# 1

**A) By participating in this tournament while knowingly rejecting the resolution, an agreed upon norm, our opponents are acting as civil disobedients.  Though they have the right to challenge rules they believe to be unjust, their request for the ballot is contradictory to the goals of their resistance.**

A.D. **Woozley 76** (Professor of Moral Philosophy at University of Virginia, “Civil Disobedience and Punishment,” Ethics, Vol. 86, No. 4. (Jul., 1976), pp. 323-331, accessed via JSTOR)

**The civil disobedient stands to gain nothing** for ~~him~~self (as the ordinary criminal does) **by breaking the law, but** ~~he~~ **stands to lose**-~~he~~ **risks the legal consequence of punishment**. ~~He~~ knows that and goes ahead: ~~he~~ is not deterred from considerations of (what he believes to be ~~his~~) duty by considerations of self-interest. ~~He~~ believes enough in the issue for which he is acting to risk punishment for it. Can ~~he~~ complain if he takes the risk and loses? **If I choose to break one of society's rules, it is hard to see how I can complain if society treats me in the way in which it has declared that it will treat anybody who breaks that rule. Claiming that I did right to break the rule** (under certain conditions), **even that I had a duty to break it, is one thing; claiming a right to break it with immunity is another;** and the first does not carry the second with it. And **that is where I am inclined to think that the appearance of consistency by the amnesty demanders breaks down. For what they are doing is demanding to be protected from the risk of punishment,** not by taking the usual precautions to minimize the risk, but **by demanding the right not to be punished. They are, as it were, complaining in advance about being punished. It is not all right both to take that risk and to make a claim not to be exposed to it. A claim for amnesty, made on behalf of others, may be right; but it has to be wrong for those for whom amnesty is claimed, even for those for whom it is rightly claimed, to demand it for themselves.**

**B) If you do believe their stance is sincere and/or you agree with it, you should reward their civil disobedience with a loss.  Punishment is key to enlisting the sympathy of the majority and ensuring the movement succeeds.**

**Cohen 72** – Marshall, University Professor, Emeritus, Professor of Philosophy and Law, Emeritus, and Dean, Emeritus, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences at USC [“Liberalism and Disobedience,” Philosophy and Public Affairs, Vol. 1, No. 3. (Spring, 1972), pp. 283-314, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/2265054.pdf>]

It is for this reason that **the civil disobedient** characteristically notifies government officials of the time and place of his actions and **attempts to make clear the point of** ~~his~~ **protest.** Obviously, one of the problems of a modern democracy is that many immoral actions taken in the people's name are only dimly known to them, if they are known at all. In such cases, the main difficulty in touching the public's conscience may well be the difficulty in making the public conscious. The civil disobedient may therefore find that in addition to making his actions public it is necessary to gain for them a wide publicity as well. Indeed, Bertrand Russell has suggested that making propaganda and bringing the facts of political life to the attention of an ignorant and often bemused electorate constitute the main functions of disobedience at the present time.3 It is certainly true that **nothing attracts the attention of the masses,** and of the mass media, **like flamboyant violations of the law**, and it would be unrealistic of those who have political grievances not to exploit this fact. But **it is important**, especially in this connection, **to recall Gandhi's warning that the technique of law violation ought to be used sparingly,** like the surgeon's knife. **For in the end the public will lose its will, and indeed its ability, to distinguish between those who employ these techniques whenever they wish to advertise their political opinions and those, the true dissenters, who use them only to protest deep violations of political principle. The techniques will then be of little use to anybody. After openly breaking the law, the traditional disobedient willingly pays the penalty. This is one of the characteristics that** serve to distinguish him from the typical criminal (his appeal to conscience is another), and it **helps to establish the seriousness** of ~~his~~ views **and the depth of** ~~his~~ **commitment** as well. Unfortunately, paying the penalty will not always demonstrate that his actions are in fact disinterested. For the **youth protesting the draft** or the welfare recipient protesting poverty **has an obvious and substantial interest in** the **success** of his cause. **If the majority suspects that these interests color the disobedient's perception of the issues involved, its suspicions may prove fatal to** ~~his~~ **ultimate success**. This is one reason why the practice of civil disobedience should not be limited to those who are directly injured by the government's immoral or lawless course (as Judge Wyzanski and others have suggested).4 **A show of support by those who have no substantial interest in the matter may carry special weight with a confused, and even with an actively skeptical, majority.** The majority simply cannot dismiss those over thirty-five as draft dodgers, or those who earn over thirty-five thousand dollars a year as boondogglers. It may therefore consider the issues at stake, and this is the first objective of the civil disobedient.

# 2

#### Politicizing those in poverty is wrong—the affirmative acts under the guise of political empowerment but inherently ends up utilizing descriptions of poverty to accomplish their own development goals—this is an act of commodification and oppression.

Linda Martín Alcoff, Department of Philosophy at SyracuseUniversity.1992, Cultural Critique Winter 1991-92, “The Problem of Speaking For Others,” pp. 5-32

Feminist discourse is not the only site in which the problem of speaking for others has been acknowledged and addressed. In anthropology there is similar discussion about wyhether it is possible to speak for others either adequately or justifiably. Trinh T. Minh-ha explains the grounds for skepticism when she says that anthropology is "mainly a conversation of `us' with `us' about `them,' of the white man with the white man about the primitive-nature man...in which `them' is silenced. `Them' always stands on the other side of the hill, naked and speechless...`them' is only admitted among `us', the discussing subjects, when accompanied or introduced by an `us'..."4 Given this analysis, even ethnographies written by progressive anthropologists are a priori regressive because of the structural features of anthropological discursive practice. The recognition that there is a problem in speaking for others has followed from the widespread acceptance of two claims. First, there has been a growing awareness that where one speaks from affects both the meaning and truth of what one says, and thus that one cannot assume an ability to transcend her location. In other words, a speaker's location (which I take here to refer to her social location or social identity) has an epistemically significant impact on that speaker's claims, and can serve either to authorize or dis-authorize one's speech. The creation of Women's Studies and African American Studies departments were founded on this very belief: that both the study of and the advocacy for the oppressed must come to be done principally by the oppressed themselves, and that we must finally acknowledge that systematic divergences in social location between speakers and those spoken for will have a significant effect on the content of what is said. The unspoken premise here is simply that a speaker's location is epistemically salient. I shall explore this issue further in the next section. The second claim holds that not only is location epistemically salient, but certain privileged locations are discursively dangerous.5 In particular, the practice of privileged persons speaking for or on behalf of less privileged persons has actually resulted (in many cases) in increasing or reinforcing the oppression of the group spoken for. This was part of the argument made against Anne Cameron's speaking for Native women: Cameron's intentions were never in question, but the effects of her writing were argued to be harmful to the needs of Native authors because it is Cameron rather than they who will be listened to and whose books will be bought by readers interested in Native women. Persons from dominant groups who speak for others are often treated as authenticating presences that confer legitimacy and credibility on the demands of subjugated speakers; such speaking for others does nothing to disrupt the discursive hierarchies that operate in public spaces. For this reason, the work of privileged authors who speak on behalf of the oppressed is becoming increasingly criticized by members of those oppressed groups themselves.6 As social theorists, we are authorized by virtue of our academic positions to develop theories that express and encompass the ideas, needs, and goals of others. However, we must begin to ask ourselves whether this is ever a legitimate authority, and if so, what are the criteria for legitimacy? In particular, is it ever valid to speak for others who are unlike me or who are less privileged than me?We might try to delimit this problem as only arising when a more privileged person speaks for a less privileged one. In this case, we might say that I should only speak for groups of which I am a member. But this does not tell us how groups themselves should be delimited. For example, can a white woman speak for all women simply by virtue of being a woman? If not, how narrowly should we draw the categories? The complexity and multiplicity of group identifications could result in "communities" composed of single individuals. Moreover, the concept of groups assumes specious notions about clear-cut boundaries and "pure" identities. I am a Panamanian-American and a person of mixed ethnicity and race: half white/Angla and half Panamanian mestiza. The criterion of group identity leaves many unanswered questions for a person such as myself, since I have membership in many conflicting groups but my membership in all of them is problematic. Group identities and boundaries are ambiguous and permeable, and decisions about demarcating identity are always partly arbitrary. Another problem concerns how specific an identity needs to be to confer epistemic authority. Reflection on such problems quickly reveals that no easy solution to the problem of speaking for others can be found by simply restricting the practice to speaking for groups of which one is a member.

#### The affirmative is a perfect erasure of the other; they craft an image of the other in terms of their own systems of knowledge. This image inevitably overwhelms the other and denies them any sort of individual subjectivity.

Linda Alcoff, Professor of Philosophy, Women's Studies and Political Science, Director of Women’s Studies, Syracuse University, 1995, “The Problem of Speaking for Others,” http://www.alcoff.com/content/speaothers.html.

This is partly the case because of what has been called the "crisis of representation." For in both the practice of speaking for as well as the practice of speaking about others, I am engaging in the act of representing the other's needs, goals, situation, and in fact, who they are, based on my own situated interpretation. In post-structuralist terms, I am participating in the construction of their subject-positions rather than simply discovering their true selves. Once we pose it as a problem of representation, we see that, not only are speaking for and speaking about analytically close, so too are the practices of speaking for others and speaking for myself. For, in speaking for myself, I am also representing my self in a certain way, as occupying a specific subject-position, having certain characteristics and not others, and so on. In speaking for myself, I (momentarily) create my self---just as much as when I speak for others I create them as a public, discursive self, a self which is more unified than any subjective experience can support. And this public self will in most cases have an effect on the self experienced as interiority. The point here is that the problem of representation underlies all cases of speaking for, whether I am speaking for myself or for others. This is not to suggest that all representations are fictions: they have very real material effects, as well as material origins, but they are always mediated in complex ways by discourse, power, and location. However, the problem of speaking for others is more specific than the problem of representation generally, and requires its own particular analysis. There is one final point I want to make before we can pursue this analysis. The way I have articulated this problem may imply that individuals make conscious choices about their discursive practice free of ideology and the constraints of material reality. This is not what I wish to imply. The problem of speaking for others is a social one, the options available to us are socially constructed, and the practices we engage in cannot be understood as simply the results of autonomous individual choice. Yet to replace both "I" and "we" with a passive voice that erases agency results in an erasure of responsibility and accountability for one's speech, an erasure I would strenuously argue against (there is too little responsibility-taking already in Western practice!). When we sit down to write, or get up to speak, we experience ourselves as making choices. We may experience hesitation from fear of being criticized or from fear of exacerbating a problem we would like to remedy, or we may experience a resolve to speak despite existing obstacles, but in many cases we experience having the possibility to speak or not to speak. On the one hand, a theory which explains this experience as involving autonomous choices free of material structures would be false and ideological, but on the other hand, if we do not acknowledge the activity of choice and the experience of individual doubt, we are denying a reality of our experiential lives.9

#### Discourses of top-down reform that speak for others are trapped in an oppressive hierarchy of power. Don’t cast your ballot for the affirmative project of speaking for others. Instead use it to sap the power from their discourse to allow the others to speak for themselves.

Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, 1972 Libcom.org, “Intellectuals and Power: A Conversation Between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze,” http://libcom.org/library/intellectuals-power-a-conversation-between-michel-foucault-and-gilles-deleuze

FOUCAULT: It seems to me that the political involvement of the intellectual was traditionally the product of two different aspects of his activity: his position as an intellectual in bourgeois society, in the system of capitalist production and within the ideology it produces or imposes (his exploitation, poverty, rejection, persecution, the accusations of subversive activity, immorality, etc); and his proper discourse to the extent that it revealed a particular truth, that it disclosed political relationships where they were unsuspected. These two forms of politicisation did not exclude each other, but, being of a different order, neither did they coincide. Some were classed as "outcasts" and others as "socialists." During moments of violent reaction on the part of the authorities, these two positions were readily fused: after 1848, after the Commune, after 1940. The intellectual was rejected and persecuted at the precise moment when the facts became incontrovertible, when it was forbidden to say that the emperor had no clothes. The intellectual spoke the truth to those who had yet to see it, in the name of those who were forbidden to speak the truth: he was conscience, consciousness, and eloquence. In the most recent upheaval (3) the intellectual discovered that the masses no longer need him to gain knowledge: they know perfectly well, without illusion; they know far better than he and they are certainly capable of expressing themselves. But there exists a system of power which blocks, prohibits, and invalidates this discourse and this knowledge, a power not only found in the manifest authority of censorship, but one that profoundly and subtly penetrates an entire societal network. Intellectuals are themselves agents of this system of power-the idea of their responsibility for "consciousness" and discourse forms part of the system. The intellectual's role is no longer to place himself "somewhat ahead and to the side" in order to express the stifled truth of the collectivity; rather, it is to struggle against the forms of power that transform him into its object and instrument in the sphere of "knowledge," "truth," "consciousness," and "discourse. "(4) In this sense theory does not express, translate, or serve to apply practice: it is practice. But it is local and regional, as you said, and not totalising. This is a struggle against power, a struggle aimed at revealing and undermining power where it is most invisible and insidious. It is not to "awaken consciousness" that we struggle (the masses have been aware for some time that consciousness is a form of knowledge; and consciousness as the basis of subjectivity is a prerogative of the bourgeoisie), but to sap power, to take power; it is an activity conducted alongside those who struggle for power, and not their illumination from a safe distance. A "theory" is the regional system of this struggle. DELEUZE: Precisely. A theory is exactly like a box of tools. It has nothing to do with the signifier. It must be useful. It must function. And not for itself.If no one uses it, beginning with the theoretician himself (who then ceases to be a theoretician), then the theory is worthless or the moment is inappropriate. We don't revise a theory, but construct new ones; we have no choice but to make others. It is strange that it was Proust, an author thought to be a pure intellectual, who said it so clearly: treat my book as a pair of glasses directed to the outside; if they don't suit you, find another pair; I leave it to you to find your own instrument, which is necessarily an investment for combat. A theory does not totalise; it is an instrument for multiplication and it also multiplies itself. It is in the nature of power to totalise and it is your position. and one I fully agree with, that theory is by nature opposed to power. As soon as a theory is enmeshed in a particular point, we realise that it will never possess the slightest practical importance unless it can erupt in a totally different area. This is why the notion of reform is so stupid and hypocritical. Either reforms are designed by people who claim to be representative, who make a profession of speaking for others, and they lead to a division of power, to a distribution of this new power which is consequently increased by a double repression; or they arise from the complaints and demands of those concerned. This latter instance is no longer a reform but revolutionary action that questions (expressing the full force of its partiality) the totality of power and the hierarchy that maintains it. This is surely evident in prisons: the smallest and most insignificant of the prisoners' demands can puncture Pleven's pseudoreform (5). If the protests of children were heard in kindergarten, if their questions were attended to, it would be enough to explode the entire educational system. There is no denying that our social system is totally without tolerance; this accounts for its extreme fragility in all its aspects and also its need for a global form of repression. In my opinion, you were the first-in your books and in the practical sphere-to teach us something absolutely fundamental: the indignity of speaking for others. We ridiculed representation and said it was finished, but we failed to draw the consequences of this "theoretical" conversion-to appreciate the theoretical fact that only those directly concerned can speak in a practical way on their own behalf. FOUCAULT: And when the prisoners began to speak, they possessed an individual theory of prisons, the penal system, and justice. It is this form of discourse which ultimately matters, a discourse against power, the counter-discourse of prisoners and those we call delinquents-and not a theory about delinquency. The problem of prisons is local and marginal: not more than 100,000 people pass through prisons in a year. In France at present, between 300,000 and 400,000 have been to prison. Yet this marginal problem seems to disturb everyone. I was surprised that so many who had not been to prison could become interested in its problems, surprised that all those who bad never heard the discourse of inmates could so easily understand them. How do we explain this? Isn't it because, in a general way, the penal system is the form in which power is most obviously seen as power?...

# 3

#### Any movement that promises radical change will be destroyed as soon as it becomes visible. An invisible movement has the most subversive potential—rejecting politics is the only political act

**The Invisible Committee, 7** [an anonymous group of French professors, phd candidates, and intellectuals, in the book “The Coming Insurrection” published by Semiotext(e) (attributed to the Tarnac Nine by the French police), http://tarnac9.noblogs.org/gallery/5188/insurrection\_english.pdf]

Whatever angle you look at it from, there's no escape from the present. That's not the least of its virtues. For those who want absolutely to have hope, it knocks down every support. Those who claim to have solutions are proven wrong almost immediately. It's understood that now everything can only go from bad to worse. "There's no future for the future" is the wisdom behind an era that for all its appearances of extreme normalcy has come to have about the consciousness level of the first punks. The sphere of political representation is closed. From left to right, it's the same nothingness acting by turns either as the big shots or the virgins, the same sales shelf heads, changing up their discourse according to the latest dispatches from the information service. Those who still vote give one the impression that their only intention is to knock out the polling booths by voting as a pure act of protest. And we've started to understand that in fact it’s only *against the vote itself* that people go on voting. Nothing we've seen can come up to the heights of the present situation; not by far. By its very silence, the populace seems infinitely more 'grown up' than all those squabbling amongst themselves to govern it do. Any Belleville *chibani*1 is wiser in his chats than in all of those puppets’ grand declarations put together. The lid of the social kettle is triple-tight, and the pressure inside won’t stop building. The ghost of Argentina’s *Que Se Vayan Todos*2 is seriously starting to haunt the ruling heads. The fires of November 2005 will never cease to cast their shadow on all consciences. Those first joyous fires were the baptism of a whole decade full of promises. The media’s “suburbs vs. the Republic” myth, if it’s not inefficient, is certainly not true. The fatherland was ablaze all the way to downtown everywhere, with fires that were methodically snuffed out. Whole streets went up in flames of solidarity in Barcelona and no one but the people who lived there even found out about it. And the country hasn’t stopped burning since. Among the accused we find diverse profiles, without much in common besides a hatred for existing society; not united by class, race, or even by neighborhood. What was new wasn’t the “suburban revolt,” since that was already happening in the 80s, but the rupture with its established forms. The assailants weren’t listening to anybody at all anymore, not their big brothers, not the local associations assigned to help return things to normal. No “SOS Racism3” could sink its cancerous roots into that event, one to which only fatigue, falsification, and media *omertà*4 could feign putting an end. The whole series of nocturnal strikes, anonymous attacks, wordless destruction, had the merit of busting wide open the split between *politics* and *the political*. No one can honestly deny the obvious weight of this assault which made no demands, and had no message other than a threat which had nothing to do with *politics*. But you’d have to be blind not to see what is purely political about this resolute negation of politics, and you’d certainly have to know absolutely nothing about the autonomous youth movements of the last 30 years. Like abandoned children we burned the first baby toys of a society that deserves no more respect than the monuments of Paris did at the end of Bloody Week5 -- and knows it. There’s no *social* solution to the present situation. First off because the vague aggregate of social groupings, institutions, and individual bubbles that we designate by the anti-phrase “society” has no substance, because there’s no language left to express common experiences with. It took a half-century of fighting by the Lumières to thaw out the possibility of a French Revolution, and a century of fighting by work to give birth to the fearful “Welfare State.” Struggles creating the language in which the new order expresses itself. Nothing like today. Europe is now a de-monied continent that sneaks off to make a run to the Lidl6 and has to fly with the low-cost airlines to be able to keep on flying. None of the “problems” formulated in the social language are resolvable. The “retirement pensions issue,” the issues of “precariousness,” the “youth” and their “violence” can only be kept in suspense as long as the ever more surprising “acting out” they thinly cover gets managed away police-like. No one’s going to be happy to see old people being wiped out at a knockdown price, abandoned by their own and with nothing to say. And those who’ve found less humiliation and more benefit in a life of crime than in sweeping floors will not give up their weapons, and prison won’t make them love society. The rage to enjoy of the hordes of the retired will not take the somber cuts to their monthly income on an empty stomach, and will get only too excited about the refusal to work among a large sector of the youth. And to conclude, no guaranteed income granted the day after a quasi-uprising will lay the foundations for a new New Deal, a new pact, and a new peace. The social sentiment is rather too evaporated for all that. As their solution, they’ll just never stop putting on the pressure, to make sure nothing happens, and with it we’ll have more and more police chases all over the neighborhood. The drone that even according to the police indeed did fly overSeine-Saint-Denis7 last July 14th is a picture of the future in much more straightforward colors than all the hazy images we get from the humanists. That they took the time to clarify that it was not armed shows pretty clearly the kind of road we’re headed down. The country is going to be cut up into ever more air-tight zones. Highways built along the border of the “sensitive neighborhoods” already form walls that are invisible and yet able to cut them off from the private subdivisions. Whatever good patriotic souls may think about it, the management of neighborhoods “by community” is most effective just by its notoriety. The purely metropolitan portions of the country, the main downtowns, lead their luxurious lives in an ever more calculating, ever more sophisticated, ever more shimmering deconstruction. They light up the whole planet with their whorehouse red lights, while the BAC8 and the private security companies’ -- read: militias’ -- patrols multiply infinitely, all the while benefiting from being able to hide behind an ever more disrespectful judicial front. The catch-22 of the present, though perceptible everywhere, is denied everywhere. Never have so many psychologists, sociologists, and literary people devoted themselves to it, each with their own special jargon, and each with their own specially missing solution. It’s enough just to listen to the songs that come out these days, the trifling “new French music,” where the petty-bourgeoisie dissects the states of its soul and the K’1Fry mafia9 makes its declarations of war, to know that this coexistence will come to an end soon and that a decision is about to be made. This book is signed in the name of an imaginary collective. Its editors are not its authors. They are merely content to do a little clean-up of what’s scattered around the era’s common areas, around the murmurings at bar-tables, behind closed bedroom doors. They’ve only determined a few necessary truths, whose universal repression fills up the psychiatric hospitals and the painful gazes. They’ve made themselves scribes of the situation. It’s the privilege of radical circumstances that justice leads them quite logically to revolution. It’s enough just to say what we can see and not avoid the conclusions to be drawn from it.

#### Vote negative to make their movement imperceptible- allows resistance to be reframed. Visible ensures cooption

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In this sense **imperceptible politics does not necessarily differ from or oppose other prevalent forms of politics, such as state-oriented politics, micropolitics, identity politics, cultural and gender politics, civil rights movements, etc**. And indeed **imperceptible politics connects with all these various forms of political engagement and intervention in an opportunistic way: it deploys them to the extent that they allow the establishment of spaces outside representation**; that is, spaces which do not primarily focus on the transformation of the conditions of the double-R axiom (rights and representation) but on the insertion of new social forces into a given political terrain. In the previous chapter we called this form of politics outside politics: the politics which opposes the representational regime of policing. Imperceptibility is the everyday strategy which allows us to move and to act below the overcoding regime of representation. **This everyday strategy is inherently anti-theoretical; that is, it resists any ultimate theorisation, it cannot be reduced to** one **successful and necessary form of politics** (such as state-oriented politics or micropolitics, for example). **Rather, imperceptible politics is genuinely empiricist, that is it is always enacted as ad hoc practices which allow the decomposition of the representational strategies in a particular field and the composition of events which cannot be left unanswered by the existing regime of control.If imperceptible politics resists theorisation and is ultimately empiricist, what then are the criteria for doing imperceptible politics? There are** three **dimensions which characterise imperceptible politics: objectlessness,** totality, **trust**. **Firstly, imperceptible politics is objectless, that is it performs political transformation without primarily targeting a specific political aim (such as transformation of a law or institution, or a particular claim for inclusion**, etc). **Instead imperceptible politics proceeds by materialising its own political actions through contagious and affective transformations.The object of its political practice is its own practices. In this sense, imperceptible politics is non-intentional - and therein lies its difference from state-oriented politics or the politics of civil rights movements**, for example - **it instigates change through a series of everyday transformations which can only be codified as having a central political aim or function in retrospect**. Secondly, imperceptible politics addresses the totality of an existing field of power. This seems to be the difference between imperceptible politics and micropolitics or other alternative social movements: imperceptible politics is not concerned with containing itself to a molecular level of action; it addresses the totality of power through the social changes which it puts to work in a particular field of action. The distinction between molar and molecular (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 275) has only analytical significance from the perspective of imperceptible politics. In fact imperceptible politics is both molar and molecular, because by being local situated action it addresses the whole order of control in a certain field. Imperceptible politics is located at the heart of a field of power and at the same time it opens a way to move outside this field by forcing the transformation of all these elements which are constitutive of this field.In this sense, imperceptible politics is a driving force which is simul­taneously both present and absent. We described this in the previous chapter by exploring the importance of speculative figurations for the practice of escape. On the everyday level of escape (a level we called in this chapter imperceptible politics) speculative figuration can be translated into trust. This is the third characteristic of **imperceptible politics**; it **is driven by a firm belief in the importance and truthfulness of its actions, without seeking any evidence for, or conducting anyinvestigation into its practices. This is trust. Imperceptible politics is driven by trust in something which seems to be absent from a particular situation. Imperceptible politics operates around a void, and it is exactly the conversion of this void into everyday politics that becomes the vital force for imperceptible politics.**

# 4

#### Bereft of values, our society demands images of suffering from others to replenish our moral sentiment. We exchange our pity for their pain, in a process that guarantees the suffering must continue.

Baudrillard in 94(Jean, September 28, "No Reprieve For Sarejevo")

The problem lies indeed in the nature of our reality. We have got only one, and it must be preserved. Even if it is by the use of the most heinous of all paroles: "One must do something. One cannot remain idle." Yet, to do something for the sole reason that one cannot do nothing never has been a valid principle for action, nor for liberty. At the most it is an excuse for one's own powerlessness and a token of self-pity. The people of Sarajevo are not bothered by such questions. Being where they are, they are in the absolute need to do what they do, to do the right thing. They harbour no illusion about the outcome and do not indulge in self-pity. This is what it means to be really existing, to exist within reality. And this reality has nothing to do with the so-called objective reality of their plight, which should not exist, and which we do so much deplore. This reality exits as such - it is the stark reality of action and destiny. ¶ This is why they are alive, while we are dead. This is why we feel the need to salvage the reality of war in our own eyes and to impose this reality (to be pitiable) upon those who suffer from it, but do not really believe in it, despite the fact they are in the midst of war and utter distress. Susan Sontag herself confesses in her diaries that the Bosnians do not really believe in the suffering which surrounds them. They end up finding the whole situation unreal, senseless, and unexplainable. It is hell, but hell of what may be termed a hyperreal kind, made even more hyperreal by the harassment of the media and the humanitarian agencies, because it renders the attitude of the world towards them even less unfathomable. Thus, they live in a kind of ghost-like war - which is fortunate, because otherwise, they would never have been able to stand up to it. These are not my words, by the way: they say it so. But then Susan Sontag, hailing herself from New York, must know better than them what reality is, since she has chosen them to incarnate it. Or maybe it is simply because reality is what she, and with her all the Western world, is lacking the most. **To reconstitute reality, one needs to head to where blood flows. All these "corridors",** opened by us to funnel our foodstuffs and our "culture" are in fact our lifelines along which we suck their moral strength and the energy of their distress. Yet another unequal exchange. And to those who have found in a radical delusion of reality (and this includes the belief in political rationality, which supposedly rules us, and which very much constitutes the principle of European reality) a kind of alternative courage, that is to survive a senseless situation, to these people Susan Sontag comes to convince them of the "reality" of their suffering, by making something cultural and something theatrical out of it, so that it can be useful as a referent within the theatre of western values, including "solidarity". But Susan Sontag herself is not the issue. She is merely a societal instance of what has become the general situation whereby toothless intellectuals swap their distress with the misery of the poor, both of them sustaining each other, both of them locked in a perverse agreement. This parallels the way the political class and civil society are swapping their respective misery: one throwing up corruption and scandals, the other its purposeless convulsions and its inertia. Thus, not so long ago, one could witness Bourdieu and Abbe Pierre offering themselves as televisual slaughtering lambs trading with each other pathetic language and sociological garble about poverty.¶ Our whole society is thus on its way towards "commiseration" in the most literal sense of the word (under the cloak of ecumenical bathos). It looks like as if we are in the midst of an immense feeling of guilt, shared by intellectuals and politicians alike, and which is linked to the end of history and the downfall of values. Then, it has become necessary to replenish the pond of values, the pond of references, and to do so by using that smallest common denominator which is the suffering of the world, and in doing so, replenishing our game reserves with artificial fowls. "At the moment, it has become impossible to show anything else than suffering in the news broadcasts on television", reports David Schneidermann. Ours is a victim-society. I gather that society is merely expressing its own disappointment and longing for an impossible violence against itself. Everywhere, a New Intellectual Order is following on the heels of the New World Order. Everywhere, we see distress, misery and suffering becoming the basic stuff of the primitive scene. The status of victimhood, paired with human rights is the sole funeral ideology. Those who do not directly exploit it do it by proxy - there is no dearth of mediators who take some surplus value of financial or symbolic nature along the way. Loss and suffering, just like the global debt, are negotiable and for sale on the speculative market, that is, the intellectual-political market - which is in no way undermining the military-industrial complex of old & sinister days. ¶

# 5

**A.Link and Alternative.**

**Movements based on class are supplemented by antiblackness. Solving for the “exploitation” of Capitalism can never solve for the forced labor of the slave. The alternative is to refuse to affirm a political program which ignores the positionality of the Black in the US and entrenches this position thorough demands based on class exploitation. It is not “try OR die” but “try OR strengthen antiblackness”.**

**Wilderson. 2007.** Frank B. Chap 1. The prison slave as Hegemony’s (silent) scandal. In Joy James “Warfare in the American Homeland”

The black subject reveals the inability of social movements grounded in Gramscian discourse to think of white supremacy (rather than capitalism) as the base and thereby calls into question their claim to elaborate a comprehensive and decisive antagonism. Stated another way, Gramscian discourse and coalition politics are indeed able to imagine the subject that transforms itself into a mass of antagonistic identity formations-formations that can precipitate a crisis in wage slavery, exploitation, and hegemony-but they are asleep at the wheel when asked to provide enabling antagonisms toward unwaged slavery, despotism, and terror. 3. We begin to see how Marxism suffers from a kind of conceptual anxiety. There is a desire for socialism on the other side of crisis, a society that does away not with the category of worker but with the imposition that workers suffer under the approach of variable capital. In other words, the mark of its conceptual anxiety is in its desire to democratize work and thus help to keep in place and ensure the coherence of Reformation and Enlightenment foundational values of productivity and progress. This scenario crowds out other postrevolutionary possibilities-that is, idleness.The scandal with which the black subject position "threatens" Gramscian and coalition discourse is manifest in the black subject's incommensurability with, or disarticulation of, Gramscian categories: work, progress, production, exploitation, hegemony, and historical self-awareness. Through what strategies does the black subject destabilize-emerge as the unthought, and thus the scandal of-historical materialism? How does the black subject function within the "American desiring machine" differently from the quintessential Gramscian subaltern, the worker? Capital was kick-started by the rape of the African continent, a phenomenon that is central to neither Gramsci nor Marx. According to Lindon Barrett, something about the black body in and of itself made it the repository of the violence that was the slave trade. It would have been far easier and far more profitable to take the white underclass from along the riverbanks of England and western Europe than to travel all the way to Africa for slaves.The theoretical importance of emphasizing this in the early twenty-first century is twofold. First, capital was kick-started by approaching a particular body (a black body) with direct relations of force, not by approaching a white body with variable capital. Thus, one could say that slavery is closer to capital's primal desire than is exploitation. It is a relation of terror as opposed to a relation of hegemony. Second, today, late capital is imposing a renaissance of this original desire, the direct relation of force, the despotism of the unwaged relation. This renaissance of slavery-that is, the reconfiguration of the prison-industrial complex-has once again as its structuring metaphor and primary target the black body. The value of reintroducing the unthought category of the slave by way of noting the absence of the black subject lies in the black subject's potential for extending the demand placed on state/capital formations because its reintroduction into the discourse expands the intensity of the antagonism. In other words, the positionality of the slave makes a demand that is in excess of the demand made by the positionality of the worker. The worker demands that productivity be fair and democratic (Gramsci's new hegemony; Lenin's dictatorship of the proletariat-in a word, socialism). In contrast, the slave demands that production stop, without recourse to its ultimate democratization. Work is not an organic principle for the slave. The absence of black subjectivity from the crux of radical discourse is symptomatic of the text's inability to cope with the possibility that the generative subject of capitalism, the black body of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the generative subject that resolves late capital's over-accumulation crisis, the black (incarcerated) body of the twentieth century and twenty-first century, does not reify the basic categories that structure conflict within civil society: the categories of work and exploitation. Thus, the black subject position in America represents an antagonism or demand that cannot be satisfied through a transfer of ownership or organization of existing rubrics. In contrast, the Gramscian subject, the worker, represents a demand that can indeed be satisfied by way of a successful war of position, which brings about the end of exploitation. The worker calls into question the legitimacy of productive practices, while the slave calls into question the legitimacy of productivity itself. Thus, **the insatiability of the slave demand on existing structures means that it cannot find its articulation within the modality of hegemony (influence, leadership, consent). The black body cannot give its consent because "generalized trust," the precondition for the solicitation of consent, "equals racialized whiteness"'** Furthermore, as Orlando Patterson points out, slavery is natal alienation by way of social death, which is to say that a slave has no symbolic currency or material labor power to exchange.' A slave does not enter into a transaction of value (however asymmetrical), but is subsumed by direct relations of force. As such, a slave is an articulation of a despotic irrationality, whereas the worker is an articulation of a symbolic rationality. A metaphor comes into being through a violence that kills the thing so that the concept may live. Gramscian discourse and coalition politics come to grips with America's structuring rationality-what it calls capitalism, or political economy-but not with its structuring irrationality, the anti-production of late capital, and the hyperdiscursive violence that first kills the black subject so that the concept may be born. In other words**, from the incoherence of black death, America generates the coherence of white life.** This is important when thinking about the Gramscian paradigm and its spiritual progenitors in the world of organizing in the United States today, with its overvaluation of hegemony and civil society. Struggles over hegemony are seldom, if ever, asignifying. At some point, they require coherence and categories for the record, meaning that they contain the seeds of antiblackness. What does it mean to be positioned not as a positive term in the struggle for anticapitalist hegemony-that is, as a worker-but to be positioned in excess of hegemony; to be a catalyst that disarticulates the rubric of hegemony; to be a scandal to its assumptive, foundational logic; to threaten civil society's discursive integrity? In White Writing, J. M. Coetzee examines the literature of Europeans who encountered the South African Khoisan in the Cape between the sixteenth century and the eighteenth century.10 The Europeans faced an "anthropological scandal": a being without (recognizable) customs, religion, medicine, dietary patterns, culinary habits, sexual mores, means of agriculture, and, most significant, character (because, according to the literature, they did not work). Other Africans, such as the Xhosa, who were agriculturalists, provided European discourse with enough categories for the record so that, through various strategies of articulation, they could be known by textual projects that accompanied the colonial project. But the Khoisan did not produce the necessary categories for the record, the play of signifiers that would allow for a sustainable semiotics. According to Coetzee, the coherence of European discourse depends on two structuring axes. A "Historical Axis" consists of codes distributed along the axis of temporality and events, while the "Anthropological Axis" is an axis of cultural codes. It mattered very little which codes on either axis a particular indigenous community was perceived to possess, with "possession" the operative word, for these codes act as a kind of mutually agreed-on currency. What matters is that the community has some play of difference along both axes, sufficient in number to construct taxonomies that can be investigated, identified, and named by the discourse. Without this, the discourse cannot go on. It is reinvigorated when an unknown entity presents itself, but its anxiety reaches crisis proportions when the entity remains unknown. Something unspeakable occurs. Not to possess a particular code along the Anthropological Axis or the Historical Axis is akin to lacking a gene for brown hair or green eyes on an X or Y chromosome. Lacking a Historical Axis or an Anthropological Axis is akin to the absence of the chromosome itself. The first predicament raises the notion: What kind of human? The second predicament brings into crisis the notion of the human itself. Without the textual categories of dress, diet, medicine, crafts, physical appearance, and, most important, work, the Khoisan stood in refusal of the invitation to become Anthropological Man. She or he was the void in discourse that could be designated only as idleness. Thus, the Khoisan's status within discourse was not that of an opponent or an interlocutor but, rather, that of an unspeakable scandal. His or her position within the discourse was one of disarticulation, for he or she did little or nothing to fortify and extend the interlocutory life of the discourse. Just as the Khoisan presented the discourse of the Cape with an anthropological scandal, so the black subject in the Western Hemisphere, the slave, presents Marxism and American textual practice with a historical scandal. How is our incoherence in the face of the Historical Axis germane to our experience of being "a phenomenon without analog"? A sample list of codes mapped out by an American subject's Historical Axis might include rights or entitlements; here, even Native Americans provide categories for the record when one thinks of how the Iroquois constitution, for example, becomes the U.S. Constitution. Sovereignty is also included, whether a state is one the subject left behind or, as in the case of American Indians, one taken by force and by dint of broken treaties. White supremacy has made good use of the Indian subject's positionality, one that fortifies and extends the interlocutory life of America as a coherent (albeit imperial) idea because treaties are forms of articulation: Discussions brokered between two groups are presumed to possess the same category of historical currency, sovereignty. The code of sovereignty can have a past and future history, if you will excuse the oxymoron, when one considers that 15o Native American tribes have applied to the Bureau of Indian Affairs for sovereign recognition so that they might qualify for funds harvested from land stolen from them." Immigration is another code that maps the subject onto the American Historical Axis, with narratives of arrival based on collective volition and premeditated desire. Chicano subject positions can fortify and extend the interlocutory life of America as an idea because racial conflict can be articulated across the various contestations over the legitimacy of arrival, immigration. **Both whites and Latinos generate data for this category.** Slavery is the great leveler of the black subject's positionality. The black American subject does not generate historical categories of entitlement, sovereignty, and immigration for the record. We are "off the map" with respect to the cartography that charts civil society's semiotics; we have a past but not a heritage. To the data-generating demands of the Historical Axis, we present a virtual blank, much like that which the Khoisan presented to the Anthropological Axis. This places us in a structurally impossible position, one that is outside the articulations of hegemony. However, it also places hegemony in a structurally impossible position because-and this is key-our presence works back on the grammar of hegemony and threatens it with incoherence. If every subject-even the most massacred among them, Indians-is required to have analogs within the nation's structuring narrative, and the experience of one subject on whom the nation's order of wealth was built is without analog, then that subject's presence destabilizes all other analogs. Fanon writes, "Decolonization, which sets out to change the order of the world, is, obviously, a program of complete disorder."" If we take him at his word, then we must accept that no other body functions in the Imaginary, the Symbolic, or the Real so completely as a repository of complete disorder as the black body. Blackness is the site of absolute dereliction at the level of the Real, for in its magnetizing of bullets the black body functions as the map of gratuitous violence through which civil society is possible-namely those bodies for which violence is, or can be, contingent. Blackness is the site of absolute dereliction at the level of the Symbolic, for blackness in America generates no categories for the chromosome of history and no data for the categories of immigration or sovereignty. It is an experience without analog-a past without a heritage. Blackness is the site of absolute dereliction at the level of the Imaginary, for "whoever says `rape' says Black" (Fanon), whoever says "prison" says black (Sexton), and whoever says "AIDS" says black-the "Negro is a phobogenic object."" Indeed, it means all those things: a phobogenic object, a past without a heritage, the map of gratuitous violence, and a program of complete disorder. Whereas this realization is, and should be, cause for alarm, it should not be cause for lament or, worse, disavowal-not at least, for a true revolutionary or for a truly revolutionary movement such as prison abolition. If a social movement is to be neither social-democratic nor Marxist in terms of structure of political desire, then it should grasp the invitation to assume the positionality of subjects of social death. If we are to be honest with ourselves, we must admit that the "Negro" has been inviting whites, as well as civil society's junior partners, to the dance of social death for hundreds of years, but few have wanted to learn the steps. They have been, and remain today-even in the most antiracist movements, such as the prison abolition movement-invested elsewhere. This is not to say that all oppositional political desire today is pro-white, but it is usually antiblack, meaning that it will not dance with death. Black liberation, as a prospect, makes radicalism more dangerous to the United States. This is not because it raises the specter of an alternative polity (such as socialism or community control of existing resources), but because its condition of possibility and gesture of resistance function as a negative dialectic: a politics of refusal and a refusal to affirm, a "program of complete disorder." One must embrace its disorder, its incoherence, and allow oneself to be elaborated by it if, indeed, one's politics are to be underwritten by a desire to take down this country. If this is not the desire that underwrites one's politics, then through what strategy of legitimation is the word "prison" being linked to the word "abolition"? What are this movement's lines of political accountability? There is nothing foreign, frightening, or even unpracticed about the embrace of disorder and incoherence. The desire to be embraced, and elaborated, by disorder and incoherence is not anathema in and of itself. No one, for example, has ever been known to say, "Gee-whiz, if only my orgasms would end a little sooner, or maybe not come at all." Yet few so-called radicals desire to be embraced, and elaborated, by the disorder and incoherence of blackness-and the state of political movements in the United States today is marked by this very Negrophobogenisis: "Gee-whiz, if only black rage could be more coherent, or maybe not come at all." Perhaps there is something more terrifying about the joy of black than there is in the joy of sex (unless one is talking sex with a Negro). Perhaps coalitions today prefer to remain in-orgasmic in the face of civil society-with hegemony as a handy prophylactic, just in case. If through this stasis or paralysis they try to do the work of prison abolition, the work will fail, for it is always work from a position of coherence (i.e., the worker) on behalf of a position of incoherence of the black subject, or prison slave. In this way, social formations on the left remain blind to the contradictions of coalitions between workers and slaves. They remain coalitions operating within the logic of civil society and function less as revolutionary promises than as crowding out scenarios of black antagonisms, simply feeding our frustration. Whereas the positionality of the worker (whether a factory worker demanding a monetary wage, an immigrant, or a white woman demanding a social wage) gestures toward the reconfiguration of civil society, the positionality of the black subject (whether a prison slave or a prison slave-in-waiting) gestures toward the disconfiguration of civil society. From the coherence of civil society, the black subject beckons with the incoherence of civil war, a war that reclaims blackness not as a positive value but as a politically enabling site, to quote Fanon, of "absolute dereliction." It is a "scandal" that rends civil society asunder. Civil war, then, becomes the unthought, but never forgotten, understudy of hegemony. It is a black specter waiting in the wings, an endless antagonism that cannot be satisfied (via reform or reparation) but that must, nonetheless, be pursued to the death.

# Case

#### Zapatista movement is too radical to effectively result in a global movement

Greebon 8 ( Deborah A is the Executive Director at OneVillage Partners and Board of Directors at Center for Community Alternatives, November 2008, Civil Society’s Challenge to the State: A Case Study of the Zapatistas and their Global Significance, <http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/uploadedFiles/moynihan/dst/Greebon.pdf?n=4980>)

Because space does not permit an analysis of neoliberalism, globalization, or any of the central tenets upon which the EZLN bases their struggle, I will focus this section of critiques on those who fundamentally agree with Zapatista goals, yet disagree with their strategy. Most academics and theorists who are familiar with the situation applaud the development of autonomous communities and watch in awe as the movement adeptly uses transnational networks despite economic marginalization. The major point of contention, however, is the Zapatista’s policy of non engagement with the state. Chandler (2004) argues that this policy is flawed for several reasons. Not only does non-engagement fail to promote accountability, it also decreases left-leaning influences on politics by removing more progressive debate from the national dialogue. This could serve the counter-productive end of leaving politics to an even smaller group of elites. Robinson (2006) also disagrees with EZLN strategy on this basis, as he views national political involvement as the only viable channel for challenging the global capitalist system. The Zapatistas, however, ignore talk of state power and political organizations favoring a model based on a transformation of civil society. Robinson (2006) argues that the key question is not about state power, but is now: How can “popular forces and classes… utilize state power to alter social relations (and) production relations?” (p. 61). Those who desire radical change, in Robinson’s view, must use the current system of global relations to re-conceptualize and create an alternative

#### The Zapatistas fail – no economic program or model for reform

#### **Lakin 9** ( Jason is a Senior Program Officer and Research Fellow at International Budget Partnership, April 23, 2009. Fifteen Years After the Zapatistas, Harvard International Review, <http://hir.harvard.edu/blog/jason-lakin/fifteen-years-after-the-zapatistas>)

In 2000, the PRI was swept aside not only at the national level in Mexico, but also at the gubernatorial level in Chiapas. The relationship between the Zapatistas and electoral change has always been ambiguous, since the militants have generally distrusted electoral politics. But peasants who had supported the guerillas in the past opted to vote for change in 2000, and did play a role in the state's democratic transition. Today, Chiapas is a highly competitive, multi-party state. In 2007 local elections, for example, 8 parties competed. By any normal standards, this constitutes seismic political change. Yet the peasants of Chiapas today face bleak economic conditions. State GDP has largely been stagnant since the 1990s, and the poor states of Mexico's South have, as a result, fallen further behind the rest of the country. The solution for most young, male peasants, is increasingly migration to the United States. Chiapas has moved from the bottom third to the top third of states receiving international remittances during this period. So why haven't all of these political changes made more of a difference to the lives of ordinary peasants? The conference participants suggested a few reasons. First, even the most ardent supporters of the Zapatistas admitted that the militants, who have largely given up violent struggle, have not replaced it with a realistic alternative tool of social change. Zapatistas today continue to experiment with the creation of “autonomous” zones of power in Chiapas, where they have set up parallel institutions of governance. Panelists disagreed about the efficacy of these institutions in political and juridical terms, but not in economic terms: the Zapatistas have not created a viable model of economic autonomy for poor peasants. At the same time, the turn inward, and away from the state, has rendered the Zapatistas less effective at reforming the Mexican state. While some panelists saw the Zapatista experiments as noble efforts to create alternative political structures that are more democratic than those of the wider society, others argued that the Zapatistas had missed an opportunity to build a broad movement to reform the state. But of course, the failure of development in Chiapas goes far beyond the Zapatistas. The land reforms of the mid-1990s have not brought economic self-sufficiency, because the redistributed land is of low quality, and has been sub-divided into plots that are simply too small to yield enough for survival. All of this has happened at a time when the Mexican state has offered little in the way of subsidies to small farmers, and has also failed to offer an alternative development path that would move Chiapas up the value chain. Electoral changes are also, to a certain degree, more apparent than real. A common theme to emerge from the panels was that, in spite of changes in political institutions, such as democratic elections, or decentralization, political practice at the state level in Mexico continues to be dominated by patron-client relationships and high discretion on the part of politicians. Thus, even though the PRI has been humbled, and new resources have been made available to Chiapas, and even though indigenous peasants have entered politics, dysfunctional institutions and corruption persist. The result is a failure to ameliorate basic inequalities. These findings are consistent across states as different as Oaxaca, Mexico and Chiapas. The failures of the Zapatistas, the government, and other less radical opposition groups has resulted in an increasingly significant flow of migrants out of the state. Sadly, these flows, which are in part caused by the absence of a serious political project to redistribute resources and spur development, probably also contribute over time to the absence of such a project