance is by no means inherently subversive of power also reminds us that it is only by recourse to a very non-Foucaultian moral evaluation of power as bad or that which is to be overcome that it is possible to equate resistance with that which is good, progressive, or seeking an end to domination. ¶ If popular and academic notions of resistance attach, however weakly at times, to a tradition of protest, the other contemporary substitute for a discourse of freedom—“empowerment”—would seem to correspond more closely to a tradition of **idealist reconciliation**. The language of resistance implicitly acknowledges the extent to which protest always transpires inside the regime; “empowerment,” in contrast, registers the possibility of generating one’s capacities, one’s “self-esteem,” one’s life course, without capitulating to constraints by particular regimes of power. But in so doing, contemporary discourses of empowerment **too often signal** **an oddly adaptive** **and harmonious relationship with domination** insofar as they locate an individual’s sense of worth and capacity in the register of individual feelings, a register implicitly **located on some- thing of an other worldly plane** **vis-a-vis** social and **political power**. In this regard, despite its apparent locution of resistance to subjection, contem- porary discourses of empowerment partake strongly of liberal solipsism—the radical decontextualization of the subject characteristic of¶ 23¶ liberal discourse that is **key to the fictional sovereign individualism of liberalism**. Moreover, in its almost exclusive focus on subjects’ emotional bearing and self-regard, empowerment is a formulation that **converges with a regime’s own legitimacy needs** in masking the power of the regime.¶ This is not to suggest that talk of empowerment is always only illusion or delusion. It is to argue, rather, that while the notion of empowerment articulates that feature of freedom concerned with action, with being more than the consumer subject figured in discourses of rights and eco- nomic democracy, contemporary deployments of that notion also **draw so heavily on an undeconstructed subjectivity** that they risk establishing a wide chasm between the (experience of) empowerment and an actual **capacity to shape the terms of political, social, or economic life**. Indeed, the possibility that one can “feel empowered” without being so **forms an important element of** **legitimacy** for the antidemocratic dimensions of liberalism.

#### Vote negative to vote aff. Refusing the permanence of the ballot is the only way to maintain the singularity of the aff’s performance---voting aff commodifies their performance which can only result in its fetishization by external forces

Phelan 96

Peggy, chair of New York University's Department of Performance Studies Unmarked: the politics of performance, ed published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005

I am speaking here of an active vanishing, **a deliberate and conscious refusal to take the payoff of visibility**. For the moment, active disappearance usually requires at least some recognition of what and who is not there to be effective. (In short, this has largely been apossibility for white middle- and upper-class women.) A group of women artists and feminist theorists in New York call themselves the Guerrilla Girls. They make posters and signs underlining the everyday racist and sexist practices which constitute business asusual in the mainstream art market. They take the real facts of exhibition space, art market prices, and the sexist and racist policies which have influenced the collections of most galleries and museums, as the ground of their representational strategies. Much of this work is witty and wry.In their poster straightforwardly listing the ten advantages of being awoman artist, for example, one benefit is the relief of never having to worry about being labeled a genius. While their work has become increasingly lauded by both establishment and anti-establishment critics and art world commentators, the Guerrilla Girls **continue to remain anonymous**. When they do make appearances, they wear gorilla masks and mini-skirts. By refusing to participate in the **visibility-is-currency economy** which determines value in “the art world,” the members of the group resist the fetishization of their argument that many are, at the moment, quite ready to undertake. By resisting **visible identities**, **the Guerrilla Girls mark the failure of the gaze to possess, and arrest, their work**. Their posters go up with glue on temporary construction sites, on the sides of buildings, on the doors of closed galleries. They remain there until other messages, often advertisements, overtake them. Underneath the new representations, the racist and sexist “facts” of the Guerrilla Girls’ real continue to “exist,” while remaining obscured. Always failing to keep the real in view, representation papers it over and reproduces other representations.

## Case

#### Multiple statistical measures prove a trend towards equality---this isn’t to say that everything is OK, but that falsifiable claims matter for assessing impacts AND that engagement can be effective

Currie 8

<http://www.american.com/archive/2008/november-11-08/the-long-march-of-racial-progress/>

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Measuring racial progress is all about perspective. Since Appomattox, the struggle for racial equality has seen triumphs and setbacks alike. On balance, however, the story of race relations in America is one of extraordinary change and transformation. According to Princeton historian James McPherson, the rate of black illiteracy dropped from roughly 90 percent in 1865 to 70 percent in 1880 and to under 50 percent in 1900. “From the perspective of today, this may seem like minimal progress,” McPherson wrote in his 1991 book, Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution (a collection of essays). “But viewed from the standpoint of 1865 the rate of literacy for blacks increased by 200 percent in fifteen years and by 400 percent in thirty-five years.” McPherson also noted that the share of school-age black children attending school jumped from 2 percent in 1860 to 34 percent in 1880. “During the same period,” he said, “the proportion of white children of school age attending school had grown only from 60 to 62 percent.” In 1908, 100 years before the election of America’s first black president, there was a bloody race riot in Springfield, Illinois, which began when an angry mob surrounded a prison where a black man falsely accused of rape was being held. As columnist George Will has observed, “The siege of the jail, the rioting, the lynching, and mutilating all occurred within walking distance of where, in 2007, Barack Obama announced his presidential candidacy.” Over the past century, the racial attitudes of white Americans have undergone a sea change. The shift toward greater racial tolerance was driven by many factors, including blacks’ participation in World War II, the integration of professional sports and the military, and the civil rights movement. “Even as Americans were voting more conservatively in the 1980s, their views on race were becoming more liberal,” Wall Street Journal senior editor Jonathan Kaufman wrote recently. “More than three quarters of whites in 1972 told pollsters that ‘blacks should not push themselves where they are not wanted.’ Two-thirds of whites that same year said they opposed laws prohibiting racial discrimination in the sale of homes. Forty percent said whites had the right to live in segregated neighborhoods.” However, “By the end of 1980s, all those numbers had fallen markedly and [they] continued to fall through the following decades.” As University of Michigan sociologist Reynolds Farley points out in a new paper, there are now 41 African Americans serving in the House of Representatives, compared to only six when the Kerner Commission issued its famous report on race and poverty in 1968. During the years following the Kerner Report, “The slowly rising incomes of black men and the more rapidly rising incomes of black women produced an important economic change for African Americans,” Farley writes. “In 1996, for the first time, the majority of blacks were in the economic middle class or above, if that means living in a household with an income at least twice the poverty line.” According to Farley, “Only three percent of African Americans could be described as economically comfortable in 1968. That has increased to 17 percent at present. This is an unambiguous sign of racial progress: one black household in six could be labeled financially comfortable.” He notes that the black-white poverty gap “is much smaller now” than it was in the late 1960s. Residential and marriage trends are also encouraging. “The trend toward less residential segregation that emerged in the 1980s and accelerated in the 1990s continues in this century,” says Farley. Meanwhile, interracial marriage rates have increased dramatically. “At the time of the Kerner Report, about one black husband in 100 was enumerated with a white spouse. By 2006, about 14 percent of young black husbands were married to white women.”

#### Their vision of debate creates a confessional politics—that forces minorities to become judges and privileged bodies become colonizers

Smith, associate professor – Media and Cultural Studies @ UC Riverside, ‘13

(Andrea, “The Problem with Privilege,” http://andrea366.wordpress.com/2013/08/14/the-problem-with-privilege-by-andrea-smith/)

Rey Chow notes that within this position of ethnographic entrapment, the only rhetorical position offered to the Native is that of the “protesting ethnic.” The posture to be assumed under the politics of recognition is the posture of complaint. If we complain eloquently, the system will give us something. Building on Chow’s work, this essay will explore how another posture that is created within this economy is the self-reflexive settler/white subject. This self-reflexive subject is frequently on display at various anti-racist venues in which the privileged subject explains how much s/he learned about her complicity in settler colonialism and/or white supremacy because of her exposure to Native peoples. A typical instance of this will involve non-Native peoples who make presentations based on what they “learned” while doing solidarity work with Native peoples in their field research/solidarity work, etc. Complete with videos and slide shows, the presenters will express the privilege with which they struggled. We will learn how they tried to address the power imbalances between them and the peoples with which they studied or worked. We will learn how they struggled to gain their trust. Invariably, the narrative begins with the presenters initially facing the distrust of the Natives because of their settler/white privilege. But through perseverance and good intentions, the researchers overcome this distrust and earn the friendship of their ethnographic objects. In these stories of course, to evoke Gayatri Spivak, the subaltern does not speak. We do not hear what their theoretical analysis of their relationship is. We do not hear about how they were organizing on their own before they were saved/studied by these presenters. Native peoples are not positioned as those who can engage in self-reflection; they can only judge the worth of the confession. Consequently, the presenters of these narratives often present very nervously. Did they speak to all their privileges? Did they properly confess? Or will someone in the audience notice a mistake and question whether they have in fact become a fully-developed anti-racist subject? In that case, the subject would have to then engage in further acts of self-reflection that require new confessions in the future. Thus, borrowing from the work of Scott Morgensen and Hiram Perez, the confession of privilege, while claiming to be anti-racist and anti-colonial, is actually a strategy that helps constitute the settler/white subject. In Morgensen’s analysis, the settler subject constitutes itself through incorporation. Through this logic of settlement, settlers become the rightful inheritors of all that was indigenous – land, resources, indigenous spirituality, or culture. Thus, indigeneity is not necessarily framed as antagonistic to the settler subject; rather the Native is supposed to disappear into the project of settlement. The settler becomes the “new and improved” version of the Native, thus legitimizing and naturalizing the settler’s claims to this land.