## 1

#### 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.

#### Latin America policy proposals activate agency and decision-making

IRI ’12 (International Republican Institute; “Latin America Think Tank Policy Initiative”; http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/Latin%20America%20Think%20Tank%20Policy%20Initiative%2011-4-11\_0.pdf)

An ongoing political trend in Latin America is the inconsistent execution of parties to create substantive policies that address social and economic needs of their countries. While citizens are hungry for solutions to problems affecting their everyday lives – challenges such as unemployment, high crime, bad roads, poor education and lack of medicine – their political parties are many times only offering speeches and rhetoric intended to win votes on Election Day. Within the ‘marketplace of ideas’, descriptive policy, strategic substance and thoughtful analysis give way to ambiguity, unachievable promises and shallow discourse. Within this framework, the race to win seats in public office no longer rely on the best ideas and the best plans, but instead hinge on the influence of money, scandals, superficial advertising and sensationalist journalism. The International Republican Institute’s (IRI) Latin America Think Tank Policy Initiative addresses this phenomenon and helps make political discourse substantive and relevant to the needs and interests of citizens. The initiative regularly joins together thought leaders and think tanks from countries in the region to share policy opinions and create common platforms of regional thematic priorities. In turn, these enlightened think tank analysts return their focus to their home countries and educate parties on innovative policy ideas, regional trends and helpful data. The goal is that parties and candidates will open themselves to this substantive influence and ultimately create their own thoughtful platforms. To help encourage the advancement of substantive policies, IRI fosters a policy-focused network that allows independent and party-affiliated think tanks throughout Latin America to not only convene and discuss important issues, but helps them share resources to study issues, share opinion research and develop specific policy direction that will ultimately be shared throughout the region. The network is focusing on eight priority themes which affect practically countries in Latin America: poverty reduction; education needs; health care improvement; environmental challenges; economic development, tax and fiscal policy; citizen security; democratic participation; and social inclusion. In the second phase of the initiative, IRI utilizes its relationships with political stakeholders, media and civil society to share these cooperative policy ideas more broadly, working with political leaders to incorporate these ideas into their own campaign platforms, policy agendas and governing strategies. Ultimately, these policy proposals will help drive more substantive discussion and debate among political leaders and elected officials on how to solve the most pressing issues facing Latin America.

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

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

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

Steinberg and Freeley ‘13

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*Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making*, Thirteen Edition

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

## 2

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 3

#### The hashtag is simply reproduced, re-constituted and put on a t-shirt—we can’t know the struggle of the students but their intellectual project only ensures the movement fails and is coopted

Mendoza 13 (Daryl, Philosophy and Religious Studies Department, University of San Carlos, Cebu City, Philippines, “Baudrillard and the Malaise in the Global Villiage: Can There Be a Global Community in an Era of Hyper-Communication Without Communion,” Volume 10, Number 1 (January 2013), International Journal of Baudrillard Studies, JS)

This massive proliferation of the image in society has allowed reality to be reduced to appearances. The original, reduced to its image, allows the representation to dominate the represented which is no longer differentiated from the former. This is properly where ideology, in Marx’s terms, becomes appropriate. As images begin to dominate, society is slowly absorbed as determinations of the mode of production; hence, reality is reduced to its appearances. This is where Debord’s analysis of the society of spectacle is seen at its height. For instance, all books before the invention of the printing press were unique to a specific scribe or writer. Specific scribes have specific ways of inscribing certain works into a book. With mass production, however, all copies of a book are rendered equivalent to its original. This is similar to newspapers and gazettes. The Presence in communication is known through the image that is being circulated en masse. This is why McLuhan, citing E.P Goldschmidt, considers the “Print Culture” to have ushered in the birth of the “author” (McLuhan 1962: 160-161). The author is a reification of presence equivalent to his image. [Goldschmidt argues: “What I have tried to demonstrate is that the Middle Ages for various reasons and from various causes did not possess the concept of ‘authorship’… [B]efore 1500 or thereabouts people did not attach the same importance to ascertaining the precise identity of the author of a book they were reading or quoting as we do now.” (Goldschmidt 1943: 116, 88; cited in McLuhan 1962: 160-161)]. The reification of presence leads him to a variable in the production scheme. Presence is no longer different from the message being reproduced serially. The message is the author. This is why at this stage the image “masks and denatures a profound reality” (Baudrillard [1981] 1994: 6). The serial image begins to hide presence and replace it with the author who is equivalent to his image. The author is the image, the image is the author. Such is why Baudrillard argues that this stage follows no longer the law of nature where the image counterfeits the original, but instead the law of the market and exchange. Presence becomes reified and hidden as author. Michel Foucault best describes this as a product of a “complex operation which constructs a certain rational being” that deprives “the subject (or its substitute) of its role as originator, and of analyzing the subject as a variable and complex function of discourse.” He further describes it as “an ideological product… which marks the manner in which we fear the proliferation of meaning” (Foucault [1979] 2010: 110, 118-119). The reification of Presence distanciates and hides it from its representation as author. The author being the image of presence becomes the privileged locus of attention in communication. For Baudrillard, this is malificence (Baudrillard [1981] 1994: 6). This is the time of illusion and ideology. The last stage of the Image enters when new disturbances of the human senses are introduced by a new form of media technology. This third stage of the Image, which Baudrillard calls the Hyperreality of Simulation, is made possible by the entrance of the Electric Age and the passing away of the Gutenberg Galaxy. With the discovery of electricity as a vehicle of communication, it is now possible to use the speed that electricity brings to the process of communication. From writing to typography, what dominate society are live news coverage and the internet. This is the period which we talked about earlier and which McLuhan describes as “The Global Village.” The speed of the current form of media technology has allowed for what David Harvey calls “time-space compression” (Harvey 1990: 147). [Harvey writes that it (contemporary capitalism) “has also entailed a new round of what I shall call ‘time-space’ compression… in the capitalist word – the time horizons of both private and public decision-making have shrunk, while satellite communication and declining transport costs have made it increasingly possible to spread those decisions immediately over an ever wider and variegated space” (Harvey 1990: 147)]. This made it possible for technology to communicate with almost anyone in the world, giving us “real-time” and proximate perspective. Here, the image is considered as the Hyperreal. It offers itself as presence even when it is not present. Unlike the industrial image which merely hides presence in the façade of the author, at this stage the image, the object, replaces the communion in communication. For Baudrillard, this is the period of sorcery and simulation, because the image “masks the absence of a profound reality” and comes to the point in which it “has no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacrum” (Baudrillard [1981] 1994: 6). For instance, the Internet and other contemporary forms of telecommunication bring together individuals from different parts of the globe. We have earlier mentioned some of these media forms, like Rheingold’s “Virtual Community”, teleconferencing, Emails, social networking, webcasting, News Live Coverage and etc. However, this bridging is not a meeting of two presences; rather, these presences are absorbed by the “network of communication” and reconstituted as binary codes or mere variables within the system. Baudrillard uses the term, “the Screen,” (Baudrillard [1987] 1988: 12) to describe this situation, the juncture of commutation that reduces the poles of exchange to a general code of difference: sender and receiver. This general difference is further transcribed in its radicality as signs, hence reducing the entire communication process as a closed system, ala de Saussure, that exchanges signs with signs in its own self. The Screen, which allows for this to occur, has transfigured communication into an ever increasing complexity of an operation. It is an operation that increasingly expands its reaches, yet never ultimately refers to any determination or beginning. Only then, as binary codes or signals, can these objects, sieved from their primordial state, conceive each other in an exchange of information. The communion in the communication process disappears. There is no more communion taking place. What is present is this digital double, a doppelgänger, which assumes itself as pseudo-presence within this giant communication and information system. In the Industrial Image, the author is the image. Here, however, there is no more image, only an exact clone that replaces presence that has vanished. In Fatal Strategies, Baudrillard remarks that communion or “Presence does not efface itself before emptiness, but before a redoubling of presence which effaces the opposition between presence and absence” (Baudrillard [1983] 2008: 29). This disappearance of opposition between presence and absence is spectrality. It is a haunting of ghosts and specters in which, borrowing from Derrida, “one does not know if it is living or dead” (Derrida 1994: 6) [Derrida describes a Specter as follows: “It is something that one does not know, precisely, and one does not know if precisely It is, if it exists, it if responds to a name and corresponds to an essence. One does not know: not out of ignorance, but because this non-object, this non-present present, this being-there of an absent or departed one no longer belongs to knowledge…One does not know if it is living or it is dead” (Derrida 1994:6)]. Jean Baudrillard’s double proliferates in these networks. One only has to use a search engine to summon his many doubles to the screen. As one logs in the system Presence vanishes into its representation, that is, its re-presence-ing, a superimposition of the appearance of an appearance. By logging in, one gives rise to the spectrality of the digital double that haunts virtual reality. In the Industrial Image, the author is the image, an image that is still constrained by time and space. At this point, it is already our double that exchanges information with other doubles. In this level, the position of communion in communication is already taken by its representation within this digital reality. Baudrillard writes: “It is the same with our mediatized and computerized human relations. We interact without touching each other, interlocute without speaking to each other, interface without seeing each other. Here is something really bizarre (Baudrillard 2009: 17). This is why Baudrillard comments that, with the reign of the Image and the “murder of the real,” Presence or communion disappears in global communication. He describes this as “the end of metaphysics and the beginning of the era of hyperreality” (Baudrillard [1976] 1993: 74), and the point when the “sublime has passed into the subliminal” (Baudrillard [1987] 1988: 54).

#### Their protest is nothing more than frustration—unable to produce future outcomes the affirmative reduces their advocacy to a simulacrum. The hashtag becomes just another cool symbol that you put as your cover photo—this need to return to past politics and past forms of change only recreates violence and destroys change. Vote neg to search for new forms of politics not bound up in contemporary paradigms

**Lindsay 12** (Jason, Ph.d from Columbia University, Assistant Professor of Political Science at St. Cloud State University, “Baudrillard’s Simulated Politics and Debord’s Agents of Detournement,” Volume 9, Number 3 October 2012, International Journal of Baudrillard Studies, JS)

**For the political scientist, Baudrillard's work on simulation and the hyperreal is prescient. Politics** in contemporary times **seems very hollow when compared to the past.** In democratic political systems **debates on policy have given way to increasingly baroque ideological arguments**. The "issues" that resonate the most with voters are generally symbolic or cultural disputes disconnected from economic management or social welfare. Scholarly **evidence for this trend continues to accumulate**. A good example is the work Lau and Heldman (2009) which builds on earlier research by Lau in (Sears, Lau, Tyler, and Allen (1980). **From this perspective politics**, at least in the most developed countries**, increasingly resembles Baudrillard's interaction of simulacra.** Before his death, Baudrillard frequently pointed out **the ironies of contemporary politics**. Consider his statement about the French vote on the EU’s Constitutional treaty in 2005: “The vote is fixed. If the ‘no’ side wins the day this time, they will make us vote again (as in Denmark and Ireland) until the ‘yes’ wins. We may as well vote yes right now” (Baudrillard, 2006). Here **there is the sense that this is not what politics** and a referendum **are**, but this is what they have come to be. In most of our political systems we see similar hints that something is not the way it was. **What are the tangible differences between left and right** wing administrations**?** Would a left or right government in France handle the EU differently? In the United States, **Presidents as vastly different as Obama and Bush dealt with the 2008 economic crisis** and its aftermath **with a continuity of policies**. So **when we vote, what are we doing? What are the actual options we are choosing between?** Baudrillard’s perspective fits well with a growing commentary on the emptiness at the heart of contemporary politics. Zizek in his recent (2008) writing on violence points to the curious demands of young rioters in Paris’ banlieus in October 2005. That is, they did not seem to have any demands beyond the spasm of violence in which they engaged. A similar incoherence can be observed at anti globalization protests. People are angry and want to do something about it. However, they seem unable to coherently explain what it is that has them so angry. The **spasms of violence that break out on the periphery of any large protest nowadays also points to a frustration with current politics**. Most recently**, we have seen the Occupy Wall Street protests successfully capture the attention of a very large audience. However, these protests failed to articulate a coherent political program**. In his visit to the group camped out in New York, Zizek pointed out this shortcoming when he was invited to speak. As he put it, “**We know what we do not want. But what do we want?**” (Zizek, 2011). **If there are no substantive policy differences between parties anymore**, then, as Baudrillard would expect**, we have to invent some**. Witness **the entire pop culture industry in the United States devoted to the mythology of Conservatives and Liberals**. This industry now embraces books, television, radio, and the Internet, as well as satirical greeting cards in either flavor. **Here** again **is the sense that these examples are not real politics.** Instead, **we have cultural products that seem to be the very definition of Baudrillard’s simulacra.** But how do we know this? **If all politics is just being played out within the hyperreal,** that is, politics are just combinations of signs and simulacra, **then why do we have a sense that this is not “real” politics?** **Why do referendums seem so empty to us? Why are we able to organize protests, but then have the sense that we failed to define a “real” concrete program?** Furthermore are signs and simulacra powerful enough to inspire individuals to the point of political violence? Baudrillard would most likely argue that violence on the periphery of politics is not inspired by the interaction of simulacra. Instead, this **violence represents a frustration and impatience with politics.** For Baudrillard, **the possibility of a contemporary, active politics is very slim.** Thus**, we should expect to see indifference or frustration**. However, if that is the case**, then how do we explain the motivation of some individuals for engaging in this empty politics to the point of extremism?** To explain this tension, we should examine evidence of a politics capable of referencing something outside of other simulacra. A good pressure point for such an analysis is contemporary use of the modern political tactic of detournement as described by Debord and the situationists. Despite evidence for Baudrillard’s analysis of politics as simulation, the modern political tactic of detournement is still effective. If this is the case, then how can this be explained within Baudrillard’s larger analysis of our contemporary situation? II. Simulations and Detournement Recently, **a colleague expressed** some **frustration to me when trying to talk to his students about Che** Guevera**. Although the students recognized his image, they had no clear idea who Che was**. As Baudrillard and others would expect, they knew the image of Che from our consumer culture, but could not articulate who he was. Yet, **they still knew his image was associated with subversive activities and radical politics.** This sort of incident illustrates an important point about images; they are double edged. Since the image can be disconnected from its initial context, we have the possibility of DeBord and the Situationists' detournement. We can recycle and re cut the image (like the "culture jamming" of the Ad Busters) to create new messages [culture-jamming] that are communicable through the cultural terrain (see www.adbusters.org). On the other hand, given Baudrillard’s description of our contemporary situation, how plausible is detournement since images are indeed detached? More concretely, how far removed can a given image be before it has lost both its "official" meaning and its reprogrammed "subversive" one? Does this problem indicate that we must consider the timing of detournement activities? Must we create the subversive use of the image while there is still a consciousness of the image's original intent? Furthermore, if there is an element of timing necessary for detournement, then we must consider the following sort of analysis. Why are some images more deeply ingrained with their initial intent? In turn, such deeper images may retain a possible subversive or detournement meaning for a longer period as well. If some images can be used for a longer period, then does this challenge Baudrillard's assertions that there is no meaning left beyond simulation? If there is no meaning behind the image, then why are some still useable in both "official" and "subversive" modes for a much longer period than others? Does the possibility of detournement mean that **there is some truth to our sense of contemporary politics being a simulation of "real politics”**? The ability of detournement to expose the real meaning behind advertising and other public statements suggests that we still possess an ability to understand the authentic when we see it. How else can one explain detournement's continuing effectiveness? Baudrillard indicates in his work Simulations that this is the wrong question to ask. According to Baudrillard: "We are witnessing the end of perspective and panoptic space (which remains a moral hypothesis bound up with every classical analysis of the 'objective' essence of power), and hence the very abolition of the spectacular” (Baudrillard, 1983:54). Thus, Baudrillard thought that we had already entered (in the 1980's) a period later than the society of the spectacle that Debord describes in the 1960's. The idea of any remaining ground or foundation from which one could engage in Debord's neo Marxist analysis has already disappeared according to Baudrillard. From this perspective, there is no relationship or channel of manipulation to unmask. The relationship between media and us (the audience) has collapsed to the point that Baudrillard sees no space between the two. In, Simulations, Baudrillard speaks explicitly about television (Ibid.:55-58). Already in 1983 he is concerned that reality television meant that there was no longer a subject with perspective. So, to Baudrillard, Debord's analysis is already obsolete because we are no longer an audience to a spectacle but instead we are a part of simulation. Thus for Baudrillard, the real has been replaced by the hyperreal. However, if Baudrillard is correct, then shouldn't detournement become ineffective? If the distance needed for a relationship like Debord's spectacle has collapsed, then how could the dialectic of recuperation and detournement still be possible? For Baudrillard the answer would appear to be that Debord's concept is impossible. Anything that appears to us now as detournement is most likely a simulation of that process. Recuperation and detournement are collapsed categories just like every other possible anchor in the hyperreal. Indeed, Baudrillard seems borne out to some extent when we consider the efforts of companies and products to establish "street cred". These efforts range from advertising that engages in self-parody to the planting of grass roots reviews on websites. Thus, the idea of detournement, or perhaps we should say authentic, non-simulated detournement seems obsolete. Debord himself indicates that detournement relies on some sort of ground or context. Hence, his second law of detournement, "The distortions introduced in the detourned elements must be as simplified as possible, since the main impact of detournement is directly related to the conscious or semiconscious recollection of the original contexts of the elements" (Debord and Wolman [1956] 2006). If Baudrillard is correct in his description of the hyperreal, then it is hard to see how this original context can survive. Yet, despite Baudrillard's criticism, there is evidence of Debord's dialectic functioning in contemporary culture. Writing in the late 1950's, Debord and Wolman argued that a growth in detournement would become visible in the arts through, "an increasingly extensive transformation of phrases or plastic works that happen to be in fashion" (Ibid.:3). This observation triggers several associations with contemporary culture such as the pervasive sampling that makes up current music, books that stitch together different cultural worlds, (such as Pride and Prejudice and Zombies) or television sitcoms such as The Office, which styles itself like a reality program. Furthermore, some images and pieces of culture retain enough meaning that they can easily be turned into a "subversive" mode. How is this possible unless there remains enough relationship and connection to areas outside of simulation? Perhaps Baudrillard could argue that these acts of resistance are simply wheels within wheels. The evidence we see of Debord's dialectic is simply the dramatic narrative of the simulation we know. With this interpretation, the hyperreal can retain the dramatic elements and themes of an earlier time, even though this is now unhinged from meaning. However, this solipsistic position ignores much evidence from contemporary culture. For example, we can see the dynamic of Debord's detournement and recuperation at work in several areas of contemporary, popular culture. Consider these recent manifestations of cultural recuperation: Motorcycles and motorcycle gang style- now co-opted into brand named superstores; punk rock and punk rock music- co-opted in the 1990's through grunge and alternative labels; or Goth subculture- co-opted both in popular television and movies and mainstream cosmetics that now feature Goth style colors in lipstick etc. Thus Debord's dynamic of detournement and recuperation seems to still be going strong. Two intertwining poles of agency explain this dynamic’s motive force. The first pole (or it could be the second) of this dynamo are strategic, market calculations (recuperation revives failing street cred and hence sales). The second pole (though we might prefer that it be the first), are artistic imperatives (detournement carves out a space for creativity and, hence, originality). Yet, where is such agency to be found in Baudrillard's view? In Baudrillard's broader work the simulacra he describes appear to feed off of each other. Yet this view seems sorely lacking in human agency. In a classic, broad reflection on perception and memory Bergson states, "The function of the body is not to store up recollections, but simply to choose, in order to bring back to consciousness, by the real efficacy thus conferred on it, the useful memory, that which may complete and illuminate the present situation with a view to ultimate action" (Bergson, 1991:179). Indeed, if the goal of an actor within Debord's dialectic is action, then she chooses some images and symbols with purpose. This dimension of strategy and tactics is missing from Baudrillard's analysis because it is, again to him, the wrong perspective. In contrast, detournement is at its core for Debord, a tool or tactic of class struggle and for defeating the remains of modernism in the arts. Such a program or cause is obsolete to Baudrillard given his view of our contemporary situation. Another way to pose this difference between the two thinkers is to compare Debord's idea of the "spectacle" to Baudrillard's idea of "the system of objects". The chapter on advertising in Baudrillard's The System of Objects, brings out an important distinction between Baudrillard and Debord (Baudrillard, [1968] 1996:164-196). The discussion develops into an exploration of the mass psychology of advertising. Baudrillard argues that the rational claims made in advertising are not really believed by any of us. Instead, they provide a rationalization for purchases that we desire due to non-rational motivations. Baudrillard sees advertising as a surface phenomenon of the system of objects that we live within. The key difference between Baudrillard's description of this vast economic, political, and ideological system of consumption from Debord turns upon agency. Debord still sees the spectacle as a force that can be countered with tactics such as detournement. In contrast, Baudrillard sees the system of objects as a more pervasive whole into which we are psychologically integrated. The idea of individual agency leading to some sort of resistance begins to look in Baudrillard's conception like the rebelliousness of a child, rather than the acts of Debord's class conflict. So, where has this discussion taken us in thinking about politics and the simulation of politics? Debord and Wolman argue under the second law of detournement that it indeed requires a context but that this is, "only a particular case of a general law that governs not only detournement but also any other form of action in the world. The idea of pure absolute expression is dead" (Debord and Wolman [1956] 2006). Thus, for Debord this context can be as mythical, metaphysical, or ideological as its audience is capable of comprehending. Signs and simulacra in such a context suggest the stage of “sorcery” within Baudrillard's precession of simulacra. Could this be a good way of thinking about contemporary politics as a closed system of obscurantist meanings? From this perspective, detournement could still be alive in pockets of the hyperreal where individuals still participate within a bounded envelope of ideology. Within this context signs can profoundly refer to other signs for the initiated. On the other hand, how believable is the idea that contemporary politics is an obscurantist system for the initiated, since politics involves mass behavior? Can such a view explain the agency and motivation we still encounter among political entrepreneurs that emerge from the grassroots? How can we explain the efforts at detournement we still see in society from below, as well as successful examples of recuperation? III. Baudrillard, Debord, and Nostalgia A possible path of reconciliation between these two positions is to consider Baudrillard's discussion of nostalgia. Baudrillard discusses in several of his later writings the prevalence for nostalgia in contemporary culture. Furthermore, our **recent visions of the future seem to be ones where individuals are looking back upon us.** The most obvious versions of this nostalgia for Baudrillard are books and films where, **in a post apocalyptic setting; the survivors walk around the debris of our contemporary world.** In this sense there is a context in **Baudrillard** when he **examines contemporary ideas of the future. The odd nostalgia he describes comes from us, human agents, trying to imagine the outcome of our contemporary actions.** From this perspective, **our unease is not due to the style or practice of contemporary politics, but to an underlying intuition about the failure of politics. Contemporary humanity faces the possibility of catastrophic risk. The shadow of ecological disaster is especially present in the minds of most of us. Nostalgia then is something we feel for what politics was**. Perhaps detournement continues to work because many of us long for modern (as opposed to contemporary) politics with its clarity of class conflict and ideologies that revolved around the role of the free market. Thus, we still respond to detournement actions that reference this earlier context. Furthermore, **many of us prefer to still practice and participate in politics bounded by this context.** Yet**, we suspect that this is simulation, not because it is "unreal" but because politics in this sense does not address the most urgent issues that should be political.** Instead, **with our politics locked into this modern context, the urgent issues of climate change, pollution, technological risk, and mass scale terrorism become topics for culture**. Thus, **we see the nostalgia for the "society that was", our current one,** in literature and film **with post apocalyptic themes**. **Nostalgia is** also **a defense or a coping mechanism**. **What agency do any of us possess within our contemporary context? Because we sense the futility of politics, as we know it within this contemporary setting, we retreat to behaving as if the old context, with its familiar categories and practices, still exists.** **Because we behave this way, it does continue to exist but at a cost**. **We soldier on within a modern politics that is increasingly detached from the constraints** (**ecological, economic, and biological) of our existence**. **This closed system of modern politics goes on in a ritualistic fashion, despite our growing frustration, and awareness, of its inability to address our common problems. Recent commentary** that criticizes the whole idea of detournement and Baudrillard’s analysis **reflects this desire for politics as it was.** In their book, Nation of Rebels, Heath and Potter argue that Baudrillard and Debord have created a closed ideology (Heath and Potter, 2004). From this critical perspective, they argue that there is no system performing recuperation. Instead, by collapsing the categories of the political and the cultural, many on the left have fallen into a bottomless trap**. They continue to try and create a counterculture that simply sells more lifestyle product, while failing to attend to “real” politics. Real politics being the incremental policy changes that create results as in the past.** **Is this a devastating critique? Or is this nostalgia for the politics that was?** The examples Heath and Potter give of positive change, **the American Civil Rights Movement, the construction of the welfare state, seem like a museum to us now**. Is the context for such political activity still with us? **Do we live in an era capable of producing such outcomes?** Instead, **politics** in this sort of analysis **begins to resemble religion in that we appeal to it and diligently perform our duties waiting for an intervention that does not come. Have we not performed our roles earnestly enough?** Are we neglecting the rites of our fathers? **Do we need to switch to another denomination? Should we blame the clergy? And of course some of us begin to have our doubts that any of it matters.** From this perspective, **the post apocalyptic nostalgia** so prevalent **in contemporary culture voices our lurking fears**. In these movies and books, **our lurking suspicion that contemporary politics fails to address the "real problem" is realized**. This is also a reconciliation of Baudrillard and Debord. Detournement still works because we can access this past context. Indeed, we continue to blindly insist that this past social context is still our contemporary home. **When our contemporary attempts at politics founder, because they must confront a very different world today, we try to evaluate their efficacy with this rubric from the past. Why are our governments unable to address the looming ecological crisis? Why don’t our political parties provide us with a range of public policies to choose from?** What do these observations mean for thinking about politics? If Baudrillard and Debord are both accurate in their descriptions, then **we seem to be in a moment of political stagnation**. The tactics of Debord's detournement remain relevant because we continue to look backward to what politics were. These tactics are successful on one larger point, they temporarily expose our contemporary politics as a simulation of the modern form of politics that was. In this sense, practicing Debord's detournement is a useful activity, but only a first step leading to our contemporary time's pervasive nostalgia. The next step**, taking Baudrillard's diagnosis seriously, and developing new forms of politics for our contemporary situation, is a greater challenge** (see also Lindsey 2007).

## Case

#### **Turn – the movement fails because of lack of organization – the affirmative’s endorsement only makes #yosoy132 less effective because it adds more voices to the fray**

Villagran 12 (Lauren, Christian Science Monitor Correspondent, With Mexico's election results upheld, what's next for the YoSoy132 movement? September 11, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Americas/2012/0911/With-Mexico-s-election-results-upheld-what-s-next-for-the-YoSoy132-movement>)

The election now settled, many are questioning what YoSoy132 will do next. Their No. 1 goal remains fair access to information and the “democratization” of Mexico’s media, according to a message emitted to coincide with President Felipe Calderón’s sixth and final state of the union address earlier this month. But the ad-hoc student movement, criticized early on for its lack of organization and focus, is still struggling to create a unified message, leaving some to question its significance and potential to endure in Mexico today. “The problem with the movement is not whether it continues to have a voice; it’s that it has too many,” says Carlos Bravo Regidor, professor of political studies at Mexico City’s CIDE research center. “The internal diversity at times appears to overpower [the group’s] capacity to deliver coherent and effective messages.” From nonpolitical marches against media manipulation to the “taking” of government buildings in the state of Veracruz to behind-the-scenes work on proposals for public policy, the private and public university students who consider themselves a part of the YoSoy132 movement differ as much on method as message.

#### The internal fragmentation of #yosoy132 dooms it to fail

Perasso 12 (Valeria, BBC News Mexico, El futuro de #YoSoy132 en México, July 16, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/noticias/2012/07/120712_mexico_yosoy132_futuro_vp.shtml>) \*note – the text of this card has been translated on Google Translate from Spanish – it may contain grammatical errors

Internal divisions also can undermine the influence of the movement in the immediate future . Some signs are already in sight : a few days ago , a group of youths set up a protest camp at the Electoral Tribunal of the Judiciary , the body responsible for validating the triumph of Peña Nieto once complaints are resolved , and was responsible to differentiate from # 132. They called themselves the National Front Against the Imposition and say more inclusive than their university peers . " The # 132 is a movement that surpassed himself. But here we all are, we are students but also other communities , people with party affiliation , workers ... everyone," said the BBC Herz Jossa , who carries a badge # YoSoy132 on his jacket while walking through the camp . The # 132 , meanwhile , distanced himself from the call for the march against Peña Nieto that brought thousands to the streets after the elections, failing what they consider an " attempt to use the movement for particular purposes ," according to a statement on its website . " Emerged as a cause spontaneous , but are currently divided into trends and possibly will gradually marginalized . 's A risk in any group as divisions emerge , but when a movement so young," the scholar said Bartra .

#### Must align with traditional politics to be effective

Huffington Post 12 (8/29, Post-Election, Mexico's #YoSoy132 Movement Faces Uncertain Future

The Mexican youth movement #YoSoy132 shook up the debate before the country's presidential elections in July. Now that the ballots have closed, #YoSoy132 is trying to find its footing in the nation's political scene.¶ Students like Santino Bucio, a #YoSoy132 spokesman, still organize nationwide marches, accusing President-elect Enrique Peña Nieto of voter fraud and the nation's top media company, Televisa, of biased coverage that favored Nieto.¶ "We live in a time when it's like the revolution is floating in the air,'' Bucio, who performs slam poetry at marches in Mexico City, says in the Storyhunter video below. "We have to grab it with our hands. All the ideas are there for the taking, and all you need is enough creativity to make it happen."¶ Despite passionate protest from students like Bucio, some interviewed in the video say the movement is at risk of fading away and they must unite with traditional politicians to influence policy in a sustainable way. Students began the #YoSoy132 movement by using social media to organize massive protests against Nieto, without officially supporting any other political candidate.

#### Affirmation is bad. Aesthetics must be NEGATIVE–standing not for the world as it is but the world as it could be.

Pozo 9

ANTONIO GUTIÉRREZ POZO, Filozofická fakulta, Sevilská univerzita, Sevilla, Španielsko POZO, A. G.: Utopia in Black. The Negative Aesthetics of Adorno and the Contemporary Black Art FILOZOFIA 64, 2009, No 5, p. 481

In opinion of Adorno the essential danger resides in that the social system identifies everything with itself, homogenizes everything and integrates it in itself, repressing all that denies it, keeping the pain silent. To dominate is to silence, to remove the word to the negative thing. To the integration through the silence. The system of horror does not want to be recognized as such and it wants to hide the proofs. The critic’s key element is art, because art, Adorno writes down, is “the world for second time” (AT 208). Art is then a place of transgressions, is another thing regarding the bourgeois modern world. Therefore, “there is nothing in art, even being the most sublime one, that does not come from the world; not even anything that has not been transfigured” (AT 208). This ‘second world’ of art presents a negative –critical- tendency against the first one. The definitive feature of the aesthetics according to Adorno is criticism, the resistance and the protest against what it is. “The works of art are negative a priori” (AT 201). To understand art it is necessary to see it in negative relationship with the reality.5 The authentic work of art is a revolution (Revolte) in itself, so that “a conservative work of art is a contradiction in terms in itself” (AT 13, 264, 303, 339). The polemic character a priori of art is due do its own artistic nature. Its (critic) social function resides then in maintaining its aesthetic autonomy, its immanent difference with the real6: “The comforting of the big works of art is less in what they say (aussprechen) that in the fact that they were able to be pulled up of the existence” (MM 253). But not the whole current art is critic, resistance. Only the radical art is so. Adorno points out that there is also an art that “in a infantile way is happy with the colours” (Matisse?), a colourist and happy art (heitere Kunst) (AT 65-6), an art that adopts the attitude of comfort and narcotic before the blackened empiric reality by means of the false beautification of the world. Following the precept that ‘mundus vult decipi’ (AT 34, 350), it intends to improve the appearance of the horrible real world from its colourist world, but only a naïve person, Adorno adds, can believe possible that the discoloured and disenchanted world recovers its colours from art (AT 66). There is also an art that – like the idealistic concept-serves to the dominion, a art entkünstet, that has lost its artistic character, its critical capacity (AT 32-4), and that serves to the same end: to silence and to sterilize the pain. The ideological character of this art reaches its maximum expression with the cultural industry (Kulturindustrie) that is not but the reproduction to great scale of that colourist art, transforming it in a gigantic dominion machinery: while we console ourselves of the black historical reality with the false colourist beauty of this art, we conceal the reality of the existent thing, we legitimate it and we leave it just as it is. The conversion of art in consumption object by the cultural industry coincides with its reduction to pure diversion, what supposes the suspension of its critical and utopian power (DA 152). It promises ‘di-version’, that is, escape, evasion, but this promise is the mask of its ideological character as instrument of the dominion. Really, Adorno writes down, “escape art, escape movies are abhorrent not because they turn their back to a discoloured existence but because they do not do that with enough energy”, so that, “the escape is all a message. The message seems just the opposite, what wants to escape to escape from the flight (Flucht)” (MM 228). Diversion (Vergnügen) is flight, but not of the negative reality but of the “last resistance thought” that becomes agitated against that situation (DA 167). The diversion, far from escaping from this disenchanted world, it affirms it; it is what is most committed with the exploitation and the dominion. The message that the flight carries with itself really means ‘to be in agreement’: diversion is to collaborate, to forget the suffering, to abandon criticism (DA 167, 181). As Pascal7, Adorno conceives diversion like a mask, like turning one’s back before reality not to face the real problems face to face, in sum, as a closing in false of the wounds, what impedes to man the possibility to solve them in a more appropriate way: utopia. The diversion is the opposite side to the suffering conscience, the conscience that is nurtured of blood that flows from a wounded reality; the message of diversion is the suppression of the conscience of pain, the only way to salvation. This is the aesthetic hedonism that Adorno condemns. This cheerful and charming art that forgets and conceals horrors, is an injustice against “the deads and the accumulated pain and without word (akkumulierten und sprachlosen Schmerz)” (AT 66). Adorno assumes those verses of Brecht in which it is prohibited for our time an art that does not want to realize of horror: “What kind of times are they, where / a talk about trees is almost a crime / because it implies silence about so many horrors!” (AT 66). The poetry that has become impossible after Auschwitz, for being barbarian (KG 30), is the colourist poetry. For this reason Adorno has written that “maybe it has been false to say that after Auschwitz it can no longer be possible to write poems” (ND 355). They can be written, whenever they are black poems!. In this sombre time, an art that has lost all evidence (Selbstverständlichkeit) and legitimacy (AT 9-10), is art as embellishment, the ideological art that conceals and justifies the current reality.