# 1NC

## 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

Steinberg and Freeley ’13 David Director of Debate at U Miami, Former President of CEDA, officer, American Forensic Association and National Communication Association. Lecturer in Communication studies and rhetoric. Advisor to Miami Urban Debate League, Masters in Communication, and Austin, JD, Suffolk University, attorney who focuses on criminal, personal injury and civil rights law, *Argumentation and Debate Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making*, Thirteen Edition

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.

#### Independently failure to provide an advocacy text is a voting issue for fairness and predictability---ensures there’s no stable debate because their always one-step ahead and can permute any negative arguments because nothing is mutually exclusive---that leaves us with concessionary ground which destroys the intellectual potential of debate

## anthro

#### The 1AC is a human-centric ethic—this culminates in ecological collapse and extinction---the alternative is to embrace an ethic of organism

Ahkin ‘10 (Melanie Ahkin, Monash University, 2010, “Human Centrism, Animist Materialism, and the Critique of Rationalism in Val Plumwood’s Critical Ecological Feminism,” Emergent Australian Philosophers, a peer reviewed journal of philosophy,http://www.eap.philosophy-australia.com/archives.html)

These five features provide the basis for hegemonic centrism insofar as they promote certain conceptual and perceptual distortions of reality which universalise and naturalise the standpoint of the superior relata as primary or centre, and deny and subordinate the standpoints of inferiorised others as secondary or derivative. Using standpoint theory analysis, Plumwood's reconceptualisation of human chauvinist frameworks locates and dissects these logical characteristics of dualism, and the conceptual and perceptual distortions of reality common to centric structures, as follows. Radical exclusion is found in the rationalist emphasis on differences between humans and non-human nature, its valourisation of a human rationality conceived as exclusionary of nature, and its minimisation of similarities between the two realms. Homogenisation and stereotyping occur especially in the rationalist denial of consciousness to nature, and its denial of the diversity of mental characteristics found within its many different constituents, facilitating a perception of nature as homogeneous and of its members as interchangeable and replaceable resources. This definition of nature in terms of its **lack** of human rationality and consciousness means that its identity remains relative to that of the dominant human group, and its difference is marked as deficiency, permitting its inferiorisation. Backgrounding and denial may be observed in the conception of nature as extraneous and inessential background to the foreground of human culture, in the human denial of dependency on the natural environment, and denial of the ethical and political constraints which the unrecognised ends and needs of non-human nature might otherwise place on human behaviour. These features together create an ethical discontinuity between humans and non-human nature which denies nature's value and agency, and thereby promote its instrumentalisation and exploitation for the benefit of humans.11 This dualistic logic helps to universalise the human centric standpoint, making invisible and seemingly inevitable the conceptual and perceptual distortions of reality and oppression of non-human nature it enjoins. The alternative standpoints and perspectives of members of the inferiorised class of nature are denied legitimacy and subordinated to that of the class of humans, ultimately becoming invisible once this master standpoint becomes part of the very structure of thought.12 Such an anthropocentric framework creates a variety of serious injustices and prudential risks, making it highly ecologically irrational.13 The hierarchical value prescriptions and epistemic distortions responsible for its biased, reductive conceptualisation of nature strips the non-human natural realm of non-instrumental value, and impedes the fair and impartial treatment of its members. Similarly, anthropocentrism creates distributive injustices by restricting ethical concern to humans, admitting partisan distributive relationships with non-human nature in the forms of commodification and instrumentalisation. The prudential risks and **blindspots** created by anthropocentrism are problematic for nature and humans alike and are of especial concern within our current context of radical human dependence on an irreplaceable and increasingly degraded natural environment. These prudential risks are in large part consequences of the centric structure's promotion of illusory human disembeddedness, self-enclosure and insensitivity to the significance and survival needs of non-human nature: The logic of centrism naturalises an illusory order in which the centre appears to itself to be disembedded, and this is especially dangerous in contexts where there is real and radical dependency on an Other who is simultaneously weakened by the application of that logic.14 Within the context of human-nature relationships, such a logic must inevitably lead to failure, either through the catastrophic extinction of our natural environment and the consequent collapse of our species, or more **hopefully** by the abandonment and transformation of the human centric framework.15

## off

#### The aff commodifies the suffering of the victims of the drug war 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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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. 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.

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#### The war on drugs is not an isolated incident – it is the latest in a line of imperial projects created and justified by the nature of Western modernity – our perceptions and portrayals of Latin America are soaked in the foundation logic of colonialism

Mignolo 5(Walter, Professor at Duke University, Joint Appointments in Cultural Anthropology and Romance Studies, “The Idea of Latin America,” pg 5)

How do these two entangled concepts, modernity and coloniality, work together as two sides of the same reality to shape the idea of “America” in the sixteenth century and of “Latin” America in the nineteenth? Modernity has been a term in use for the past thirty or forty years. In spite of differences in opinions and deﬁnitions, there are some basic agreements about its meaning. From the European perspective, modernity refers to a period in world history that has been traced back either to the European Renaissance and the “discovery” of America (this view is common among scholars from the South of Europe, Italy, Spain, and Portugal), or to the European Enlightenment (this view is held by scholars and intel-lectuals and assumed by the media in Anglo-Saxon countries – England, Germany, and Holland – and one Latin country, France). On the other side of the colonial difference, scholars and intellectu-als in the ex-Spanish and ex-Portuguese colonies in South America have been advancing the idea that the achievements of modernity go hand in hand with the violence of coloniality. The difference, to reiterate, lies in which side of each local history is told. O’Gorman’s “invention of America” theory was a turning point that put on the table a perspective that was absent and not recognized from the existing European and imperial narratives. Let’s agree that O’Gorman made visible a dimension of history that was occluded by the partial “discovery” narratives, and let’s also agree that it is an example of how things may look from the varied experiences of coloniality. America, as a concept, goes hand in hand with that of modernity, and both are the self-representation of imperial projects and global designs that originated in and were implemented by European actors and institutions. The invention of America was one of the nodal points that contributed to create the conditions for imperial European expansion and a lifestyle, in Europe, that served as a model for the achievements of humanity. Thus, the “discovery and conquest of America” is not just one more event in some long and linear historical chain from the creation of the world to the present, leaving behind all those who were not attentive enough to jump onto the bandwagon of modernity. Rather, it was a key turning point in world history: It was the moment in which the demands of modernity as the ﬁnal horizon of salvation began to require the imposition of a speciﬁc set of values that relied on the logic of coloniality for their implementation. The “invention of America” thesis offers, instead, a perspective from coloniality and, in consequence, reveals that the advances of modernity outside of Europe rely on a colonial matrix of power that includes the renaming of the lands appropriated and of the people inhabiting them, insofar as the diverse ethnic groups and civilizations in Tawantinsuyu and Anáhuac, as well as those from Africa, were reduced to “Indians” and “Blacks.” The idea of “America” and of “Latin” America could, of course, be accounted for within the philosophical framework of European modernity, even if that account is offered by Creoles of European descent dwelling in the colonies and embracing the Spanish or Portuguese view of events. What counts, however, is that the need for telling the part of the story that was not told requires a shift in the geography of reason and of understanding. “Coloniality,” therefore, points toward and intends to unveil an embedded logic that enforces control, domina-tion, and exploitation disguised in the language of salvation, progress, modernization, and being good for every one. The double register of modernity/coloniality has, perhaps, never been as clear as it has been recently under the administration of US president George W. Bush. Pedagogically, it is important for my argument to conceptualize “modernity/coloniality” as two sides of the same coin and not as two separate frames of mind: you cannot be modern without being colonial; and if you are on the colonial side of the spectrum you have to transact with modernity – you cannot ignore it. The very idea of America cannot be separated from coloniality: the entire continent emerged as such in the European consciousness as a massive extent of land to be appropriated and of people to be converted to Christianity, and whose labor could be exploited. Coloniality, as a term, is much less frequently heard than “moder-nity” and many people tend to confuse it with “colonialism.” The two words are related, of course. While “colonialism” refers to spe-ciﬁc historical periods and places of imperial domination (e.g., Spanish, Dutch, British, the US since the beginning of the twentieth century), “coloniality” refers to the logical structure of colonial domination underlying the Spanish, Dutch, British, and US control of the Atlantic economy and politics, and from there the control and management of almost the entire planet. In each of the particu-lar imperial periods of colonialism – whether led by Spain (mainly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) or by England (from the nineteenth century to World War II) or by the US (from the early twentieth century until now) – the same logic was maintained; only power changed hands.

#### This makes extermination of the Latin American other an imperative

Lander 2k (Edgardo, Professor of Social Sciences at the Universidad Central de Venezuela, “Eurocentrism and Colonialism in Latin American Social Thought”, Nepantla: Views from South, Vol. 1 Iss. 3, p. 519-532)

Political and social thought regarding Latin America has been historically characterized by a tension between the search for its specific attributes and an external view that has seen these lands from the narrow perspective of European experience. There has also been an opposition between the challenge of the rich potentialities of this New World and distress over its difference, which stands in contrast with the ideal represented by European culture and racial composition. Nonetheless, external colonial views and regrets because of the difference have been widely hegemonic. A brief revision of the texts of the first republican constitutions is enough to illustrate how liberals, in their attempt to transplant and install a replica of their understanding of the European or North American experience, almost completely ignore the specific cultural and historical conditions of the societies about which they legislate. When these conditions are considered, it is with the express purpose of doing away with them. The affliction because of the difference—the awkwardness of living in a continent that is not white, urban, cosmopolitan, and civilized— finds its best expression in positivism. Sharing the main assumptions and prejudices of nineteenth-century European thought (scientific racism, patriarchy, the idea of progress), positivism reaffirms the colonial discourse. The continent is imagined from a single voice, with a single subject: white, masculine, urban, cosmopolitan. The rest, the majority, is the “other,” barbarian, primitive, black, Indian, who has nothing to contribute to the future of these societies. It would be imperative to whiten, westernize, or exterminate that majority.

#### The structures of knowledge concerning Mexico, the drug war, and Latin America as a whole are constituted by this underlying supremacy of modernity – only a pluralization of knowledge and evaluation of alternate perspectives can solve

Alcoff 7 (Linda, professor of philosophy at Syracuse University, “Mignolo’s Epistemology of Coloniality”, The New Centennial Review, Winter 2007, pp. 79-102)

Modernity” was imagined as the house of epistemology. ¶ —Walter Mignolo (2006, 93)¶ Together with Enrique Dussel, his fellow Argentine exile, and Anibal Quijano, a Peruvian sociologist, Mignolo’s main argument throughout his corpus ¶ has been that modernity emerged from colonialism, not after it nor simply ¶ alongside. Colonialism is constitutive of modernity, of its teleological macronarratives of human progress, and of the material base necessary to provide ¶ both the surplus and the self-representation required to imagine Europe ¶ as the vanguard of the human race. To put this another way, colonialism is ¶ constitutive of both the base and the superstructure of modernity.¶ From Quijano, Mignolo has taken up the idea of a coloniality of power to ¶ refer to the system that organized the distribution of epistemic, moral, and ¶ aesthetic resources in a way that both reflects and reproduces empire (Quijano 1998). Th e concept of coloniality of power allows us to think through ¶ how the colonized were subjected not simply to a rapacious exploitation of ¶ all their resources but also to a hegemony of Eurocentric knowledge systems.¶ It allows us to understand the constitutive relationship between the historical a priori of European thought and its off -shore adventures. It also allows ¶ us to think through the Anglo- and Eurocentric structure of thought and ¶ representation that continues to dominate much of the world today, whether ¶ or not, in a given place and time, formal national liberation has been won.¶ From Dussel, Mignolo took up the idea of transmodernity, which signifies ¶ the global networks within which European modernity itself became possible. ¶ Transmodernity operates to displace the teleological and linear progression ¶ of modernity and postmodernity, rendering even the most anti-Western ¶ postmodernists still complicit with the temporal concepts of colonialism that ¶ erased the colonial diff erence. Whereas the concepts of modernity and postmodernity maintain the Eurocentric imaginary timeline of Greece → Rome ¶ → Renaissance → Modern World, relegating the colonized areas of the world ¶ as peripheral to the main story, the concept of transmodernity is intended ¶ by Dussel to displace that timeline with a spatialization in which the whole ¶ planet is involved at every stage in history. If modernity is imagined to be ¶ European, transmodernity is planetary, with principle players from all parts ¶ of the globe.¶ Both Dussel and Quijano have developed their concepts of transmodernity and of the coloniality of power, respectively, with a strong linkage to ¶ questions of knowledge and questions of reason. Quijano writes that the ¶ concept “coloniality of power” implies “the hegemony of Eurocentrism as ¶ epistemological perspective”(quoted in Mignolo 2000, 54). And for Dussel, ¶ transmodernity must be accompanied by what he calls a “liberating reason” ¶ as an alternative to the imperial, ego-logical reason of cartesian colonial ¶ modernity (see esp. 1995). But even more than these and other theorists of ¶ colonialism, it is Walter Mignolo who has focused on the epistemological ¶ eff ects of colonialism. Since the publication in 1995 of Th e Darker Side of the ¶ Renaissance, Mignolo’s central focus in his subsequent work, including the ¶ collection of essays Local Histories/Global Designs and in several essays that ¶ have appeared in journals and anthologies, has been on the subordination of ¶ non-European modes of knowing, conceptualization, and representation.¶ Hegemony in Mignolo’s usage of the term is very much taken from the ¶ Gramscian idea of hegemony as the construction of mass consent. Th at is,¶ hegemony is achieved through a project of persuasion that works principally ¶ through claims to truth. Europe is ahead because Europe is smarter and ¶ more reflective than the rest of the world; the United States has the right to ¶ hog the world’s resources because it knows best how to make use of them. ¶ Leading liberals like Arthur Schlesinger make the claim for Western epistemic ¶ supremacy without any embarrassment: Schlesinger claims not that Europe ¶ (and the U.S. as a European nation) has made no mistakes, but that Europe ¶ alone invented the scientific method, which gave it the capacity to critique its ¶ mistakes. Moreover, he claims that, although every culture “has done terrible ¶ things,” “whatever the particular crimes of Europe, that continent is also the ¶ source—the unique source—of those liberating ideas . . . to which most of the ¶ world today aspires. These are European ideas, not Asian, nor African, nor ¶ Middle eastern ideas, except by adoption”(Schlesinger 1992, 127; emphasis in ¶ original). The result of the wide acceptance of such hegemonic claims in the ¶ United States and in Europe is a broad-based consent to imperial war as the ¶ presumptive entitlement of the political vanguard of the human race; the ¶ result of the acceptance of such hegemonic claims in the colonized world ¶ includes such symptomatic eff ects as the ones Samuel Ramos and Octavio ¶ Paz described when they said that Mexicans have an alienated relationship ¶ to their own temporal reality, and that they imagine the real present as occurring somewhere else than where they live. Th e temporal displacement ¶ or alienation of space, which causes the colonized person to be unable to ¶ experience their own time as the now and instead to see that “now” as occurring in another space, is the result of a Eurocentric organization of time ¶ in which time is measured by the developments in technological knowledge, ¶ the gadget porn of iPods and BlackBerrys, and the languages in which that ¶ technological knowledge is developed. Who is developing the latest gadgets? ¶ What language do they speak? Th ese questions show us where the “now” ¶ resides, and thus, who is “behind.”¶ In Th e Phenomenology of Spirit (1977), Hegel works through a phenomenology of subjectivity precisely by beginning with the reference points “here” ¶ and “now.” Th ese are terms whose meaning cannot be elucidated without ¶ reference to a specific spatio-temporally located consciousness; we cannot ¶ judge either the justification or the meaning of a claim about “here” or about¶ “now” without knowing its specific context of reference. From these common ¶ indexicals, Hegel meant to show that all knowledge is similarly indexed to a ¶ specific subject, place, and time, in the sense that knowledge is dependent on ¶ justificatory procedures, measuring instruments, theoretical and metaphysical ¶ framing concepts, and categories of analysis that are intelligible within a given ¶ located domain—a fact that should not lead us to skepticism, in his view, but ¶ to see that to understand the world we need first to understand ourselves.¶ Th is explains why it is so important that the relationship between the ¶ colonized subject and its “here” and “now” is displaced by the colonial ¶ imaginary. If the knowing subject is the point of reference around which all ¶ knowledge claims revolve, what happens when that subject has only an indirect and long-distance relationship to its own “here” and “now,” or when it ¶ has what Ramos called an alienated account of its own reality (Ramos 1962)? ¶ Th e result is that it can no longer serve as the reference point for knowledge, ¶ or judge the adequacy of claims of justification. It no longer knows.¶ For Ramos, Paz, Zea, Edouard Glissant, and the many others in this ¶ tradition who identified colonial alienation of consciousness, the solution ¶ to alienation is a positional shift to “our America” in which a philosophy ¶ reflective of its own Latin American reality might be developed. In his most ¶ recent work, Th e Idea of Latin America (2005), Mignolo expresses doubts ¶ about this alternative Latin America construction, predicated as it is on another exclusionary paradigm. Before we can go about the process of developing a new philosophy and new account of “our” reality, he argues, we need ¶ a more extensive period of epistemological reflection. We need to develop ¶ a decolonial critical theory that will be more thoroughly delinked from the ¶ contemporary variants of the modern imperial designs of the recent past.¶ Th e fact that language, space, time, and history have all been colonized ¶ through the colonization of knowledge must give us pause before we borrow the founding concepts of Eurocentric thought, such as center/periphery, ¶ tradition/modernity, and primitive/civilized, or the very evaluative binary ¶ structure that grounds these. Mignolo develops Quijano’s concept of the coloniality of power, then, as a way to name that set of framing and organizing assumptions that justify hierarchies and make it almost impossible to evaluate ¶ alternative claims. Why was it said that there were no pre-Colombian books¶ or forms of writing, when it was known that the codices had been raided and ¶ burned in heaps? How could the claim that modernity represented an expansion of freedom not be challenged by its development within the context of ¶ colonialism? Why do we continue to conceptualize rationality as separate ¶ from and properly in dominion over the realm of aff ect, a distinctly Greek ¶ and nonindigenous notion, as Mariategui showed many decades ago? Why ¶ is it considered sufficient, even exemplary, to have one Latin Americanist in ¶ a university history department in the United States, when 5 or 10 or even 15 ¶ Europeanists are required? And in philosophy departments, it is not necessary to have a single one.¶ To think through and beyond these persistent limitations in Western ¶ knowledge practices, Mignolo argues that we need to reinscribe what he calls ¶ the “colonial diff erence” into the order of representation. If the Eurocentric ¶ imaginary of modernity has forgotten colonialism and relegated the colonized spaces to the periphery and to the past in its description of universal ¶ reality (even if that “past” paradoxically exists in the “present”), the task of ¶ the colonial diff erence is to reinscribe simultaneity. To make “our America” ¶ no longer considered peripheral and behind the “now,” hierarchical and binary categories must be replaced with pluralist and egalitarian ones.¶ Mignolo’s concept of the colonial diff erence is thus an attempt to reveal ¶ and displace the logic of the same by which Europeans have represented their ¶ others. Non-Europeans are seen as existing on the same historical trajectory, ¶ but further behind; their goals are the same, but not achieved to the same ¶ degree; their knowledge is subject to the same justificatory procedures, but ¶ it is less well-developed. In this way, true otherness or diff erence is invisible ¶ and unintelligible. By use of the term “colonial diff erence,” Mignolo seeks to ¶ break out of this logic of the same. He seeks both to reveal the way in which ¶ power has been at work in creating that diff erence (that is, the way in which ¶ colonialism creates “backwardness” both materially and ideologically) as ¶ well as the way in which colonial power represents and evaluates diff erence. ¶ The coloniality of power, in other words, produces, evaluates, and manages ¶ the colonial difference.¶ Now here let me signal one of the issues of critical debate I want to raise ¶ later on in the paper: What is the nature of the diff erence that Mignolo¶ means to signify by the term “colonial diff erence”? Is it an absolute or a relative diff erence; that is, does it stand alone or is it dependent on its relation to ¶ Eurocentrism? Is it, like the concept of race, an epiphenomena of colonialism ¶ itself, or does it preexist the colonial encounter in the way that Dussel suggests that “living labor” preexists capitalism? What, in other words, is the ¶ metaphysical status of the colonial diff erence?¶ I will return to this question, but here let me conclude this summary ¶ exposition of Mignolo’s critique of Western epistemology before turning to ¶ his more constructive rebuilding of knowledge. First, we need to understand ¶ where Mignolo’s critique of Western epistemology fits within the internal ¶ debates within Western philosophy itself, in which binary concepts and ¶ absolutist accounts of knowledge have come under so much criticism since ¶ the turn away from positivism (a trend that has occurred in both the analytic ¶ and continental traditions). One good way to illuminate his relationship to ¶ this internal Western critique is to look at Mignolo’s changed relationship to ¶ the tradition of hermeneutics.¶ Within the debates of Western epistemology, hermeneutics, as the ¶ science of interpretation that focuses on understanding rather than mere ¶ propositional knowledge, is often portrayed as the other of epistemology, ¶ its more expansive sibling, or its gentler, kinder face. Because hermeneutics ¶ recognizes the interpretive step involved in all understanding, thus making ¶ it possible to pluralize meaning, many see hermeneutics as less prone to ¶ imperialism than epistemology proper. For epistemology in the Cartesian ¶ tradition, to note the role of the situation of the knower is to submit to ¶ relativism, and to acknowledge the ubiquity of interpretive frames would ¶ be to invite skepticism. Knowledge is either imperial or it does not exist. For ¶ hermeneutics, by contrast, the situated-ness of knowers, what Gadamer calls ¶ “prejudgement” and Heidegger calls “foreknowledge,” that works to situate ¶ both knower and known in time and space, is a precondition of knowledge ¶ and not the sign of its demise. Just as Hegel showed that “here” and “now” ¶ cannot be elucidated outside of a context, so hermeneutics argues that ¶ knowledge is not intelligible outside of a tradition.¶ Much of Mignolo’s critique of epistemology concerns its inability to acknowledge its location, the undeniable fact of its local history. Epistemology’s¶ hegemonic eff ects are tied to its denial of its own spatial locality. Western ¶ epistemology systematically delocalized knowledge, Mignolo argues (2000b, ¶ 22, 41). So one might reasonably wonder why Mignolo rejects hermeneutics ¶ as vigorously as he rejects epistemology, given hermeneutic’s acknowledgement of the local foundation of all truth.¶ The reason is because Mignolo sees hermeneutics (at least in his more recent work) as the corollary of epistemology, not its true other. Epistemology’s ¶ proper focus is scientific knowledge; hermeneutics’ proper focus is meaning ¶ and understanding. Both domains, however, are represented without the ¶ colonial diff erence. The question of what is meaningful or intelligible, in ¶ other words, is no less subject to colonial representations than the question ¶ of what is true (9). Both are judged within a European frame of reference. ¶ At one point Mignolo was adopting the phrase “pluritopic hermeneutics,” ¶ following Raimundo Panikkar, to signify the way in which a hermeneutic ¶ approach might be cured of its Eurocentrism and provide a real alternative to monological and imperial unified standards of reference. Pluritopic ¶ hermeneutics, as opposed to the usual monotopic hermeneutics one finds in ¶ Gadamer, Heidegger, and the European tradition generally, does not assume ¶ there exists one single unified historical culture with which new meanings ¶ must be “fused,” to use Gadamer’s term. Rather, pluritopic hermeneutics ¶ assumes no central frame or unified tradition at all and thus opens up the ¶ determination of meaning to multiple possibilities even within the same ¶ historical horizon.

#### The alternative is to endorse a strategy of epistemic disobedience—only this delinking from Western though can break the illusion of progressive modernity and accurately portray colonialist domination—this is the only form of ethical engagement

Mignolo 12 (Walter, Professor at Duke University, Joint Appointments in Cultural Anthropology and Romance Studies, “Epistemic Disobedience and the Decolonial Option: A Manifesto,” Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World, 45-46)

But the basic formulation of decolonial delinking (e.g., desprendimiento) was advanced by Aníbal Quijano in his ground-breaking article “Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad” (1991) [Coloniality and modernity/rationality]. The argument was that, on the one hand, an analytic of the limits of Eurocentrism (as a hegemonic structure of knowledge and beliefs) is needed. But that analytic was considered necessary rather than sufficient. It was necessary, Quijano asserted, “desprenderse de las vinculaciones de la racionalidad-modernidad con la colonialidad, en primer término, y en definitiva con todo poder no constituido en la decisión libre de gentes libres” [“It is necessary to extricate oneself from the linkages between rationality/modernity and coloniality, first of all, and definitely from all power which is not constituted by free decisions made by free people”].4 “Desprenderse” means epistemic de-linking or, in other words, epistemic disobedience. Epistemic disobedience leads us to decolonial options as a set of projects that have in common the effects experienced by all the inhabitants of the globe that were at the receiving end of global designs to colonize the economy (appropriation of land and natural resources), authority (management by the Monarch, the State, or the Church), and police and military enforcement (coloniality of power), to colonize knowledges (languages, categories of thoughts, belief systems, etc.) and beings (subjectivity). “Delinking” is then necessary because there is no way out of the coloniality of power from within Western (Greek and Latin) categories of thought. Consequently, de-linking implies epistemic disobedience rather than the constant search for “newness” (e.g., as if Michel Foucault’s concept of racism and power were “better” or more “appropriate” because they are “newer”—that is, post-modern—within the chronological history or archaeology of European ideas). Epistemic disobedience takes us to a different place, to a different “beginning” (not in Greece, but in the responses to the “conquest and colonization” of America and the massive trade of enslaved Africans), to spatial sites of struggles and building rather than to a new temporality within the same space (from Greece, to Rome, to Paris, to London, to Washington DC). I will explore the opening up of these spaces—the spatial paradigmatic breaks of epistemic disobedience—in Waman Puma de Ayala and Ottabah Cugoano. The basic argument (almost a syllogism) that I will develop here is the following: if coloniality is constitutive of modernity since the salvationist rhetoric of modernity presupposes the oppressive and condemnatory logic of coloniality (from there come the damnés of Fanon), then this oppressive logic produces an energy of discontent, of distrust, of release within those who react against imperial violence. This energy is translated into decolonial projects that, as a last resort, are also constitutive of modernity. Modernity is a three-headed hydra, even though it only reveals one head: the rhetoric of salvation and progress. Coloniality, one of whose facets is poverty and the propagation of AIDS in Africa, does not appear in the rhetoric of modernity as its necessary counterpart, but rather as something that emanates from it. For example, the Millennium Plan of the United Nations headed by Kofi Anan, and the Earth Institute at Columbia University headed by Jeffrey Sachs, work in collaboration to end poverty (as the title of Sach’s book announces).5 But, while they question the unfortunate consequences of modernity, never for a moment is the ideology of modernity or the black pits that hide its rhetoric ever questioned: the consequences of the very nature of the capitalist economy—by which such ideology is supported—in its various facets since the mercantilism of the sixteenth century, free trade of the following centuries, the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century, and the technological revolution of the twentieth century. On the other hand, despite all the debate in the media about the war against terrorism, on one side, and all types of uprisings, of protests and social movements, it is never suggested that the logic of coloniality that hides beneath the rhetoric of modernity necessarily generates the irreducible energy of humiliated, vilified, forgotten, or marginalized human beings. Decoloniality is therefore the energy that does not allow the operation of the logic of coloniality nor believes the fairy tales of the rhetoric of modernity. Therefore, decoloniality has a varied range of manifestations—some undesirable, such as those that Washington today describes as “terrorists”—and decolonial thinking is, then, thinking that de-links and opens (de-linking and opening in the title come from here) to the possibilities hidden (colonized and discredited, such as the traditional, barbarian, primitive, mystic, etc.) by the modern rationality that is mounted and enclosed by categories of Greek, Latin, and the six modern imperial European languages.

## Case

#### No impact

**Dickinson**, associate professor of history – UC Davis, **‘4**

(Edward, Central European History, 37.1)

In short, the continuities between early twentieth-century biopolitical discourse and the practices of the welfare state in our own time are unmistakable. Both are instances of the “disciplinary society” and of biopolitical, regulatory, social-engineering modernity, and they share that genealogy with more authoritarian states, including the National Socialist state, but also fascist Italy, for example. And it is certainly fruitful to view them from this very broad perspective. **But that analysis can easily become superficial and misleading**, because it obfuscates the **profoundly different** strategic and local dynamics of power in the two kinds of regimes. Clearly the democratic welfare state is not only formally but also substantively **quite different from totalitarianism.** Above all, again, it has nowhere developed the fateful, radicalizing dynamic that characterized National Socialism (or for that matter Stalinism), the psychotic logic that leads from economistic population management to mass murder. Again, there is always the potential for such a discursive regime to generate coercive policies. In those cases in which the regime of rights does not successfully produce “health,” such a system can —and historically does— create compulsory programs to enforce it. But again, there are political and policy potentials and constraints in such a structuring of biopolitics that are very different from those of National Socialist Germany. Democratic biopolitical regimes require, enable, and incite a degree of self-direction and participation that is **functionally incompatible** with authoritarian or totalitarian structures. And this pursuit of biopolitical ends through a regime of democratic citizenship does appear, historically, to have imposed increasingly **narrow limits on coercive policies**, and to have generated a “logic” or imperative of increasing liberalization. Despite limitations imposed by political context and the slow pace of discursive change, I think this is the unmistakable message of the really very impressive waves of legislative and welfare reforms in the 1920s or the 1970s in Germany.90

Of course it is not yet clear whether this is an irreversible dynamic of such systems. Nevertheless, such regimes are characterized by sufficient degrees of autonomy (and of the potential for its expansion) for sufé cient numbers of people that I think it becomes useful to conceive of them as productive of a strategic coné guration of power relations that might fruitfully be analyzed as a condition of “liberty,” just as much as they are productive of constraint, oppression, or manipulation. At the very least, **totalitarianism cannot be the sole orientation point** for our understanding of biopolitics, the only end point of the logic of social engineering.

**This notion is not at all at odds with the core of Foucauldian** (and Peukertian) **theory.** Democratic welfare states are regimes of power/knowledge no less than early twentieth-century totalitarian states; these systems are not “opposites,” in the sense that they are two alternative ways of organizing the same thing. But they are two very different ways of organizing it. The concept “power” should not be read as a universal stiè ing night of oppression, manipulation, and entrapment, in which all political and social orders are grey, are essentially or effectively “the same.” Power is a set of social relations, in which individuals and groups have varying degrees of autonomy and effective subjectivity. And discourse is, as Foucault argued, “tactically polyvalent.” Discursive elements (like the various elements of biopolitics) can be combined in different ways to form parts of quite different strategies (like totalitarianism or the democratic welfare state); they cannot be assigned to one place in a structure, but rather circulate. The varying possible constellations of power in modern societies create “multiple modernities,” modern societies with quite **radically differing potentials.**91

#### Focus on exception depoliticizes violence, rendering it uncontestable.

Jef Huysmans 8, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS) at the Open University, UK, The Jargon of Exception—On Schmitt, Agamben and the Absence of Political Society, International Political Sociology (2008) 2, 165–183

Even if one would argue that Agamben’s framing of the current political conditions are valuable for understanding important changes that have taken place in the twentieth century and that are continuing in the twenty ﬁrst, they also are to a considerable extent depoliticizing. Agamben’s work tends to guide the analysis to unmediated, factual life. For example, some draw on Agamben to highlight the importance of bodily strategies of resistance. One of the key examples is individual refugees protesting against their detention by sewing up lips and eyes. They exemplify how individualized naked life resists by deploying their bodily, biological condition against sovereign biopolitical powers (for example, Edkins and Pin-Fat 2004:15–17). I follow Adorno and others, however, that such a conception of bodily, naked life is not political. It ignores how this life only exists and takes on political form through various socioeconomic, technological, scientiﬁc, legal, and other mediations. For example, the images of the sewed-up eyelids and lips of the individualized and biologized refugees have no political signiﬁcance without being mediated by public media, intense mobilizations on refugee and asylum questions, contestations of human rights in the courts, etc. It is these mediations that are the object and structuring devices of political struggle. Reading the politics of exception as the central lens onto modern conceptions of politics, as both Agamben and Schmitt do, erases from the concept of politics a rich and constitutive history of sociopolitical struggles, traditions of thought linked to this history, and key sites and temporalities of politics as well as the central processes through which individualized bodily resistances gain their sociopolitical signiﬁcance.

#### The affirmative’s demand for a pure rejection of sovereignty results in scagegoating–the impact is massive violence

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(Alberto, *CR: The New Centennial Review*, 4.3)

But Rasch remains a Schmittian, not a Benjaminian. For him, no interruption of the political principle of reason—the ultimate principle of political order, the nomos of the nomos, the principle of sovereign exception, which he persuasively shows to be a case of the logical law of the excluded middle (Rasch 2002, 38–42)—is possible **without** risking the collapse of the political into an eschatology of the end of the world, which is the same as an eschatology of radical origin: “to be liberated from the structure of sovereignty is to be returned to a natural state of innocence” (48). Rasch is suspicious of Benjamin’s—and Agamben’s—pure violence as the harbinger of a “completely new politics” that might in fact **accomplish** **nothing** but an exclusion of the political (38). As he says in a different essay, “the political does not exist to usher in the good life by eliminating social antagonism; rather, it exists to serve as the medium for an acceptably limited and therefore productive conflict in the inevitable absence of any final, universally accepted vision of the good life” (Rasch n.d., 30–31). Rasch opposes a politics of the katechon—a properly Schmittian politics of the containment of evil—to the **messianic** **politics** of the reestablishment of natural innocence that he detects in Agamben’s Homo Sacer.12 Is there, in fact, in Agamben’s State of Exception, an “appeal to the ontological hope” of “infinite perfectibility” (Rasch n.d., 29)? And, a fortiori, is that also what is behind Derrida’s Voyous? The crucial question here concerns the determination of a **practical** understanding of the political beyond every messianic delusion. Messianic delusion turns everypoliticsinto a kind of **ultrapolitics** whose political effectivity then **wavers between the inane and the catastrophic**. An alternative question is: are onto-theological politics the only possible politics for our age? R E A S O N B E YOND R E A S O N Autoimmunity is said to refer to “this strange illogical logic through which a living being can spontaneously destroy, in an autonomous fashion, that which, in it, is destined to protect it against the other, to immunize it against the intrusive aggression of the other” (Derrida 2003, 173). Autoimmunity is therefore a kind of “death drive” (215) that can be related to the structure of betrayal as self-betrayal, which, as we saw, Lacan considers a radical structure of the human relationship to being. For Lacan, the abandonment of the ethical imperative not to give ground on one’s desire is ultimately an accommodation to the real from which there is no return; the path back of the “ordinary man” into his own business is blocked once he has paid the price of accommodation to the service of goods and has betrayed the structure of his desire: “once one has crossed that boundary . . . there is no way back. It might be possible to do some repair work, but not to undo it” (Lacan 1992, 321). This betrayal formalizes politics—just as it formalizes religion—for Lacan. Lacanian politics, to the extent that they are understood to be a politics of the subject, are framed by a postrevolutionary service of goods, in which a sublimated jouissance waits infinitely, and uselessly, for the formation of the universal State. Is an alternative frame for contemporary politics available? Both Derrida and Agamben radicalize Schmitt’s intuition regarding the necessity of a transformation in the concept of the political given the exhaustion of the political order of modernity. The political order of modernity has exhausted itself through autoimmunitary developments— something that Schmitt anticipated both in his partisan theory, through the projection of the figure of the total counterpartisan that follows “the inevitability of a moral compulsion,” and in his investigation of the notion of a nomos of the earth, which reaches an unexpected arrest in the notion of the Kantian unjust enemy. If both Derrida and Agamben can be said to be Schmittian to a certain extent, in spite of their fundamental antagonism to the German thinker, it is precisely insofar as both of them take as point of departure for their investigations of political sovereignty some of Schmitt’s crucial theories. Derrida makes it very clear through a sort of disavowing avowal: “One did not have to wait for Schmitt to know that the sovereign is he who decides exceptionally and performatively on the exception, he who guards or gives himself the right to suspend the law; or to know that this juridico-political concept, like all the others, secularizes a theological heritage” (2003, 211–12). And Agamben of course makes Schmitt a crucial reference in both Homo Sacer and State of Exception.13 Both of them are interested, not, like Rasch, in a reassertion of sovereignty as the only possible pragmatic framing for a conceptualization of the political today, but rather in a dismantling of the claims of sovereignty as ultimate political claims, or as the ultimate claims of the political. They want to explore the contemporary troubles of sovereignty, troubles in sovereignty—what Derrida can and does call in French mal de souveraineté (196). These troubles are autoimmunity troubles: sovereignty ultimately suffers from itself, as it is its action that ultimately dooms it to face, in a certain far-from-reassuring impotence, the absolute threat or the anomic terror of the real. Can we then think of politics not beyond sovereignty, but rather as not exhausted by the sovereign frame? Is there a position—a properly political position—that can establish a distance from sovereignty without dreaming, like the Lacanian ordinary man, of the messianic fulfillment of the universal State, when desire will coincide absolutely with itself (and when, therefore, there will be nothing but the sovereign, as sovereign desire)? If there is a position, if it is possible to work out a position that can think of sovereignty without being absolutely circumscribed by sovereignty, that position will have accomplished a derangement of onto-theology. It will not have gotten rid of it, just as it will not have gotten rid of sovereignty, but it will have displaced onto-theology, and its political translation as sovereignty theory, from the horizon of the political. Derrida uses the shorthand “nonsovereign god” for this possibility, echoing Heidegger but also displacing Heidegger.14 And Agamben talks about the liberation of anomy, as a solicitation of the deep historical compromise of violence and the law. If violence becomes the “thing” of politics for Agamben, this is so to the extent that “human action” must “rescind the link between violence and the law” in order to expose the violence of the law, rather than the lawfulness of violence (which is the Schmittian project). But the reference to human action is already revealing of a limit in Agamben’s project. Certainly human action is an unavoidable referent for politics. But Agamben is still under the Lacanian determination, if on the side of the hero. His project, a liberation of pure violence, is a tragic project to the extent that it leads the hero towards what Sophocles calls até. Of até Lacan says: “It is an irreplaceable little word. It designates the limit that human life can only briefly cross. The text of the Chorus is significant and insistent—ektos atas. Beyond this até, one can only spend a brief period of time, and that’s where Antigone wants to go. . . . One learns from Antigone’s own mouth testimony on the point she has reached: she literally cannot stand it any more. . . . She lives with the memory of the intolerable drama of the one whose descendence has just been destroyed in the figure of her two brothers. She lives in the house of Creon; she is subject to his law; and that is something she cannot bear” (Lacan 1992, 262–63). Agamben, like the tragic hero, situates himself “with relation to the goal of desire” (265), namely, in the relentless pursuit of a liberation from the sovereign law that has created a permanent state of exception: the ineluctable violence of the state as the house of Creon. **To liberate pure violence in order to destroy the law**: of this one could say what Lacan says of the tragic hero, namely, “he knows what he is doing. He always manages to cause things to come crashing down on his head” (275). Agamben defines the contemporary state as one in which “the norm rules, but it is not applied (it does not have force) and . . . acts that have no legal value acquire the force. . . . The state of exception is an anomic space, where what is set in place is a force of law without law . . . , where act and power are radically separated” (52). If the contemporary state, the contemporary embodiment of the law, is absolute exception, understood as absolute oppression, and if only a liberation of violence from its lawful capture can release an appropriate politics, this politics’ human action, like Antigone, stands in “as a pure and simple relationship of the human being to that of which he miraculously happens to be the bearer, namely, the signifying cut that confers on him the indomitable power of being what he is in the face of everything that may oppose him. Anything at all may be invoked in connection with this, and that’s what the Chorus does in the fifth act when it evokes the god that saves. Dionysos is this god; otherwise why would he appear here? There is nothing Dionysiac about the act and the countenance of Antigone. Yet she pushes to the limit the realization of something that might be called the pure and simple desire of death as such. She incarnates that desire” (282). A politics of heroic desire, in the ineluctable fulfillment of the ethical imperative, might be conceived to be an antisovereign politics, but it is still a subjective politics of catastrophe. At the limit, the hero does not abandon the horizon of sovereignty: **the hero simply inverts i**t, and puts it at the service of an intensely mystical jouissance, “the passage that allows access to the justice that one of Benjamin’s posthumous fragments defines as a state of the world in which it appears as an absolutely inappropriatable and unjuridifiable good” (Agamben 2003, 83).

# 2NC

## AT RP BAD

#### Arguing that a current government policy is bad is not roleplaying

Scott Harris, Director of Debate, Kansas University, 2013, This Ballot, http://www.cedadebate.org/forum/index.php?topic=4762.0

While this ballot has meandered off on a tangent I’ll take this opportunity to comment on an unrelated argument in the debate. Emporia argued that oppressed people should not be forced to role play being the oppressor. This idea that debate is about role playing being a part of the government puzzles me greatly. While I have been in debate for 40 years now never once have I role played being part of the government. When I debated and when I have judged debates I have never pretended to be anyone but Scott Harris. Pretending to be Scott Harris is burden enough for me. Scott Harris has formed many opinions about what the government and other institutions should or should not do without ever role playing being part of those institutions. I would form opinions about things the government does if I had never debated. I cannot imagine a world in which people don’t form opinions about the things their government does. I don’t know where this vision of debate comes from. I have no idea at all why it would be oppressive for someone to form an opinion about whether or not they think the government should or should not do something. I do not role play being the owner of the Chiefs when I argue with my friends about who they should take with the first pick in this year’s NFL draft. I do not role play coaching the basketball team or being a player if I argue with friends about coaching decisions or player decisions made during the NCAA tournament. If I argue with someone about whether or not the government should use torture or drone strikes I can do that and form opinions without ever role playing that I am part of the government. Sometimes the things that debaters argue is happening in debates puzzle me because they seem to be based on a vision of debate that is foreign to what I think happens in a debate round.