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#### Sparks explains that

Sparks 3 “Queens, Teens, and Model Mothers Race, Gender, and the Discourse of Welfare Reform” Race and the Politics of Welfare Reform Sanford F. Schram, Joe Soss, and Richard C. Fording, Editors http://www.press.umich.edu/titleDetailDesc.do?id=11932 The University of Michigan Press, 2003

Iris Young, for example, has identified two forms of exclusion that prevent citizens from fully participating in democracies. What she calls external exclusion “names the many ways that individuals and groups that ought to be included are purposely or inadvertently left out of fora for discussion and decision-making” (2000, 53–54). External exclusion can be as blatant as deliberately failing to invite certain groups to impor- tant meetings, or can take more subtle forms such as the way economic inequalities affect access to political institutions. As Nancy Fraser has noted, in societies like the United States in which the publication and cir- culation of political views depends on media organizations that are pri- vately owned and operated for pro‹t, those citizens who lack wealth will also generally “lack access to the material means of equal participation” (1997, 79). This criticism has obvious salience for families living on wel- fare budgets. On a more basic level, money and time are also necessary for participation in putatively “free” political institutions. Poor parents with young children, for example, might not have the resources to pur- chase child-care in order to attend a town council meeting at which important political decisions are made.3 Internal exclusions, in contrast, “concern ways that people lack effective opportunity to influence the thinking of others even when they have access to fora and procedures of decision-making” (Young 2000, 55; emphasis added). Citizens may find that “others ignore or dismiss or patronize their statements and expressions. Though formally included in a forum or process, people may find that their claims are not taken seriously and may believe that they are not treated with equal respect” (55). Internal exclusion can take the form of public ridicule or face-to-face inattention (Bickford 1996), but it can also stem from less obvious sources, such as the norms of articulateness, dispassionateness, and orderliness that are often privileged in political discussions (Young 2000, 56). As Young observes, In many formal situations the better-educated white middle-class people . . . often act as though they have a right to speak and that their words carry authority, whereas those of other groups often feel intimidated by the argument requirements and the formality and rules of parliamentary procedure, so they do not speak, or speak only in a way that those in charge ‹nd “disruptive.” . . . The dominant groups, moreover, often fail entirely to notice this devaluation and silencing, while the less privileged often feel put down or frustrated, either losing confidence in themselves or becoming angry. (1996, 124) Since “unruly” forms of speech tend to be used primarily by women, racial minorities, and working-class people, large groups of citizens face the devaluation of their political participation.

#### Thus, we advocate intralocality as strategic resistance to the embargo on the debate space.

#### Darnell Moore writes

Moore 11 (Darnell L., writer and activist whose work is informed by anti-racist, feminist, queer of color, and anti-colonial thought and advocacy. Darnell's essays, social commentary, poetry, and interviews have appeared in various national and international media venues, including the Feminist Wire, Ebony magazine, and The Huffington Post, "On Location: The “I” in the Intersection," http://thefeministwire.com/2011/12/on-location-the-i-in-the-intersection/)

The most general statement of our politics at the present time would be that we are actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression and see as our particular ask the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking. The synthesis of these oppressions creates the conditions of our lives. As black women we see black feminism as the logical political movement to combat the manifold and simultaneous oppressions that all women of color face. -The Combahee River Collective in A Black Feminist Statement¶ Many radical movement builders are well-versed in the theory of intersectionality. Feminists, queer theorists and activists, critical race scholars, progressive activists, and the like owe much to our Black feminist sisters, like The Combahee River Collective, who introduced us to the reality of simultaneity–as a framework for assessing the multitude of interlocking oppressions that impact the lives of women of color–in A Black Feminist Statement (1978). Their voices and politics presaged Kimberlé Crenshaw’s very useful theoretical contribution of “intersectionality” to the feminist toolkit of political interventions in 1989.¶ Since its inception, many have referenced the term—sometimes without attribution to the black feminist intellectual [genealogy](http://thefeministwire.com/2011/12/on-location-the-i-in-the-intersection/) from which it emerged—as a form of en vogue progressive parlance. In fact, it seems to be the case that it is often referenced in progressive circles as a counterfeit license (as in, “I understand the ways that race, sexuality, class, and gender coalesce. I get it. I really do.”) to enter resistance work even if the person who declares to have a deep “understanding” of the connectedness of systemic matrices of oppression, themselves, have yet to discern and address their own complicity in the maintenance of the very oppressions they seek to name and demolish. I am certain that I am not the only person who has heard a person use language embedded with race, class, gender, or ability privilege follow-up with a reference to “intersectionality.”¶ My concern, then, has everything to do with the way that the fashioning of intersectionality as a political framework can lead toward the good work of analyzing ideological and material systems of oppression—as they function “out there”—and away from the great work of critical analyses of the ways in which we, ourselves, can function as actants in the narratives of counter-resistance that we rehearse. In other words, we might be missing the opportunity to read our complicities, our privileges, our accesses, our excesses, our excuses, our modes of oppressing—located “in here”—as they occupy each of us.¶ Crenshaw’s theorization has provided us with a useful lens to assess the problematics of the interrelated, interlocking apparatuses of power and privilege and their resulting epiphenomena of powerlessness and subjugation. Many have focused on the external dimensions of oppression and their material results manifested in the lives of the marginalized, but might our times be asking of us to deeply consider our own “stuff” that might instigate such oppressions?¶ What if we extended Crenshaw’s theory of intersectionality by invoking what we might name “intralocality”? Borrowing from sociologists, the term “social location,” which broadly speaks to one’s context, highlights one’s standpoint(s)—the social spaces where s/he is positioned (i.e. race, class, gender, geographical, etc.). Intralocality, then, is concerned with the social locations that foreground our knowing and experiencing of our world and our relationships to the systems and people within our world. Intralocality is a call to theorize the self in relation to power and privilege, powerlessness and subjugation. It is work that requires the locating of the “I” in the intersection. And while it could be argued that such work is highly individualistic, I contend that it is at the very level of self-in-relation-to-community where communal transformation is made possible.¶ Might it be time to travel into the deep of our contexts? Might it be time for us—theorists/activists—to do the work of intersectionality (macro/system-analysis) in concert with the intra-local (micro/self-focused analysis)?¶ Intersectionality as an analysis, rightly, asks of us to examine systemic oppressions, but in these times of radical and spontaneous insurgencies—times when we should reflect on our need to unoccupy those sites of privilege (where they exist) in our own lives even as we occupy some other sites of domination—work must be done at the level of the self-in-community. We cannot—as a progressive community—rally around notions of “progression” and, yet, be complicit in the very homo/transphobias, racisms, sexisms, ableisms, etc. that violently terrorize the lives of so many others. If a more loving and just community is to be imagined and advanced, it seems to me that we would need to start at a different location than we might’ve expected: self.

#### Tony Perucci explains that

(Tony, Assistant Professor of Co mmunication Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "What the F uck is T hat? The Poetics of Ruptural Performance," Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies Vol. 5, No. 3, September 2009)

Recent years have seen a rise in the practice of political street performance. Often called “interventions” or “performance activism,” many of these actions exceed the transparent political messaging of traditional agit - prop performance. Rather, they mobilize the particular qualities of performance as embodied action — what I call “ruptural performance” — as a modality in opposition to the stultifying effects of the society of the sp ectacle. Drawing on Brechtian aesthetics and the Artaudian embodiment of “the poetic state” as well as the (a)logic of Dada and the materialism of Minimal Art, **ruptural performance enacts interruption, event, confrontation and bafflement as a form of direct action**. “ Every day, do something that won’t compute” — Wendell Berry, The Mad Farmer’s Manifesto 1 Much of today’s activism emerges out of an experience of the totality, of the intractability and intransigence of consumer culture, and of what Guy Deb ord once called “the society of the spectacle.” It is an aesthetic response to a political/cultural crisis, not to mention an ecological, psychic and economic one. This essay addresses what is particular to the performance of what are variously called “interventions” and “performance activism.” These actions’ characteristics as performance work in ways that are specific to their form and exceed any “message” or content that they might (or might not) seek to convey. The conditions of inequity and ecological disaster that are intrinsic to consumer culture are now an open secret – or not even a secret but an accepted fact of life. Perhaps this is even truer now in the face of what has been named “the current economic crisis,” which spurs the call to “drill baby drill” and sends Wal - Mart sales through the roof while the rest of the economy collapses. Ecological crisis and sweatshop labor are no longer concerns that we think we can afford to address in daily life. In the face of such conditions, Jacques Rancière points out the challenge of what he calls the dilemma of “critical art” thusly: “understanding alone can do little to transform consciousness and situations. The exploited have rarely had the need to have the laws of exploitation explained to them. Because it’s not a misunderstanding of the existing state of affairs that nurtures the submission of the oppressed, but a lack of confidence in their own capacity to transform it” (83). In what follows, I argue for and trace out the critical characteristics of this insurgent form of performance activism that I am calling “ruptural performance.” Ruptural performances are distinct less because of a communicated message of their content and more by their qualities as performance: they are interruptive, becoming - event, confrontational, and baffling. Understanding performance as rupture provides a significant way to think about and create interventionist and political performance that places the focus centrally on the act of performance. This emergent genre of performed activism pays a particular debt to the pranksterism of Abbie Hoffman, the d é tournement of the Situationists, and the absurd enactments of Dada performance. These performance interventions are best known today through the practice of culture jamming and by the staged performances of Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping, The Billionaires for Bush, and the Yes Men. Such interventions, as well as those by lesser - known artists (partly because their strangeness cannot be easily accommodated by media coverage, political activists and academic theorization), can be understood through the notion of “performance as rupture” (Perucci “Guilty” 315 - 329). Rupture itself is not a “new” element in culture, and it certainly has a long legacy in modernism as the bre ach, shift or break. But it has a particular resonance in current activist practices that are both freer and more delimited than previous such enactments. To define performance as rupture, we must articulate what it ruptures. At the risk of constructing a false binary, let me propose that the obverse of “performance as rupture” is Debord’s “spectacle.” Debord explains that while the society of the spectacle is indeed an “accumulation of spectacles ,” ( Society 12) he distinguishes that “The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images” ( Society 12). While he calls it a “weltanschauung” ( Society 13) it is more than an ideology or a veil of false consciousness. Rather it is “the very heart of society’s real unreality,” ( Society 13) and in that materiality extends the alienation of the production of the commodity to its consumption: the spectacle produces “isolation” through the shift from doing to “contemplation,” where “The spectator’s alienation from and submission to the contemplated object [...] works like this: the more he contemplates, the less he lives” ( Society 23). Ultimately, the spectacle as “social relationship” represents the triumph of the commodity - image, the “ruling order’s ... un interrupted monologue of self - praise” ( Society 19) where “the commodity completes its colonization of social life” ( Society 29). In understanding the spectacle as not merely spectacles, but a modality of experience, in which separation and contemplation fl atten the encounter with presence, Debord proposes “situations” specifically to intervene at the level of the experience. However, in his recent attempt to characterize the new activism, Dream: Re - imagining Progressive Politics in the Age of Fantasy , Steph en Duncombe proposes that spectacle is itself the basis for protest, and that the distinction of the spectacle and the situation is merely “semantic” (130). Instead, he proposes “the ethical spectacle”: **our spectacles will be participatory** , dreams the public can mold and shape themselves. They will be active : spectacles that work only if people help create them. They will be open - ended : setting stages to ask questions and leaving silences to formulate answers. And they will be transparent : dreams that one knows are dreams but which still have the power to attract and inspire. And finally, the spectacles we create will not cover over or replace reality and truth but perform and amplify it. (17, emphasis added) There is much to be gained from Duncombe’s schema tization here. And what I wish to do is revise and amplify it by challenging his dismissal of the distinctive character of “spectacle.” 2 As I have tried to show in my brief summary above, the spectacle is not just a thing to be seen, but is also a mode of performance . Interventionist performance, particularly that which seeks to challenge and disrupt the values and especially the experience of the society of the spectacle, is another modality of enactment rather than a variation of spectacle. While performa nce interventions share with spectacle the qualities of being dramatic and theatrical, what distinguishes them is that they disrupt the experience of daily life, a rupture of the living of social relations — what Reverend Billy of the Church of Stop Shopping calls “the necessary interruption” ( What Should I Do, xiii). The interruption, which Benjamin might call the “sudden start” or the “shock” (163), creates the space for and initiates the experience of a ruptural performance. While bearing in mind the promi sing schema laid out by Duncombe, but also taking into consideration the particular characteristics of the society of the spectacle upon which much “interventionist” work means to engage, I am calling for a proliferation of ruptural performances. Below is an attempt to trace out rupture as a “modality” of performance that means to disrupt, or at least, to fuck with the spectacle. Given Duncombe’s setting of “dreaming the impossible” (158) as a critical element of performance activism, I will introduce my sc hematic be means of an example from a fiction film. The 2004 film, Die Fetten Jahre Sind Vorbei ( The Fat Years are Over , released in the US as The Edukators , d. Weingartner) begins this way: an affluent German family returns to their home to discover a bre ak - in. Their first sign of trouble is a massive tower made of their dining room furniture. They gaze at the sculpture, frozen with bafflement. Nothing, however, has been stolen. But their many commodities have been humiliated: a porcelain bust is hanging f rom a noose, glass figurines are found stuffed in the toilet, the stereo is in the refrigerator, and finally a letter that says “Lesen!” (“Read! ” ). Inside reads the message from the anarchist group that reorganizes the possessions of wealthy residents: “Di e fetten Jarhre sind vorbei.” They stop and stare, confounded. 1. Ruptural performances are interruptive. In some way these performances halt, impede, or delay the habitual practices of daily life. They intervene at the level and in the midst of the quotidian. Such performances engage the “necessary interruption” which seeks to make conscious what is habitual so that it is available for critique. In this way it shares Debord’s notion of the con structed situation — “the concrete construction of temporary settings of life and their transformation into a higher, passionate nature” is inherently interruptive as it “asserts a non - continuous conception of life” (“Report” 48). They seek to destabilize wh at the Russian Formalist Viktor Shklovsky called the “automatism of perception” (13). For Shklovsky, the role of art is to undo “habitualization,” which he says, “devours works, clothes, furniture, one’s wife, and the fear of war” (12). Such a reclamation of perception Shklovsky calls “defamiliarization” (13), for which the Russian phrase is priem ostraneniye , and that translates literally as “making strange.” Brecht realized the political potential for this concept as the Verfremsdungeffekt , which is foundational in that it focuses on the experience of making the familiar strange as much as the transmission of a political message. In the speed - up of a contemporary life characterized by images and simulations, these performances engage what Walter Benjamin c alls the “interruption of happenings” that estranges the “conditions of life” (150). It is this interruption, Benjamin suggests, that allows performance to obtain the “special character [of] ... producing astonishment rather than empathy” (150). Interruptive performance, however, occurs not at the level of representation, but on the field of presence. It is achieved by “putting a frame” around experience (more in John Cage’s than Erving Goffman’s sense) that produces what Richard Bauman calls a “heightened in tensity” or “special enhancement of experience” (43). The Brazilian group, Opovoempé , 3 has performed their Guerrilha Magnética (Magnetic Guerilla) and other intervenções (interventions) throughout public spaces in São Paulo. In 2006, they composed and per formed Congelados (Frozen), a series of intervenções , throughout the city’s supermercados . The performances consisted of simple and improvised ensemble compositions constructed through the use of gesture, repetition, spatial relationship, and kinesthetic r esponse. 4 The piece, in its basic performance of the actions of shopping, defamiliarizes the activities of shopping. The “choreography” that constitutes the “dance and music of buying” only gr adually becomes evident, as the repetition of the banal gestures of shopping begins to mark their strangeness as performance (“Nos Supermercados” Esteves). 5 Though the content of the action is not overtly political (it does not scream its ideology), it ma kes the encounter with shopping, and especially its mindlessness and repetitiveness, seem strange. At its foundation, the pieces are rupture - producing machines : “ The interventions intend to cause rupture of communication barriers, revelation of humor and play, change in the use of public space, and the manifestation of latent contents or social tensions previously unnoticed” ( “What is” Esteves). That rupture is specifically political — particularly in mobilizing the poetic state of quotidian settings. Guerri lha Magnética performances are intended “to break apathy and indifference, to install a creative atmosphere of play and to reveal the poetic content of the city” ( “What is” Esteves). 2. Ruptural performanc es are becoming - events. That is, they do, as Dell Hymes suggests, “breakthrough into performance” (11). And while their boundaries are unstable and unfixed, it is the ruptural performances’ eventness, their status as singular in time and space, which enables the presencing that the spectacle confounds. Alain Baidou puts it this way: “This other time, whose materiality envelops the consequences of the event, deserves the name of a new present. The event is neither past nor future. It makes us present to the present” (39). And yet the instability of the boundaries of the event is equally significant. Ruptural performances tend to confound boundaries of the real and artificial. The actual event of performance is generated by means of artifice, in which audience s often don’t initially realize that they are in a performance. In ruptural performances, audiences often first suspect that something isn’t right, but are not sure if something is amiss. Ultimately, though, the “breakthrough” occurs that things aren’t nor mal, they are strange, and we are in the midst of an event. It is this eventness (and the anticipatory process of becoming event) that enlivens the occasion of the here and now. And that temporal immediacy is captured well by Benjamin’s invocation of Jetzt zeit or the “presence of the now” (261). One becoming - event that has been performed around the world is the “whirl.” The whirl consists of a group of fifteen or more people entering a sweatshop store a few at a time (most often a Wal - Mart, thus the someti mes - used moniker: “Whirl - Mart”) who move empty shopping carts throughout the store. Once all performers are inside and with carts, the participants create a single line of carts that snakes throughout the store, splitting and refiguring as the snake of car ts meets up with blocked aisles and shopping customers (which must look like a Busby Berkley dance sequence to the overhead security cameras). 6 During the hour or more of the performance, if asked by management, security, employees, or customers what they are doing, performers respond kindly with “I’m not shopping.” As performers make their rounds, it is the employees who first encounter the becoming - event, then the customers, then management (who begin manically communicat ing on walkie - talkies), and finally security. When security gets wise, it’s time to return the carts and exit the store. As ruptural performance, the whirl does not make any specific claim on protesting the many things one could advocate against — sweatshop labor, poor treatment of store employees, predatory business practices, etc. ad infinitum — given that all present could recite this litany of wrongs. Rather the whirl enacts the becoming - event of “not shopping,” which in itself can be read as an engagement against over - consumption, Wal - Mart’s imperialism, unfair labor practices, or ecological devastation. 7 3. Ruptural performances are confrontational. By this, I don’t necessarily mean aggressive, though they may be that. Rather, it is as Benjamin puts it, where a “stranger is confronted with the situation as with a startling picture” (151). Ruptural performance is thus distinguished from the “revelatory” performance that unmasks the hidden truths (though it may also do this). In our age, what Marx called the “secret of the commodity” — that its price masked the alienated labor that produced it — is now exposed. We know, for instance, that many of the products we buy are produced by sweatshop, child and slave labor; but we have developed what Adrian Piper calls “ways of averting one’s gaze” (“Ways” 167). Ruptural performance is thus less a critique of ideology or false consciousness, and is more about the experience of the encounter of returning one’s gaze to that which one avoids to maintain acceptance of the inequities of the contemporary social orders. As Husserl notes, “Things are simply there and just need to be seen.” Bruce Wilshire also gets at what I’m talking about when he describes phenomenology as a “systematic effort to unmask the obvious” (11). In fact, this quality is what Michael Fried complained about as the central quality minimal art: its “stage presence” or “theatricality” where “the work refuses, obstinately, to let him alone — which is to say, it refuses to stop confronting him” (140). And in this way, ruptural performance owes as much to Minimalism as it does to Dada. As such it enacts what Fred Moten suggests is not only an “excess of meaning” but also “the anti - interpretive nonreduction of nonmeaning” (197). Ruptural performances, like Minimal Ar t , are characterized by a “concrete thereness,” that Barbara Rose says is a “literal and emphatic assertion of their own existence” (216). As Rosalind Krauss says of Donald Judd’s work, we can say of Ruptural Performance: it “compels and gratifies immediat e sensual gratification” (211)

#### Patricia Collins explains that

Collins 90 (Patricia Hill Collins, Distinguished University Professor of Sociology at the University of Maryland, College Park, Former head of the Department of African American Studies at the University of Cincinnati, and the past President of the American Sociological Association Council, Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment, p. 62-65)

A second component of the ethic of caring concerns the appropriateness of emotions in dialogues. Emotion indicates that a speaker believes in the validity of an argument. Consider Ntozake Shange’s description of one of the goals of her work: "Our [Western] society allows people to be absolutely neurotic and totally out of touch with their feelings and everyone else’s feelings, and yet be very respectable. This, to me, is a travesty I’m trying to **change** the idea of seeing emotions and intellect as **distinct** faculties." The Black women’s blues tradition’s history of personal expressiveness heals this either/or dichotomous rift separating emotion and intellect. For example, in her rendition of "Strange Fruit," Billie Holiday’s lyrics blend seamlessly with the emotion of her delivery to render a trenchant social commentary on southern lynching. Without emotion, Aretha Franklin’s cry for "respect" would be virtually meaningless. A third component of the ethic of caring involves developing the capacity for empathy. Harriet Jones, a 16-year-old Black woman, explains to her interviewer why she chose to open up to him: "Some things in my life are so hard for me to bear, and it makes me feel better to know that you feel sorry about those things and would change them if you could." Without her belief in his empathy, she found it difficult to talk. Black women writers often explore the growth of empathy as part of an ethic of caring. For example, the growing respect that the Black slave woman Dessa and the white woman Rufel gain for one another in Sherley Anne William’s Dessa Rose stems from their increased understanding of each other’s positions. After watching Rufel fight off the advances of a white man, Dessa lay awake thinking: "The white woman was subject to the same ravishment as me; this the thought that kept me awake. I hadn’t knowed white mens could use a white woman like that, just take her by force same as they could with us." As a result of her newfound empathy, Dessa observed, "it was like we had a secret between us." These components of the ethic of caring: the value placed on individual expressiveness, the appropriateness of emotions, and the capacity for empathy-pervade African-American culture. One of the best examples of the interactive nature of the importance of dialogue and the ethic of caring in assessing knowledge claims occurs in the use of the call-and-response discourse mode in traditional Black church services. In such services both the minister and the congregation routinely use voice rhythm and vocal inflection to convey meaning. The sound of what is being said is just as important as the words themselves in what is, in a sense, a dialogue of reason and emotion. As a result it is nearly impossible to filter out the strictly linguistic-cognitive abstract meaning from the sociocultural psychoemotive meaning. While the ideas presented by a speaker must have validity (i.e., agree with the general body of knowledge shared by the Black congregation), the group also appraises the way knowledge claims are presented. There is growing evidence that the ethic of caring may be part of women’s experience as well. Certain dimensions of women’s ways of knowing bear striking resemblance to Afrocentric expressions of the ethic of caring. Belenky et al. point out that two contrasting epistemological orientations characterize knowing: one an epistemology of separation based on impersonal procedures for establishing truth and the other, an epistemology of connection in which truth emerges through care. While these ways of knowing are not gender specific, disproportionate numbers of women rely on connected knowing. The emphasis placed on expressiveness and emotion in African-American communities bears marked resemblance to feminist perspectives on the importance of personality in connected knowing. Separate knowers try to subtract the personality of an individual from his or her ideas because they see personality as biasing those ideas. In contrast, connected knowers see personality as adding to an individual’s ideas and feel that the personality of each group member enriches a group’s understanding. The significance of individual uniqueness, personal expressiveness, and empathy in African-American communities thus resembles the importance that some feminist analyses place on women’s "inner voice." The convergence of Afrocentric and feminist values in the ethic of caring seems particularly acute. White women may have access to a women’s tradition valuing emotion and expressiveness, but few Eurocentric institutions except the family validate this way of knowing. In contrast, Black women have long had the support of the Black church, an institution with deep roots in the African past and a philosophy that accepts and encourages expressiveness and an ethic of caring. Black men share in this Afrocentric tradition. But they must resolve the contradictions that confront them in searching for Afrocentric models of masculinity in the face of abstract, unemotional notions of masculinity imposed on them. The differences among race/gender groups thus hinge on differences in their access to institutional supports valuing one type of knowing over another. Although Black women may be denigrated within white-male-controlled academic institutions, other institutions, such as Black families and churches, which encourage the expression of Black female power, seem to do so, in part, by way of their support for an Afrocentric feminist epistemology. The Ethic of Personal Accountability An ethic of personal accountability is the final dimension of an alternative epistemology. Not only must individuals develop their knowledge claims through dialogue and present them in a style proving their concern for their ideas, but people are expected to be accountable for their knowledge claims. Zilpha Elaw’s description of slavery reflects this notion that every idea has an owner and that the owner’s identity matters: "Oh, the abominations of slavery! ... Every case of slavery, however lenient its infliction and mitigated its atrocities, indicates an oppressor, the oppressed, and oppression." For Elaw abstract definitions of slavery mesh with the concrete identities of its perpetrators and its victims. African-Americans consider it essential for individuals to have personal positions on issues and assume full responsibility for arguing their validity. Assessments of an individual’s knowledge claims simultaneously evaluate an individual’s character, values, and ethics. African-Americans reject **the Eurocentric, masculinist belief that probing into an individual’s personal viewpoint is** outside the boundaries of discussion. Rather, all views expressed and actions taken are thought to derive from a central set of core beliefs that cannot be other than personal. "Does Aretha really believe that Black women should get ‘respect, or is she just mouthing the words?" is a valid question in an Afrocentric feminist epistemology. Knowledge claims made by individuals respected for their moral and ethical connections to their ideas will carry more weight than those offered by less respected figures. An example drawn from an undergraduate course composed entirely of Black women which I taught might help to clarify the uniqueness of this portion of the knowledge validation process. During one class discussion I asked the students to evaluate a prominent Black male scholar’s analysis of Black feminism. Instead of severing the scholar from his context in order to dissect the rationality of his thesis, my students demanded facts about the author’s personal biography. They were especially interested in concrete details of his life, such as his relationships with Black women, his marital status, and his social class background. By requesting data on dimensions of his personal life routinely excluded in positivist approaches to knowledge validation, they invoked concrete experience as a criterion of meaning. They used this information to assess whether he really cared about his topic and drew on this ethic of caring in advancing their knowledge claims about his work. Furthermore, they refused to evaluate the rationality of his written ideas without some indication of his personal credibility as an ethical human being. The entire exchange could only have occurred as a dialogue among members of a class that had established a solid enough community to employ an alternative epistemology in assessing knowledge claims. The ethic of personal accountability is clearly an Afrocentric value, but is it feminist as well? While limited by its attention to middle-class, white women, Carol Gilligan’s work suggests that there is a female model for moral development whereby women are more inclined to link morality to responsibility, relationships, and the ability to maintain social ties. If this is the case, then African-American women again experience a convergence of values from Afrocentric and female institutions. The use of an Afrocentric feminist epistemology in traditional Black church services illustrates the interactive nature of all four dimensions and also serves as a metaphor for the distinguishing features of an Afrocentric feminist way of knowing. The services represent more than dialogues between the rationality used in examining bible texts and stories and the emotion inherent in the use of reason for this purpose. The rationale for such dialogues involves the task of examining concrete experiences for the presence of an ethic of caring. Neither emotion nor ethics is subordinated to reason. Instead, emotion, ethics, and reason are used as interconnected, essential components in assessing knowledge claims. In an Afrocentric feminist epistemology, values lie at the heart of the knowledge validation process such that inquiry always has an ethical aim. Alternative knowledge claims in and of themselves are rarely threatening to conventional knowledge. Such claims are routinely **ignored, discredited, or simply absorbed and marginalized in existing paradigms**, Much more threatening is the challenge that alternative epistemologies offer to he basic process used by the powerful to legitimate their knowledge claims. If the epistemology used to validate knowledge comes into question, then all prior knowledge claims validated under the dominant model become suspect. An alternative epistemology challenges all certified knowledge and opens up the question of whether what has been taken to be true can stand the test of alternative ways of validating truth. The existence of a self-defined Black women’s standpoint using an Afrocentric feminist epistemology calls into question the content of what currently passes as truth and simultaneously challenges the process of arriving at the truth.

Danielle Endres Assistant Professor of Communication @ Utah 2011 “Location Matters: The Rhetoric of Place in Protest” Quarterly Journal of Speech (97) (3) 2011 August/September

The rhetorical deployment of place is a common tactic for social movements. Calling on fond memories of or attachment to particular places, environmental social movements routinely ask their supporters to take action to “save” special places including Yosemite Valley, Glen Canyon, and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). Beyond referencing particular places in their arguments for social change, social movements have also relied on the rhetoricity of places themselves by holding protest events in particularly meaningful places or using protest events to create temporary fissures in the dominant meanings of places. The 1963 Civil Rights Movement's March on Washington culminated at the Lincoln Memorial in the Washington Mall in part because of the significance of that place: both its proximity to the center of Federal Government and Abraham Lincoln's role in freeing slaves. As Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech, the place and the presence of hundreds of thousands of people congregating in that place also constituted the movement's goals. The 2003 anti-war (in Iraq) protesters who took to the streets—indeed, any protest that marches through city streets—not only sent a visual message of the strength of the movement through images of city streets brimming with people but also temporarily reconstructed city streets from places for transportation into places of protest. These are just a few examples of how place is rhetorically significant to social movement protest. “In short,” as Tim Cresswell notes, “the qualities of place that make them good strategic tools of power simultaneously make them ripe for resistance in highly visible and often outrageous ways.”1 (Re)constructing the meaning of place, even in temporary ways, can be a tactical act of resistance along with the tactics we traditionally associate with protest, such as speeches, marches, and signs. As we will demonstrate, place (re)constructions can function rhetorically to challenge dominant meanings and practices in a place. Place is a performer along with activists in making and unmaking the possibilities of protest. Although scholars in geography and sociology regularly attend to the implications of theories of place for social movements and activism,2 rhetoricians have yet to turn to place as a way to examine the rhetorical performances of social movement protest. This essay provides a foundation for such an examination by articulating the rhetorical force of place in protest. We argue that place can serve as a unique heuristic for rhetorical studies of social movements. Traditionally research on social movements has been focused on the actions of protesters through their words or use of bodies, our discussion of place in protest shifts attention to how embodied rhetorics of protest are always situated in particular places. In other words, studying bodies and words can reveal only part of the rhetorical tactics of protest. Studying how words and bodies interact in and with place allows us to see social movement rhetoric from a new perspective. Beyond this specific contribution, our heuristic also contributes to a general understanding of the rhetoricity of place by specifically attending to how bodies, words, and places all interact in rhetoric. Further, the concept of place in protest has implications for understanding how to study the rhetoric of place. We build our argument by pulling together threads of existing research on place to offer a critical lens—place in protest—with which to ask questions relevant to a more comprehensive analysis of how place functions along with other rhetorical performances in social movement discourse. Place in protest allows us to understand how social movements use both place-based arguments and place-as-rhetoric. Place-based arguments discursively invoke images or memories of a place to support an argument, such as summoning the melting of the arctic as a reason to stop global warming, and make salient that dominant place meanings are sometimes linked to systems of power that discourage protest. In addition to examining such indirect invocations of place, we are interested in how social movements construct and reconstruct places in line with their challenges to the status quo (e.g., gay pride celebrations taking over everyday city streets to temporarily queer them). Place-as-rhetoric is at the core of our contribution to the study of place in protest and place generally; it assumes that the very place in which a protest occurs is a rhetorical performance that is part of the message of the movement. We will further refine place-as-rhetoric by distinguishing three ways in which places act rhetorically. First, protesters may build on a pre-existing meaning of a place to help make their point, such as holding a protest event at a state capital so that protesters can direct their message to this symbol of government. Second, protests can temporarily reconstruct the meaning (and challenge the dominant meaning) of a particular place, such as Critical Mass's take-over of car lanes in downtown city streets to raise awareness about bicycles as a “legitimate” form of transportation. These temporary reconstructions of places create short-term fissures in the dominant meanings of places in productive ways. Third, repeated reconstructions over time can result in new place meanings, such as how the 1960s UC Berkeley Free Speech Movement's repeated use of the front steps of Sproul Hall (a building that at the time housed campus administration offices) for their protests eventually resulted in its being known as a place for protest on campus, even though the building now houses student services. In these three ways, places themselves—not discourse about places—are rhetorical tactics in movements toward social change.

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HIFI says

HIFI 9 (Unity and Struggle, anti-racist activist group, On the Origins of Anti-Asian Racism and How We Have Fought Back, May 4, http://gatheringforces.org/2009/05/04/on-the-origins-of-anti-asian-racism-and-how-we-have-fought-back/)

In the United States, racist views of Asian-Americans are promiscuous and self-contradictory. On the one hand, we are told that we are model minorities, hard working citizens living out the classic American story of immigration and upward mobility. On the other hand, we are painted as perpetual foreigners, never quite American even after multiple generations of citizenship. On the one hand, we are supposed to be passive, docile, and submissive, while on the other hand they fear we are the yellow peril, a rising, ruthless, and aggressive empire that will someday destroy the white race.

The fact that these stereotypes are so contradictory show their ludicrousness. Racists project their own fears, anxieties, desires, and aspirations onto us in order to suppress our self-government and make us into who they want us to be, even if what they want us to be makes no sense. But racist fears, anxieties, desires and aspirations are not simply the product of individual ill will – they are shaped by powerful institutions. For example the U.S. military reproduces stereotypes of Asians as an aggressive, brainwashed Mongolian horde in order to raise support for their base expansion projects aimed at containing Chinese military power. Without U.S. military interests in Asia, this stereotype could have died out but instead it is growing.

That’s why liberal strategies of “anti-racism” will not liberate us. Liberals encourage white people to question their stereotypes as part of confronting their “privilege.” They do not attempt to abolish the institutions like military bases that produce and reproduce these stereotypes to keep us subordinated. This editorial will examine the historic political, economic, and social origins of anti-Asian racism. Our goal is not to enlighten anyone’s consciousness but rather to expose the institutions that oppress us so we know who our enemies are and what we need to smash.

The big picture: Facing the double-barreled shotgun of colonialism and empire

In general, we can say that our enemies are the forces of white supremacy – any institutions and practices that have the effect of elevating white people over people of color (including Asians) by subordinating and suppressing our attempts to be self-governing.

In particular, there are two interlocking systems of white supremacy that shape the terrain of Asian American life and struggle. The first consists of the social relations formed by the colonial settlement of North America and the founding of the United States out of colonial settler states. It is the result of land stolen from American Indians and Chicano/as, the enslavement of Blacks, and the extreme exploitation of “free” Black, Indigenous, European, and Asian migrant labor. As a shorthand, we will call all of this “settlerism”.[1]

Settlerism has created a legacy of terror, violence, and racial hierarchy which Asian Americans have had to navigate. From the moment we arrived as workers in the Wild Wild West we found ourselves facing down the barrels of guns originally pointed at Blacks and American Indians. Later, we found ourselves victims of a Jim-Crow-style legal system. It is only more recently that we have been championed as the “model minority”, a supposed solution to the “problem” of militant Black resistance to 500 years of settler terror. The racist rationale that created such an identification for Asian Americans is further explored below, as well as in other articles.

The second system of white supremacy is related to settlerism but is more global. It consists of the social relations formed through the expansion of U.S. imperialism in Asia through military conquest (the colonization of the Philippines, the partition of Korea, the Vietnam War, etc.) and the domination of American multinational corporations, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank over Asian economies. U.S. Empire built off of earlier forms of European imperialism in Asia even as it modified them. Like them, it enforced the fiction of a white Western civilization reforming Asian barbarism.

The experience of Asian Americans has been shaped by the fact that those who rule over us here in the U.S. also subjugated the countries we or our families came from. The architects of U.S. Empire in Asia created a whole string of lies about Asians being backwards, ignorant, weak, and undemocratic in order to justify this subjugation. These lies have been applied to us as well, preventing us from assimilating and becoming white like the formerly non-white immigrant groups from Europe did.

In response many Asian Americans have chosen to be consistent and principled internationalists – we have known that our situation here will not improve unless people of color abroad defeat U.S. Empire. Others have bought into U.S. empire, claiming they are the “good” Asians, unlike those “bad” Asians over there who are prone to terrorism, fanaticism, Communism, or Islam. And of course US Empire has exported aspects of North American settlerist ideology to Asia, which is why so many of our aunties and uncles over there are scared of Black Americans even though they have never met any.

In order to understand Asian American struggles we need to keep both of these systems of white supremacy in our headlights. We can’t adopt the all-too-common view that race in America is a simple binary of white over Black. Social relations in the U.S. are deeply shaped by U.S. imperialism in Asia, our peoples’ resistance to it, and our own struggles here in North America. But at the same time, we can’t pretend we’re in a national liberation struggle somewhere in Asia where we are the majority – we are in the Western Hemisphere where our lives are forged in the Black-indigenous-white crucible and we need to seek our allies and define our enemies within this context.

Llano says

Steve Llano Director of debate at St. John s Universit 01/28/14 “Tournament-Centric debating” Progymnasmata Preliminary exercises in rhetoric, argumentation, and debate. http://www.progymnasmata.net/2014/01/tournament-centric-debating.html?m=1

Debate programs have been, for almost as long as they have existed, been competition-oriented. Before there were tournaments, the triangular leagues ensured that debate was gameified - that is, the actions taken by a debate program were within the frame of the dative: "we are doing this for the upcoming debate with such-and-such university." After this level of gamification, the rise of the tournament as the site for debate practice became an easy lateral for this approach. Since then, debate programs have justified themselves in large connection to tournament involvement. ¶ Competition is an excellent catalyst for pedagogy, thought, and argument development. Now though, competition has been reduced to tournament participation. These are not equivalents. The tournament is a time, resource, and energy drain on debating programs. This means that when the time to justify a program's existence comes around, it's easier to construct that defense based on some amount of tournament participation and success rather than think of other ways the funding can be justified. At its worst, tournament centric debating becomes a recruitment tool - making tournaments offer larger breaks, easier breaks, and more awards in more categories in order to give students enough praise-through-victory to keep them participating in debate. Everyone knows that without colored ribbons, and without plastic trophies, there's very little defense of the team. The problem is that there's very little material defense of the team, and it's become conflated with the entire defense of it - not only to administrators, but to ourselves and to our students as well.¶ Recent public discussions about the form and function of the collegiate debating tournament show a complete and uncritical acceptance that the debate tournament is the debate program. There are no other ways to organize a program, goes the logic. Tournaments are debate; debates are tournaments. Alternative methods of running a debate program are not even considered - the tournament centric model consumes all time and energy from large, program-wide considerations of alternative methods to engage students in co-curricular, exciting, and interesting ways to practice and study argumentation.¶ There are a lot of reasons for this, and I'll be writing against tourno-centrism quite a bit in this space over the next few weeks. There's a lot to say - and most importantly, the idea of what the alternative debate program would look like is the most crucial. This is because most of us (us being those directing a debating program, either professionally or otherwise) have brought our administration with us on the tourno-centric journey, tying tournament participation, success, and achievement with our reason to exist as official University programs.¶ Tournament participation equates the study of debate with debating in competitions.¶ I've written before about the dangers of having professional competitive debate coaches commenting on political debates and being debate interpreters for the public. The danger is, in shortened form, the equating of expertise in a limited, competitive venue with an ontological knowledge, applicable and truth-discerning in all moments that have the flavor of debate or disagreement. This has the result of allowing audiences to cynically toss out any public discourse that doesn't meet their expectations of form or flavor. It creates a consumer-capitalist sensed machine that grinds up complicated rhetoric into tasty, easy to chew bits.¶ It is no surprise that people think that expertise in a small thing makes them experts in the larger thing, but in debate that connection is spurious, yet unanalyzed. Debate, as performed in tournament settings, has sacrificed a huge amount of its natural features in order to be measurable as a game. To have a contest, constraints must be added. Those constraints are always for the game, period. They make the game more fair, easier and clearer to evaluate, and increase the quality of the product of the game - the things that keep us coming back to play again.¶ Debate outside of these situations is messy, difficult to evaluate, and has rules that do not help with the evaluation of a contest. The rules in these cases are either culturally determined - based on norms of fairness the audience and debaters accept (such things like turn-taking, from discourse analysis, etc) or in order to provide maximum distribution of ideas, statements, and information during the debate. Often times, the debate is a continuation of a larger debate with no possible win or loss to be had (like election debates for example, designed to increase and focus attention on the larger question of the election itself). Ancient rhetorical theorists such as Cicero and Aristotle identified audiences as co-creators of the meaning of arguments, not neutral-ish judges of ontological conditions of argument. We teach, unintentionally, that arguments can be evaluated properly, under any conditions, by the right people who understand what a good argument is. This could not be more opposite than the way the ancient rhetoricians thought, nor could it be more opposed to contemporary argumentation studies.¶ The problem arises when debate teachers and directors think that tournament participation and success mean that they or their students can adequately speak about debates as if they were all equal - as if they were all of the same material. This comes out in casual conversation about public disputes. It is never the case. Students begin to talk about public debates as if they were malformed "good" debates (aka tournament-flavored debates, artificial colors and flavors) and dismiss many civic interactions as not worth their time. The tournament centric model of argument education flips the natural flavor for the artificial, so that when encounters with natural debate happen, the students hate the taste. When some sort of engagement does happen, public discourse is subverted to the form of the tournament round, and analyzing a debate becomes an exercise in seeing how well it can be parsed up to look like the familiar competitive debate. This is the equivalent of the chef taking nice, natural and good ingredients, and coating them in seasonings and sauces to make them if not good, more familiar, and therefore something that should appear on the plate (for an excellent example of this, nothing is as great an example as SIU debate coach Todd Graham's CNN posts).¶ This is as bad as choosing to take a football coach's diet advice for his players as diet advice for yourself. Of course, there are elements that will be present in both diets, but appropriateness is determined by many, many factors. Sometimes the accepting of a practice based on competitive success is very harmful to the adopter. When debate coaches and teachers do not actively intervene in the discussion of arguments, pointing out that the good of an argument is dependent on the situation, they are paving the way to this sort of ontological disaster. Students must be reminded that what works in a tournament setting needs serious adjustment to work outside of that setting.¶ Many of the by-products of debating are very useful, but one we don't use at all is the dissonance between the public idea of deliberation and debate and its contrast to the private, tournament-only idea of what is persuasive. The tournament-centric program gives students no choice about this question of situation. Good arguments are good. That's the end of the discussion.¶ Moving away from the tournament-centric pedagogy we find tournaments doing what they do best: Serving the larger pedagogical principles of rhetoric. What works here may not work there. What we like may not be likable outside these walls. What works for a monk doesn't work for a layperson - the sermons must be altered. And it happens all the time even in something as invariant as the Catholic church. Tournament speeches can be altered for public audiences, and the value of both can be evaluated in team meetings or practices. Tournament debates can be held on-campus for students to see how the quality of the decision and feedback change based on the audience. If anything, the tournament should show how little control we have over what we believe, and what small part of that we can use to get others to come to our side.¶ Having tournament-focused argumentation as your only activity in your debate program is to not have a debate program at all. It's to have a tournament program. If it's such a sin to "teach to the test" in the modern education system, why are debate coaches all over the world happily continuing this process? Variety not only improves the scope of your debate program, it will turn students from debaters into students of debate and argumentation. That's much more valuable than someone who is well trained to parse public discourse into manageable, familiar-tasting bites of argument, leaving out the messier, and more important rhetorical elements of public disputation.¶ The study of debate should be a study of all of it, not just what works for weekend contests. Students should be using competition to see how debate and argument is limited, not to get a false sense of what good argument looks like, then judge all of society for not being able to perform it to the esoteric tastes they gained from tournaments.

#### Failure to understand how the markers on our bodies interpolate and influence the ways that people understand material markers prevents effective action

Ross 2k

[Marlon B., Professor, Department of English and Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies, “Commentary: Pleasuring Identity, or the Delicious Politics of Belonging,” New Literary History, Vol. 31, No. 4, pages 840-841]

Although in his contribution Eric Lott targets Professor Michaels's comments and his own recent feud with Timothy Brennan (who unfortunately is not included in this volume) rather than Ken's argument, what Eric says about “left and liberal fundamentalists” who “simply and somewhat penitently” urge us to “‘go back to class’” could also be directed at Ken's conclusion. Ken writes, “Crafting a political left that does not merely reflect existing racial divisions starts with the relatively mundane proposition that it is possible to make a persuasive appeal to the given interests of working and unemployed women and men, regardless of race, in support of a program for economic justice.” On this one, I side with Eric, rather than Tim and Ken. Standing on the left depends on whose left side we're talking about. My left might be your right and vice versa, because it depends on what direction we're facing, and what direction depends on which identities we're assuming and affirming. Eric adds, "Even in less dismissive [than Tim's] accounts of new social movements based not on class but on identities formed by histories of injustice, there is a striking a priori sense of voluntarism about the investment in this cause or that movement or the other issue—as though determining the most fundamental issue were a matter of the writer's strength of feeling rather than a studied or analytical sense of the ever-unstable balance of forces in a hegemonic bloc at a given moment." I agree, but I'll risk mangling what Eric says by putting it more crassly.Touting class or "economic justice"as the fundamental stance for left identity is just another way of telling everybody else to shut up so I can be heard above the fray. Because of the force of "identity politics," a leftist white person would be leery of claiming to lead Blacks toward the promised land, a leftist straight man leery of claiming to lead women or queers, but, for a number of complex rationalizations, we in the middle class (where all of us writing here currently reside) still have few qualms about volunteering to lead, at least theoretically, the working class toward "economic justice." What Eric calls here "left fundamentalism," I'd call, at the risk of sounding harsh, left paternalism. **Of the big identity groups articulated through "identity politics," economic class remains the only identity where a straight white middle-class man can still feel comfortable claiming himself a leading political voice, and** thus he**may sometimes overcompensate by screaming that this is the only identity that really matters—which is the same as claiming that class is beyond identity**. Partly this is because**Marxist theory**and Marx himself (a bourgeois intellectual creating the theoretical practice for the workers' revolution) **stage the model for working-class identity as a sort of trans-identification, a magical identity that is transferable to those outside the group who commit themselves to it wholeheartedly enough**. If we look back, we realize even this magical quality is not special to a history of class struggle, as whites during the New Negro movements of the early twentieth century felt that they were vanguard race leaders because they had putatively imbibed some essential qualities of Negroness by cross-identifying with the folk and their culture.

Parker says

1996 Kelly A., Associate Professor and Chair of philosophy at Grand valley state Pragmatism and Environmental Thought, Environmental Pragmatism edited by Andrew Light and Eric Katz,

I have spoken of the experience of organisms‑in‑environments as centrally important. Pragmatism is "anthropocentric" (or better, "anthropometric")24 in one respect: the human organism is inevitably the one that discusses value. This is so because human experience, the human perspective on value, is the only thing we know as humans. Many other entities indeed have experience and do value things. Again, this is not to say that human whim is the measure of all things, only that humans are in fact the measurers. This must be a factor in all our deliberations about environmental issues. We can and should speak on the others' behalf when appropriate, but we cannot speak from their experience. We can in some sense hear their voices, but we cannot speak in their voices. I see no way out of our own distinctively human bodies. In this sense, the human yardstick of experience becomes, by default, the measure of all things. Although the debate over environmental issues is thus limited to human participants, this is not inappropriate ‑ after all, the debate centers almost exclusively on human threats to the world. Wolves, spotted owls, and old­growth forests are unable to enter the ethics debate except through their human spokespersons, and that is perhaps regrettable. Far better that they should speak for themselves! Lacking this, they do at least have spokespersons ‑ and these spokespersons, their advocates, need to communicate their concerns only to other humans. To do this in anthropic value categories is not shameful. It is, after all, the only way to go.