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#### “United States Federal Government should” means the debate is solely about the outcome of a policy established by governmental means

**Ericson 3** (Jon M., Dean Emeritus of the College of Liberal Arts – California Polytechnic U., et al., The Debater’s Guide, Third Edition, p. 4)

The Proposition of Policy: Urging Future Action In policy propositions, each topic contains certain key elements, although they have slightly different functions from comparable elements of value-oriented propositions. 1. An agent doing the acting ---“The United States” in “The United States should adopt a policy of free trade.” Like the object of evaluation in a proposition of value, the agent is the subject of the sentence. 2. The verb should—the first part of a verb phrase that urges action. 3. An action verb to follow *should* in the *should*-verb combination. For example, should adopt here means to put a program or policy into action though governmental means. 4. A specification of directions or a limitation of the action desired. The phrase *free trade*, for example, gives direction and limits to the topic, which would, for example, eliminate consideration of increasing tariffs, discussing diplomatic recognition, or discussing interstate commerce. Propositions of policy deal with future action. Nothing has yet occurred. The entire debate is about whether something ought to occur. What you agree to do, then, when you accept the *affirmative side* in such a debate is to offer sufficient and compelling reasons for an audience to perform the future action that you propose.

#### Economic Engagement is defined as expanding economic ties with a country to change its behavior

**Kahler, 6** - Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, University of California, San Diego (M., “Strategic Uses of Economic Interdependence: Engagement Policies on the Korean Peninsula and Across the Taiwan Strait” in Journal of Peace Research (2006), 43:5, p. 523-541, Sage Publications)

Economic engagement - a policy of deliberately expanding economic ties with an adversary in order to change the behavior of the target state and improve bilateral political relations

#### Violation – the affirmative does not defend a USFG policy

#### Vote negative---

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

**Steinberg and Freeley ‘13**

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

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

#### 2) switch-side is key---Effective deliberation is crucial to the activation of personal agency and is only possible when debaters divorce themselves from ideology to engage in political contestation

**Roberts-Miller 3** - Patricia is Associate Professor of Rhetoric at the University of Texas "Fighting Without Hatred:Hannah Ar endt ' s Agonistic Rhetoric" JAC 22.2 2003

Totalitarianism and the Competitive Space of Agonism Arendt is probably most famous for her analysis of totalitarianism (especially her The Origins of Totalitarianism andEichmann in Jerusalem), but the recent attention has been on her criticism of mass culture (The Human Condition). Arendt's main criticism of the current human condition is that the common world of deliberate and joint action is fragmented into solipsistic and unreflective behavior. In an especially lovely passage, she says that in mass society people are all imprisoned in the subjectivity of their own singular experience, which does not cease to be singular if the same experience is multiplied innumerable times. The end of the common world has come when it is seen only under one aspect and is permitted to present itself in only one perspective. (Human 58) What Arendt so beautifully describes is that isolation and individualism are not corollaries, and may even be antithetical because obsession with one's own self and the particularities of one's life prevents one from engaging in conscious, deliberate, collective action. Individuality, unlike isolation, depends upon a collective with whom one argues in order to direct the common life. Self-obsession, even (especially?) when coupled with isolation from one' s community is far from apolitical; it has political consequences. Perhaps a better way to put it is that it is political precisely because it aspires to be apolitical. This fragmented world in which many people live simultaneously and even similarly but not exactly together is what Arendt calls the "social." Arendt does not mean that group behavior is impossible in the realm of the social, but that social behavior consists "in some way of isolated individuals, incapable of solidarity or mutuality, who abdicate their human capacities and responsibilities to a projected 'they' or 'it,' with disastrous consequences, both for other people and eventually for themselves" (Pitkin 79). One can behave, butnot act. For someone like Arendt, a German-assimilated Jew, one of the most frightening aspects of the Holocaust was the ease with which a people who had not been extraordinarily anti-Semitic could be put to work industriously and efficiently on the genocide of the Jews. And what was striking about the perpetrators of the genocide, ranging from minor functionaries who facilitated the murder transports up to major figures on trial at Nuremberg, was their constant and apparently sincere insistence that they were not responsible. For Arendt, this was not a peculiarity of the German people, but of the current human and heavily bureaucratic condition of twentieth-century culture: we do not consciously choose to engage in life's activities; we drift into them, or we do them out of a desire to conform. Even while we do them, we do not acknowledge an active, willed choice to do them; instead, we attribute our behavior to necessity, and we perceive ourselves as determined—determined by circumstance, by accident, by what "they" tell us to do. We do something from within the anonymity of a mob that we would never do as an individual; we do things for which we will not take responsibility. Yet, whether or not people acknowledge responsibility for the consequences of their actions, those consequences exist. Refusing to accept responsibility can even make those consequences worse, in that the people who enact the actions in question, because they do not admit their own agency, cannot be persuaded to stop those actions. They are simply doing their jobs. In a totalitarian system, however, everyone is simply doing his or her job; there never seems to be anyone who can explain, defend, and change the policies. Thus, it is, as Arendt says, rule by nobody. It is illustrative to contrast Arendt's attitude toward discourse to Habermas'. While both are critical of modern bureaucratic and totalitarian systems, Arendt's solution is the playful and competitive space of agonism; it is not the rational-critical public sphere. The "actual content of political life" is "the joy and the gratification that arise out of being in company with our peers, out of acting together and appearing in public, out of inserting ourselves into the world by word and deed, thus acquiring and sustaining our personal identity and beginning something entirely new" ("Truth" 263). According to Seyla Benhabib, Arendt's public realm emphasizes the assumption of competition, and it "represents that space of appearances in which moral and political greatness, heroism, and preeminence are revealed, displayed, shared with others. This is a competitive space in which one competes for recognition, precedence, and acclaim" (78). These qualities are displayed, but not entirely for purposes of acclamation; they are not displays of one's self, but of ideas and arguments, of one's thought. When Arendt discusses Socrates' thinking in public, she emphasizes his performance: "He performed in the marketplace the way the flute-player performed at a banquet. It is sheer performance, sheer activity"; nevertheless, it was thinking: "What he actually did was to make public, in discourse, the thinking process" {Lectures 37). Pitkin summarizes this point: "Arendt says that the heroism associated with politics is not the mythical machismo of ancient Greece but something more like the existential leap into action and public exposure" (175-76). Just as it is not machismo, although it does have considerable ego involved, so it is not instrumental rationality; Arendt's discussion of the kinds of discourse involved in public action include myths, stories, and personal narratives. Furthermore, the competition is not ruthless; it does not imply a willingness to triumph at all costs. Instead, it involves something like having such a passion for ideas and politics that one is willing to take risks. One tries to articulate the best argument, propose the best policy, design the best laws, make the best response. This is a risk in that one might lose; advancing an argument means that one must be open to the criticisms others will make of it. The situation is agonistic not because the participants manufacture or seek conflict, but because conflict is a necessary consequence of difference. This attitude is reminiscent of Kenneth Burke, who did not try to find a language free of domination but who instead theorized a way that the very tendency toward hierarchy in language might be used against itself (for more on this argument, see Kastely). Similarly, Arendt does not propose a public realm of neutral, rational beings who escape differences to live in the discourse of universals; she envisions one of different people who argue with passion, vehemence, and integrity. Continued… Eichmann perfectly exemplified what Arendt famously called the "banality of evil" but that might be better thought of as the bureaucratization of evil (or, as a friend once aptly put it, the evil of banality). That is, he was able to engage in mass murder because he was able not to think about it, especially not from the perspective of the victims, and he was able to exempt himself from personal responsibility by telling himself (and anyone else who would listen) that he was just following orders. It was the bureaucratic system that enabled him to do both. He was not exactly passive; he was, on the contrary, very aggressive in trying to do his duty. He behaved with the "ruthless, competitive exploitation" and "inauthen-tic, self-disparaging conformism" that characterizes those who people totalitarian systems (Pitkin 87). Arendt's theorizing of totalitarianism has been justly noted as one of her strongest contributions to philosophy. She saw that a situation like Nazi Germany is different from the conventional understanding of a tyranny. Pitkin writes, Totalitarianism cannot be understood, like earlier forms of domination, as the ruthless exploitation of some people by others, whether the motive be selfish calculation, irrational passion, or devotion to some cause. Understanding totalitarianism's essential nature requires solving the central mystery of the holocaust—the objectively useless and indeed dysfunctional, fanatical pursuit of a purely ideological policy, a pointless process to which the people enacting it have fallen captive. (87) Totalitarianism is closely connected to bureaucracy; it is oppression by rules, rather than by people who have willfully chosen to establish certain rules. It is the triumph of the social. Critics (both friendly and hostile) have paid considerable attention to Arendt's category of the "social," largely because, despite spending so much time on the notion, Arendt remains vague on certain aspects of it. Pitkin appropriately compares Arendt's concept of the social to the Blob, the type of monster that figured in so many post-war horror movies. That Blob was "an evil monster from outer space, entirely external to and separate from us [that] had fallen upon us intent on debilitating, absorbing, and ultimately destroying us, gobbling up our distinct individuality and turning us into robots that mechanically serve its purposes" (4). Pitkin is critical of this version of the "social" and suggests that Arendt meant (or perhaps should have meant) something much more complicated. The simplistic version of the social-as-Blob can itself be an instance of Blob thinking; Pitkin's criticism is that Arendt talks at times as though the social comes from outside of us and has fallen upon us, turning us into robots. Yet, Arendt's major criticism of the social is that it involves seeing ourselves as victimized by something that comes from outside our own behavior. I agree with Pitkin that Arendt's most powerful descriptions of the social (and the other concepts similar to it, such as her discussion of totalitarianism, imperialism, Eichmann, and parvenus) emphasize that these processes are not entirely out of our control but that they happen to us when, and because, we keep refusing to make active choices. We create the social through negligence. It is not the sort of force in a Sorcerer's Apprentice, which once let loose cannot be stopped; on the contrary, it continues to exist because we structure our world to reward social behavior. Pitkin writes, "From childhood on, in virtually all our institutions, we reward euphemism, salesmanship, slogans, and we punish and suppress truth-telling, originality, thoughtful-ness. So we continually cultivate ways of (not) thinking that induce the social" (274). I want to emphasize this point, as it is important for thinking about criticisms of some forms of the social construction of knowledge: denying our own agency is what enables the social to thrive. To put it another way, theories of powerlessness are self-fulfilling prophecies. Arendt grants that there are people who willed the Holocaust, but she insists that totalitarian systems result not so much from the Hitlers or Stalins as from the bureaucrats who may or may not agree with the established ideology but who enforce the rules for no stronger motive than a desire to avoid trouble with their superiors (see Eichmann and Life). They do not think about what they do. One might prevent such occurrences—or, at least, resist the modern tendency toward totalitarianism—by thought: "critical thought is in principle anti-authoritarian" (Lectures 38). By "thought" Arendt does not mean eremitic contemplation; in fact, she has great contempt for what she calls "professional thinkers," refusing herself to become a philosopher or to call her work philosophy. Young-Bruehl, Benhabib, and Pitkin have each said that Heidegger represented just such a professional thinker for Arendt, and his embrace of Nazism epitomized the genuine dangers such "thinking" can pose (see Arendt's "Heidegger"). "Thinking" is not typified by the isolated contemplation of philosophers; it requires the arguments of others and close attention to the truth. It is easy to overstate either part of that harmony. One must consider carefully the arguments and viewpoints of others: Political thought is representative. I form an opinion by considering a given issue from different viewpoints, by making present to my mind the standpoints of those who are absent; that is, I represent them. This process of representation does not blindly adopt the actual views of those who stand somewhere else, and hence look upon the world from a different perspective; this is a question neither of empathy, as though I tried to be or to feel like somebody else, nor of counting noses and joining a majority but of being and thinking in my own identity where actually I am not. The more people's standpoints I have present in my mind while I am pondering a given issue, and the better I can imagine how I would feel and think if I were in their place, the stronger will be my capacity for representative thinking and the more valid my final conclusions, my opinion. ("Truth" 241) There are two points to emphasize in this wonderful passage. First, one does not get these standpoints in one's mind through imagining them, but through listening to them; thus, good thinking requires that one hear the arguments of other people. Hence, as Arendt says, "critical thinking, while still a solitary business, does not cut itself off from' all others.'" Thinking is, in this view, necessarily public discourse: critical thinking is possible "only where the standpoints of all others are open to inspection" (Lectures 43). Yet, it is not a discourse in which one simply announces one's stance; participants are interlocutors and not just speakers; they must listen. Unlike many current versions of public discourse, this view presumes that speech matters. It is not asymmetric manipulation of others, nor merely an economic exchange; it must be a world into which one enters and by which one might be changed. Second, passages like the above make some readers think that Arendt puts too much faith in discourse and too little in truth (see Habermas). But Arendt is no crude relativist; she believes in truth, and she believes that there are facts that can be more or less distorted. She does not believe that reality is constructed by discourse, or that truth is indistinguishable from falsehood. She insists tha^ the truth has a different pull on us and, consequently, that it has a difficult place in the world of the political. Facts are different from falsehood because, while they can be distorted or denied, especially when they are inconvenient for the powerful, they also have a certain positive force that falsehood lacks: "Truth, though powerless and always defe ated in a head-on clash with the powers that be, possesses a strength of its own: whatever those in power may contrive, they are unable to discover or invent a viable substitute for it. Persuasion and violence can destroy truth, but they cannot replace it" ("Truth" 259). Facts have a strangely resilient quality partially because a lie "tears, as it were, a hole in the fabric of factuality. As every historian knows, one can spot a lie by noticing incongruities, holes, or the j unctures of patched-up places" ("Truth" 253). While she is sometimes discouraging about our ability to see the tears in the fabric, citing the capacity of totalitarian governments to create the whole cloth (see "Truth" 252-54), she is also sometimes optimistic. InEichmann in Jerusalem, she repeats the story of Anton Schmidt—a man who saved the lives of Jews—and concludes that such stories cannot be silenced (230-32). For facts to exert power in the common world, however, these stories must be told. Rational truth (such as principles of mathematics) might be perceptible and demonstrable through individual contemplation, but "factual truth, on the contrary, is always related to other people: it concerns events and circumstances in which many are involved; it is established by witnesses and depends upon testimony; it exists only to the extent that it is spoken about, even if it occurs in the domain of privacy. It is political by nature" (23 8). Arendt is neither a positivist who posits an autonomous individual who can correctly perceive truth, nor a relativist who positively asserts the inherent relativism of all perception. Her description of how truth functions does not fall anywhere in the three-part expeditio so prevalent in bothrhetoric and philosophy: it is not expressivist, positivist, or social constructivist. Good thinking depends upon good public argument, and good public argument depends upon access to facts: "Freedom of opinion is a farce unless factual information is guaranteed" (238). The sort of thinking that Arendt propounds takes the form of action only when it is public argument, and, as such, it is particularly precious: "For if no other test but the experience of being active, no other measure but the extent of sheer activity were to be applied to the various activities within the vita activa, it might well be that thinking as such would surpass them all" (Human 325). Arendt insists that it is "the same general rule— Do not contradict yourself (not your self but your thinking ego)—that determines both thinking and acting" (Lectures 3 7). In place of the mildly resentful conformism that fuels totalitarianism, Arendt proposes what Pitkin calls "a tough-minded, open-eyed readiness to perceive and judge reality for oneself, in terms of concrete experience and independent, critical theorizing" (274). The paradoxical nature of agonism (that it must involve both individuality and commonality) makes it difficult to maintain, as the temptation is great either to think one's own thoughts without reference to anyone else or to let others do one's thinking. Arendt's Polemical Agonism As I said, agonism does have its advocates within rhetoric—Burke, Ong, Sloane, Gage, and Jarratt, for instance—but while each of these theorists proposes a form of conflictual argument, not one of these is as adversarial as Arendt's. Agonism can emphasize persuasion, as does John Gage's textbook The Shape of Reason or William Brandt et al.'s The Craft of Writing. That is, the goal of the argument is to identify the disagreement and then construct a text that gains the assent of the audience. This is not the same as what Gage (citing Thomas Conley) calls "asymmetrical theories of rhetoric": theories that "presuppose an active speaker and a passive audience, a speaker whose rhetorical task is therefore to do something to that audience" ("Reasoned" 6). Asymmetric rhetoric is not and cannot be agonistic. Persuasive agonism still values conflict, disagreement, and equality among interlocutors, but it has the goal of reaching agreement, as when Gage says that the process of argument should enable one's reasons to be "understood and believed" by others (Shape 5; emphasis added). Arendt's version is what one might call polemical agonism: it puts less emphasis on gaining assent, and it is exemplified both in Arendt's own writing and in Donald Lazere's "Ground Rules for Polemicists" and "Teaching the Political Conflicts." Both forms of agonism (persuasive and polemical) require substantive debate at two points in a long and recursive process. First, one engages in debate in order to invent one's argument; even silent thinking is a "dialogue of myself with myself (Lectures 40). The difference between the two approaches to agonism is clearest when one presents an argument to an audience assumed to be an opposition. In persuasive agonism, one plays down conflict and moves through reasons to try to persuade one's audience. In polemical agonism, however, one's intention is not necessarily to prove one's case, but to make public one' s thought in order to test it. In this way, communicability serves the same function in philosophy that replicability serves in the sciences; it is how one tests the validity of one's thought. In persuasive agonism, success is achieved through persuasion; in polemical agonism, success may be marked through the quality of subsequent controversy. Arendt quotes from a letter Kant wrote on this point: You know that I do not approach reasonable objections with the intention merely of refuting them, but that in thinking them over I always weave them into my judgments, and afford them the opportunity of overturning all my most cherished beliefs. I entertain the hope that by thus viewing my judgments impartially from the standpoint of others some third view that will improve upon my previous insight may be obtainable. {Lectures 42) Kant's use of "impartial" here is interesting: he is not describing a stance that is free of all perspective; it is impartial only in the sense that it is not his own view. This is the same way that Arendt uses the term; she does not advocate any kind of positivistic rationality, but instead a "universal interdependence" ("Truth" 242). She does not place the origin of the "disinterested pursuit of truth" in science, but at "the moment when Homer chose to sing the deeds of the Trojans no less than those of the Achaeans, and to praise the glory of Hector, the foe and the defeated man, no less than the glory of Achilles, the hero of his kinfolk" ("Truth" 26263). It is useful to note that Arendt tends not to use the term "universal," opting more often for "common," by which she means both what is shared and what is ordinary, a usage that evades many of the problems associated with universalism while preserving its virtues (for a brief butprovocative application of Arendt's notion of common, see Hauser 100-03). In polemical agonism, there is a sense in which one' s main goal is not to persuade one's readers; persuading one's readers, if this means that they fail to see errors and flaws in one' s argument, might actually be a sort of failure. It means that one wishes to put forward an argument that makes clear what one's stance is and why one holds it, but with the intention of provoking critique and counterargument. Arendt describes Kant's "hope" for his writings not that the number of people who agree with him would increase but "that the circle of his examiners would gradually be enlarged" {Lectures 39); he wanted interlocutors, not acolytes. This is not consensus-based argument, nor is it what is sometimes called "consociational argument," nor is this argument as mediation or conflict resolution. Arendt (and her commentators) use the term "fight," and they mean it. When Arendt describes the values that are necessary in our world, she says, "They are a sense of honor, desire for fame and glory, the spirit of fighting without hatred and 'without the spirit of revenge,' and indifference to material advantages" {Crises 167). Pitkin summarizes Arendt's argument: "Free citizenship presupposes the ability to fight— openly, seriously, with commitment, and about things that really matter—without fanaticism, without seeking to exterminate one's opponents" (266). My point here is two-fold: first, there is not a simple binary opposition between persuasive discourse and eristic discourse, the conflictual versus the collaborative, or argument as opposed to debate. Second, while polemical agonismrequires diversity among interlocutors, and thus seems an extraordinarily appropriate notion, and while it may be a useful corrective to too much emphasis on persuasion, it seems to me that polemical agonism could easily slide into the kind of wrangling that is simply frustrating. Arendt does not describe just how one is to keep the conflict useful. Although she rejects the notion that politics is "no more than a battlefield of partial, conflicting interests, where nothing countfs] but pleasure and profit, partisanship, and the lust for dominion," she does not say exactly how we are to know when we are engaging in the existential leap of argument versus when we are lusting for dominion ("Truth" 263). Like other proponents of agonism, Arendt argues that rhetoric does not lead individuals or communities to ultimate Truth; it leads to decisions that will necessarily have to be reconsidered. Even Arendt, who tends to express a greater faith than many agonists (such as Burke, Sloane, or Kastely) in the ability of individuals to perceive truth, insists that self-deception is always a danger, so public discourse is necessary as a form of testing (see especially Lectures and "Truth"). She remarks that it is difficult to think beyond one's self-interest and that "nothing, indeed, is more common, even among highly sophisticated people, than the blind obstinacy that becomes manifest in lack of imagination and failure to judge" ("Truth" 242). Agonism demands that one simultaneously trust and doubt one' s own perceptions, rely on one's own judgment and consider the judgments of others, think for oneself and imagine how others think. The question remains whether this is a kind of thought in which everyone can engage. Is the agonistic public sphere (whether political, academic, or scientific) only available to the few? Benhabib puts this criticism in the form of a question: "That is, is the 'recovery of the public space' under conditions of modernity necessarily an elitist and antidemocratic project that can hardly be reconciled with the demand for universal political emancipation and the universal extension of citizenship rights that have accompanied modernity since the American and French Revolutions?" (75). This is an especially troubling question not only because Arendt's examples of agonistic rhetoric are from elitist cultures, but also because of comments she makes, such as this one from The Human Condition: "As a living experience, thought has always been assumed, perhaps wrongly, to be known only to the few. It may not be presumptuous to believe that these few have not become fewer in our time" {Human 324). Yet, there are important positive political consequences of agonism. Arendt' s own promotion of the agonistic sphere helps to explain how the system could be actively moral. It is not an overstatement to say that a central theme in Arendt's work is the evil of conformity—the fact that the modern bureaucratic state makes possible extraordinary evil carried out by people who do not even have any ill will toward their victims. It does so by "imposing innumerable and various rules, all of which tend to 'normalize' its members, to make them behave, to exclude spontaneous action or outstanding achievement" (Human 40). It keeps people from thinking, and it keeps them behaving. The agonistic model's celebration of achievement and verbal skill undermines the political force of conformity, so it is a force against the bureaucratizing of evil. If people think for themselves, they will resist dogma; if people think of themselves as one of many, they will empathize; if people can do both, they will resist totalitarianism. And if they talk about what they see, tell their stories, argue about their perceptions, and listen to one another—that is, engage in rhetoric—then they are engaging in antitotalitarian action. In post-Ramistic rhetoric, it is a convention to have a thesis, and one might well wonder just what mine is—whether I am arguing for or against Arendt's agonism. Arendt does not lay out a pedagogy for us to follow (although one might argue that, if she had, it would lookmuch like the one Lazere describes in "Teaching"), so I am not claiming that greater attention to Arendt would untangle various pedagogical problems that teachers of writing face. Nor am I claiming that applying Arendt's views will resolve theoretical arguments that occupy scholarly journals. I am saying, on the one hand, that Arendt's connection of argument and thinking, as well as her perception that both serve to thwart totalitarianism, suggest that agonal rhetoric (despite the current preference for collaborative rhetoric) is the best discourse for a diverse and inclusive public sphere. On the other hand, Arendt's advocacy of agonal rhetoric is troubling (and, given her own admiration for Kant, this may be intentional), especially in regard to its potential elitism, masculinism, failure to describe just how to keep argument from collapsing into wrangling, and apparently cheerful acceptance of hierarchy. Even with these flaws, Arendt describes something we would do well to consider thoughtfully: a fact-based but not positivist, communally grounded but not relativist, adversarial but not violent, independent but not expressivist rhetoric.

#### 3) Government policy discussion is vital to force engagement with and resolution of competing perspectives to improve social outcomes, however those outcomes may be defined---and, it breaks out of traditional pedagogical frameworks by positing students as agents of decision-making

**Esberg & Sagan 12** \*Jane Esberg is special assistant to the director at New York University's Center on. International Cooperation. She was the winner of 2009 Firestone Medal, AND \*\*Scott Sagan is a professor of political science and director of Stanford's Center for International Security and Cooperation “NEGOTIATING NONPROLIFERATION: Scholarship, Pedagogy, and Nuclear Weapons Policy,” 2/17 The Nonproliferation Review, 19:1, 95-108

These government or quasi-government think tank simulations often provide very similar lessons for high-level players as are learned by students in educational simulations. Government participants learn about the importance of understanding foreign perspectives, the need to practice internal coordination, and the necessity to compromise and coordinate with other governments in negotiations and crises. During the Cold War, political scientist Robert Mandel noted how crisis exercises and war games forced government officials to overcome ‘‘bureaucratic myopia,’’ moving beyond their normal organizational roles and thinking more creatively about how others might react in a crisis or conflict.6 The skills of imagination and the subsequent ability to predict foreign interests and reactions remain critical for real-world foreign policy makers. For example, simulations of the Iranian nuclear crisis\*held in 2009 and 2010 at the Brookings Institution’s Saban Center and at Harvard University’s Belfer Center, and involving former US senior officials and regional experts\*highlighted the dangers of misunderstanding foreign governments’ preferences and misinterpreting their subsequent behavior. In both simulations, the primary criticism of the US negotiating team lay in a failure to predict accurately how other states, both allies and adversaries, would behave in response to US policy initiatives.7¶ By university age, students often have a pre-defined view of international affairs, and the literature on simulations in education has long emphasized how such exercises force students to challenge their assumptions about how other governments behave and how their own government works.8 Since simulations became more common as a teaching tool in the late 1950s, educational literature has expounded on their benefits, from encouraging engagement by breaking from the typical lecture format, to improving communication skills, to promoting teamwork.9 More broadly, simulations can deepen understanding by asking students to link fact and theory, providing a context for facts while bringing theory into the realm of practice.10 These exercises are particularly valuable in teaching international affairs for many of the same reasons they are useful for policy makers: they force participants to ‘‘grapple with the issues arising from a world in flux.’’11 Simulations have been used successfully to teach students about such disparate topics as European politics, the Kashmir crisis, and US response to the mass killings in Darfur.12 Role-playing exercises certainly encourage students to learn political and technical facts\* but they learn them in a more active style. Rather than sitting in a classroom and merely receiving knowledge, students actively research ‘‘their’’ government’s positions and actively argue, brief, and negotiate with others.13 Facts can change quickly; simulations teach students how to contextualize and act on information.14

#### 4) Limited deliberative forums like debate which discuss Latin American specific policies prevent elite domination, develops agency, and promotes epistemological equality

**Baxter 10** (Jorge, Education Specialist, Department of Education and Culture in the Organization of American States, Former Coordinator of the Inter-American Program on Education for Democratic Values and Practices at the OAS, PHD in International Comparative Education and Policy from University of Maryland College Park, “Towards a Deliberative and Democratic Model of International Cooperation in Education in Latin America”, Inter-American Journal of Education for Democracy, 3(2), 224-254, <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/ried/article/viewFile/1016/1307>, Accessed: 7/30/13)

In the context of international¶ education cooperation and international¶ development in Latin America, where¶ there are great asymmetries in power and¶ resources, it seems that this critique could¶ have some validity. However, rather than¶ concluding that deliberation and participation¶ should be reduced, one could conclude (as¶ is argued in this paper) that they should¶ be enhanced and expanded. Those that¶ advocate for a “thicker” democratization in¶ the region would likely advocate for a more¶ substantive approach to deliberation in policy¶ which establishes certain parameters such¶ as “education is an intrinsic human right,”¶ and which would place an emphasis on¶ achieving quality education outcomes¶ for all as the goal. This does not mean that¶ they would not advocate for deliberation but¶ rather would set parameters for deliberation¶ in order to ensure that the outcomes do not¶ lead to “unjust” policy (e.g., a policy that¶ might promote more inequity in education).¶ Those that advocate for a “thinner” approach¶ to democratization would tend to advocate¶ for a procedural approach to deliberation in¶ education policy and would most likely place¶ emphasis on equal opportunity of access¶ to quality education.¶ Instability critique: Education in Latin¶ America suffers from too much instability and¶ is too politicized. Increasing participation and¶ deliberation would only further politicize the¶ situation and polarize those who advocate for¶ educational reform and those who block it.¶ The average term of a minister of education¶ is one-and-a-half years; each time a new¶ minister comes to office, new policies are¶ passed which, according to deliberative¶ democratic theory, would need to be reasoned¶ and debated with citizens. Deliberation in this¶ context would promote even more instability¶ and would lead to further politicization of¶ education reform.¶ Response: Political instability and¶ lack of continuity in policy reform are serious¶ limitations that to some degree are inherent¶ in democratic institutions and processes. The¶ reality is that if any education reform is to¶ succeed in the long term, it needs more than¶ the efforts of governments or international¶ organizations. It needs the sustained support¶ of stakeholders across sectors (public,¶ private, and civil society) and over time. It¶ has been argued that the main problem in¶ basic education in Latin America is the lack¶ of a broad social consensus, recognizing¶ that there is a problem of equity and quality¶ in the provision of education (Schiefelbein,¶ 1997). This lack of broad social consensus¶ is especially challenging where there is, as¶ noted in the critique, a lack of continuity¶ in education reform. Reform in education¶ takes time, sometimes decades. Ensuring¶ continuity in education reform policies is¶ therefore crucial, and this requires public¶ consensus. Deliberative forums convening¶ government, private sector, and civil society¶ groups can contribute to developing this public¶ consensus and to providing more continuity¶ in policy. Deliberative forums combined¶ with collaborative projects can help promote¶ learning, distribute institutional memory,¶ support capacity-building efforts, and bring¶ more resources to bear on the education¶ reform process. Creating a space for citizens¶ to deliberate on the role of education is¶ fundamental for promoting broad social¶ consensus around education reforms. In Latin¶ America, the most innovative and successful¶ reforms have all created multiple and¶ continuous opportunities for diverse groups¶ across the education sector and society to¶ provide input and to have opportunities for¶ meaningful collaborative action. International¶ organizations, leveraging their regional and¶ international position, can contribute by¶ promoting policy dialogue and collaborative¶ actions among ministries and also with key¶ stakeholders across sectors. The challenge¶ is to develop a better understanding of how¶ deliberation can be used to promote more¶ collaborative as opposed to more adversarial¶ and partisan forms of politics. This is perhaps¶ one area which deliberative theorists need to¶ explore more.¶ 5. Power critique: The final critique relates¶ the possibility that increasing deliberation¶ and participation can lead to increased¶ inequality. Fung and Wright (2003) note¶ that deliberation can turn into domination¶ in a context where “participants in these¶ processes usually face each other from¶ unequal positions of power.” Every reform¶ in education creates winners and losers, and¶ very few create “win-win” situations. Those¶ in power would have to submit to the rules of¶ deliberation and relinquish “control” over the¶ various dimensions of democratic decisionmaking.¶ This is naïve and not politically¶ feasible.¶ Response: This is a valid critique¶ worth considering. Structural inequalities¶ and asymmetries of power in governments¶ and international institutions in Latin America¶ have facilitated domination by elites in terms¶ of authority, power, and control in politics.¶ Asymmetries of power in international¶ cooperation in education are also clear,¶ especially when powerful financial (World¶ Bank, IDB, IMF) or political (OAS, UNESCO)¶ organizations engage with local stakeholders¶ and condition policy options with funding¶ or political support. What this paper has¶ argued is relevant again here: that instead of¶ rejecting further democratization in the face¶ of these challenges, including the challenge¶ of elite “domination,” what is needed is more¶ and better democracy, defined in terms of its¶ breadth, depth, range, and control. Finally,¶ dealing with elite domination in international¶ deliberative forums will require conscious and¶ skilled facilitation on the part of international¶ organizations, which themselves are often¶ elitist and hegemonic.¶ Final Thoughts: So What?¶ Perhaps the most critical question¶ that emerges in the argument for increased¶ democratization and deliberation is simply:¶ So what? Does increased democratization and¶ deliberation actually lead to better outcomes¶ in education? More empirical research on this¶ critical question is needed. However, experiments¶ in deliberative democracy in education reform¶ in Brazil through the UNESCO and Ministry of¶ Education Coordinated Action Plan and Porto¶ Alegre‘s Citizen School, and also to some degree¶ at the international level with the OAS pilot¶ experiment in developing a more democratic¶ model of international cooperation from 2001-¶ 2005, have shown that deliberative processes¶ can enhance learning on the part of those¶ participating. Fung and Wright (2003) refer to¶ these experiments in deliberation as “schools¶ of democracy” because participants exercise¶ their capacities of argument, planning, and¶ evaluation. Deliberation promotes joint reflection¶ and consideration of others’ views. Citizens¶ who participate in deliberative forums develop¶ competencies that are important not only for¶ active citizenship (listening, communication,¶ problem-solving, conflict resolution, selfregulation skills) but also crucial for managing¶ change and school reform. Many of the same¶ skills that are developed through citizen¶ deliberation and participation are also essential¶ for transforming school cultures, promoting¶ “learning organizations” (Senge, 2000), fostering¶ communities of reflective practitioners (Schon,¶ 1991) and developing communities of practice¶ (Wenger, 2001). There is evidence from some¶ research that democratic interactions can create¶ knowledge that is more rigorous, precise, and¶ relevant than that produced in authoritarian¶ environments (Jaramillo, 2005). Another¶ important aspect of enhancing deliberative¶ democracy and democratization is that it moves¶ from a focus on individuals and their own¶ preferences towards more collective forms of¶ learning and collaboration.¶ Up to now, international organizations¶ have endorsed a “thin” version of democratization¶ that is content with formal and centralized¶ mechanisms of “representation” and “policy¶ dialogue.” If a new, more deliberative and¶ democratic model of cooperation in education in¶ the region were to emerge, what would it look¶ like?¶ First of all, a more deliberative and¶ democratic model of international cooperation in¶ education would involve more direct and deeper¶ forms of participation from everyday citizens,¶ including teachers, school directors, families,¶ school communities, students, and mesolevel¶ actors such as civil society organizations.¶ This participation would move beyond simple¶ consultation to more authentic forms of joint¶ decision-making and deliberation. The model¶ would involve more accountability on the¶ part of international organizations in terms¶ of transparency, and would require injecting¶ ethical reasoning into policies and programming.¶ In addition, a new more democratic model of¶ international cooperation would expand the¶ range of policy options available to countries¶ through devolution of authority, power, and¶ control, combined with oversight and horizontal¶ accountability mechanisms. A more democratic¶ model of international cooperation would stress¶ valuing, systematizing, and disseminating¶ local knowledge and innovation. Finally,¶ democratization and deliberation in international¶ cooperation in education would lead to enhanced¶ learning and agency on the part of participating¶ countries, groups, and individuals, and thus¶ contribute to better outcomes in terms of quality¶ and equity in education at national and local¶ levels.

#### 5) Politics – debate as a competitive political game is the best framework to solve dogmatism and human brutality

**Carter 8** – prof @ The Colorado College, research support from the Rockefeller Foundation and the staff of the Villa Serbelloni, Bellagio, Italy, the Institute of Governmental Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, and the Benezet Foundation at The Colorado College (Lief H, 2008, "LAW AND POLITICS AS PLAY," Chicago-Kent Law Review, 83(3), http://www.cklawreview.com/wp-content/uploads/vol83no3/Carter.pdf)

Vico asked his audience at the University of Naples in 1708 to debate two competing ways of knowing: Cartesian rationality versus the poetic world of the ancients. Vico, the “pre-law advisor” of his day, saw law as a rhetorical game. That is, he understood the civic (ethical) value of competi-tion itself.12 He understood that Cartesian rationality, like religious and ideological fundamentalism, generates a kind of certainty that shuts down robust debate. Vico’s comprehensive vision suggests, in effect, that people should practice law and politics not as the search for the most rational or logically correct outcomes but rather as passionate and embodied yet peaceful competitive play. Vico inspires this vision of law and politics as play because he sees that all things in the human mind, including law and politics, are at one with the human body. As Vico put it as he concluded his 1708 address, “[T]he soul should be drawn to love by means of bodily images; for once it loves it is easily taught to believe; and when it believes and loves it should be inflamed so that it wills things by means of its normal intemperance.”13 Vico had no hope that such abstract moral principles as liberty, equality, justice, and tolerance could effectively offset the “crude and rough” nature of men.14 The Holy Bible and the Qur’an contain normative principles of love, tolerance, equal respect, and peace, but these commands have not forestalled ancient and modern religious warfare. This essay proposes that humans learn how to keep the peace not by obeying the norms, rules, and principles of civil conduct but by learning how to play, and thereby reintegrating the mind and the body. People do law, politics, and economic life well when they do them in the same ways and by the same standards that structure and govern good competitive sports and games. The word “sport” derives from “port” and “portal” and relates to the words “disport” and “transport.” The word at least hints that the primitive and universal joy of play carries those who join the game across space to a better, and ideally safer, place—a harbor that Vico him-self imagined. This essay’s bold proposition honors Vico in many ways. Its “grand theory” matches the scope of Vico’s comprehensive and integrated vision of the human condition. It plausibly confirms Vico’s hope for a “concep-tion of a natural law for all of humanity” that is rooted in human historical practice.15 Seeing these core social processes as play helps us to escape from arid academic habits and to “learn to think like children,” just as Vico urged.16 Imagining law and politics as play honors Vico above all because, if we attain Ruskin’s epigraphic ideal,17 we will see that the peace-tending qualities of sports and games already operate under our noses. Seeing law and politics as play enables us “to reach out past our inclination to make experience familiar through the power of the concept and to engage the power of the image. We must reconstruct the human world not through concepts and criteria but as something we can practically see.”18 If at its end readers realize that they could have seen, under their noses, the world as this essay sees it without ever having read it, this essay will successfully honor Vico. As Vico would have predicted, formal academic theory has played at best a marginal role in the construction of competitive games. Ordinary people have created cricket and football, and common law and electoral politics and fair market games, more from the experience of doing them than from formal theories of competitive games. When they play interna-tional football today, ordinary people in virtually every culture in the world recreate the experience of competitive games. Playing competitive games unites people across cultures in a common normative world.19 Within Vico’s social anthropological and proto-scientific framework, the claim that competitive play can generate peaceful civic life is purely empirical: law and politics in progressively peaceful political systems already are nothing more or less than competitive games. All empirical description operates within some, though too often ob-scured, normative frame. This essay’s normative frame is clear. It holds, with Shaw’s epigraph, above: Human brutalities waged against other hu-mans—suicide bombings, genocides, tribal and religious wars that provoke the indiscriminate rape, murder, torture, and enslavement of men, women, and children, often because they are labeled “evil”—are the worst things that we humans do. We should learn not to do them. In Vico’s anti-Cartesian, non-foundational world, no method exists to demonstrate that this essay’s normative core is “correct,” or even “better than,” say, the core norm holding that the worst thing humans do is dishonor God. Readers who reject Shaw’s and this essay’s normative frame may have every reason to reject the essay’s entire argument. However, this essay does describe empirically how those whose core norm requires honoring any absolute, including God, above all else regu-larly brutalize other human beings, and why those who live by the norms of good competitive play do not. People brutalize people, as Shaw’s Caesar observed, in the name of right and honor and peace. Evaluated by the norm that human brutality is the worst thing humans do, the essay shows why and how the human invention of competitive play short circuits the psy-chology of a righteousness-humiliation-brutality cycle. We cannot help but see and experience on fields of contested play testosterone-charged males striving mightily to defeat one another. Yet at the end of play, losers and winners routinely shake hands and often hug; adult competitors may dine and raise a glass together.20 Whether collectively invented as a species-wide survival adaptation or not, institutionalized competitive play under-cuts the brutality cycle by displacing religious and other forms of funda-mentalist righteousness with something contingent, amoral, and thus less lethal. Play thereby helps humans become Shaw’s “race that can under-stand.”

#### Decisionmaking is the most portable and flexible skill—key to all facets of life and advocacy – means we turn case

**Steinberg and Freeley ‘13**

David Director of Debate at U Miami, Former President of CEDA, officer, American Forensic Association and National Communication Association. Lecturer in Communication studies and rhetoric. Advisor to Miami Urban Debate League, Masters in Communication, and Austin, JD, Suffolk University, attorney who focuses on criminal, personal injury and civil rights law, Argumentation and Debate

Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making, Thirteen Edition

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

#### Our model of debate is process, not product – decision-making is learned in a safe space of competing thought experiments

**Hanghoj 08** Thorkild Hanghøj, Copenhagen, 2008 Since this PhD project began in 2004, the present author has been affiliated with DREAM (Danish Research Centre on Education and Advanced Media Materials), which is located at the Institute of Literature, Media and Cultural Studies at the University of Southern Denmark. Research visits have taken place at the Centre for Learning, Knowledge, and Interactive Technologies (L-KIT), the Institute of Education at the University of Bristol and the institute formerly known as Learning Lab Denmark at the School of Education, University of Aarhus, where I currently work as an assistant professor. http://static.sdu.dk/mediafiles/Files/Information\_til/Studerende\_ved\_SDU/Din\_uddannelse/phd\_hum/afhandlinger/2009/ThorkilHanghoej.pdf

Joas’ re-interpretation of Dewey’s pragmatism as a “theory of situated creativity” raises a critique of humans as purely rational agents that navigate instrumentally through meansends- schemes (Joas, 1996: 133f). This critique is particularly important when trying to understand how games are enacted and validated within the realm of educational institutions that by definition are inscribed in the great modernistic narrative of “progress” where nation states, teachers and parents expect students to acquire specific skills and competencies (Popkewitz, 1998; cf. chapter 3). However, as Dewey argues, the actual doings of educational gaming cannot be reduced to rational means-ends schemes. Instead, the situated interaction between teachers, students, and learning resources are played out as contingent re-distributions of means, ends and ends in view, which often make classroom contexts seem “messy” from an outsider’s perspective (Barab & Squire, 2004). 4.2.3. Dramatic rehearsal The two preceding sections discussed how Dewey views play as an imaginative activity of educational value, and how his assumptions on creativity and playful actions represent a critique of rational means-end schemes. For now, I will turn to Dewey’s concept of dramatic rehearsal, which assumes that social actors deliberate by projecting and choosing between various scenarios for future action. Dewey uses the concept dramatic rehearsal several times in his work but presents the most extensive elaboration in Human Nature and Conduct: Deliberation is a dramatic rehearsal (in imagination) of various competing possible lines of action… [It] is an experiment in finding out what the various lines of possible action are really like (...) Thought runs ahead and foresees outcomes, and thereby avoids having to await the instruction of actual failure and disaster. An act overtly tried out is irrevocable, its consequences cannot be blotted out. An act tried out in imagination is not final or fatal. It is retrievable (Dewey, 1922: 132-3). This excerpt illustrates how Dewey views the process of decision making (deliberation) through the lens of an imaginative drama metaphor. Thus, decisions are made through the imaginative projection of outcomes, where the “possible competing lines of action” are resolved through a thought experiment. Moreover, Dewey’s compelling use of the drama metaphor also implies that decisions cannot be reduced to utilitarian, rational or mechanical exercises, but that they have emotional, creative and personal qualities as well. Interestingly, there are relatively few discussions within the vast research literature on Dewey of his concept of dramatic rehearsal. A notable exception is the phenomenologist Alfred Schütz, who praises Dewey’s concept as a “fortunate image” for understanding everyday rationality (Schütz, 1943: 140). Other attempts are primarily related to overall discussions on moral or ethical deliberation (Caspary, 1991, 2000, 2006; Fesmire, 1995, 2003; Rönssön, 2003; McVea, 2006). As Fesmire points out, dramatic rehearsal is intended to describe an important phase of deliberation that does not characterise the whole process of making moral decisions, which includes “duties and contractual obligations, short and long-term consequences, traits of character to be affected, and rights” (Fesmire, 2003: 70). Instead, dramatic rehearsal should be seen as the process of “crystallizing possibilities and transforming them into directive hypotheses” (Fesmire, 2003: 70). Thus, deliberation can in no way guarantee that the response of a “thought experiment” will be successful. But what it can do is make the process of choosing more intelligent than would be the case with “blind” trial-and-error (Biesta, 2006: 8). The notion of dramatic rehearsal provides a valuable perspective for understanding educational gaming as a simultaneously real and imagined inquiry into domain-specific scenarios. Dewey defines dramatic rehearsal as the capacity to stage and evaluate “acts”, which implies an “irrevocable” difference between acts that are “tried out in imagination” and acts that are “overtly tried out” with real-life consequences (Dewey, 1922: 132-3). This description shares obvious similarities with games as they require participants to inquire into and resolve scenario-specific problems (cf. chapter 2). On the other hand, there is also a striking difference between moral deliberation and educational game activities in terms of the actual consequences that follow particular actions. Thus, when it comes to educational games, acts are both imagined and tried out, but without all the real-life consequences of the practices, knowledge forms and outcomes that are being simulated in the game world. Simply put, there is a difference in realism between the dramatic rehearsals of everyday life and in games, which only “play at” or simulate the stakes and risks that characterise the “serious” nature of moral deliberation, i.e. a real-life politician trying to win a parliamentary election experiences more personal and emotional risk than students trying to win the election scenario of The Power Game. At the same time, the lack of real-life consequences in educational games makes it possible to design a relatively safe learning environment, where teachers can stage particular game scenarios to be enacted and validated for educational purposes. In this sense, educational games are able to provide a safe but meaningful way of letting teachers and students make mistakes (e.g. by giving a poor political presentation) and dramatically rehearse particular “competing possible lines of action” that are relevant to particular educational goals (Dewey, 1922: 132). Seen from this pragmatist perspective, the educational value of games is not so much a question of learning facts or giving the “right” answers, but more a question of exploring the contingent outcomes and domain-specific processes of problem-based scenarios.

### case

#### To the aff, identity is grounded in injuries of the past with no guide for the future --- this reinscribes exclusion and foreclosures social justice

**Bhambra and Margree** **10**– Gurminder K, U Warwick, and Victoria, School of Humanities, U Brighton (Identity Politics and the Need for a ‘Tomorrow’, Economic & Political Weekly, April 10, 2010 vol xlv no 15, http://www.academia.edu/471824/Identity\_Politics\_and\_the\_Need\_for\_a\_Tomorrow\_)

2 The Reification of Identity We wish to turn now to a related problem within identity politicsthat can be best described as the problem of the reiﬁcation of politicised identities. Brown (1995) positions herself within thedebate about identity politics by seeking to elaborate on “the wounded character of politicised identity’s desire” (ibid: 55); thatis, the problem of “wounded attachments” whereby a claim to identity becomes over-invested in its own historical suffering and perpetuates its injury through its refusal to give up its identity claim. Brown’s argument is that where politicised identity is founded upon an experience of exclusion, for example, exclusion itself becomes perversely valorised in the continuance of that identity. In such cases, group activity operates to maintain and reproduce the identity created by injury (exclusion) rather than– and indeed, often in opposition to – resolving the injurious social relations that generated claims around that identity in the ﬁrst place. If things have to have a history in order to have af uture, then the problem becomes that of how history is con-structed in order to make the future. To the extent that, for Brown, identity is associated primarily with (historical) injury, the future for that identity is then already determined by the injury “as both bound to the history that produced it and as a reproach to the present which embodies that history” (ibid 1995: 73). Brown’s sug-gestion that as it is not possible to undo the past, the focus back- wards entraps the identity in reactionary practices, is, we believe,too stark and we will pursue this later in the article. Politicised identity, Brown maintains, “emerges and obtains its unifying coherence through the politicisation of exclusion from an ostensible universal, as a protest against exclusion” (ibid: 65). Its continuing existence requires both a belief in the legitimacy of the universal ideal (for example, ideals of opportunity, and re- ward in proportion to effort) and enduring exclusion from those ideals. Brown draws upon Nietzsche in arguing that such identities, produced in reaction to conditions of disempowerment andinequality, then become invested in their own impotence through practices of, for example, reproach, complaint, and revenge. These are “reactions” in the Nietzschean sense since they are substitutes for actions or can be seen as negative forms of action. Rather than acting to remove the cause(s) of suffering, that suffering is instead ameliorated (to some extent) through “the estab-lishment of suffering as the measure of social virtue” (ibid 1995:70), and is compensated for by the vengeful pleasures of recrimination. Such practices, she argues, stand in sharp distinction to –in fact, provide obstacles to – practices that would seek to dispel the conditions of exclusion. Brown casts the dilemma discussed above in terms of a choicebetween past and future, and adapting Nietzsche, exhorts theadoption of a (collective) will that would become the “redeemer of history” (ibid: 72) through its focus on the possibilities of creat-ing different futures. As Brown reads Nietzsche, the one thingthat the will cannot exert its power over is the past, the “it was”.Confronted with its impotence with respect to the events of thepast, the will is threatened with becoming simply an “angry spec-tator” mired in bitter recognition of its own helplessness. The onehope for the will is that it may, instead, achieve a kind of mastery over that past such that, although “what has happened” cannotbe altered, the past can be denied the power of continuing to de-termine the present and future. It is only this focus on the future, Brown continues, and the capacity to make a future in the face of human frailties and injustices that spares us from a rancorous decline into despair. Identity politics structured by ressentiment – that is, by suffering caused by past events – can only break outof the cycle of “slave morality” by remaking the present againstthe terms of the past, a remaking that requires a “forgetting” of that past. An act of liberation, of self-afﬁrmation, this “forgettingof the past” requires an “overcoming” of the past that offers iden-tity in relationship to suffering, in favour of a future in whichidentity is to be deﬁned differently. In arguing thus, Brown’s work becomes aligned with a posi-tion that sees the way forward for emancipatory politics as re-siding in a movement away from a “politics of memory” (Kilby 2002: 203) that is committed to articulating past injustices andsuffering. While we agree that investment in identities prem-ised upon suffering can function as an obstacle to alleviating the causes of that suffering, we believe that Brown’s argument as outlined is problematic. First, following Kilby (2002), we share a concern about any turn to the future that is ﬁgured as a complete abandonment of the past. This is because for those who have suffered oppression and exclusion, the injunction to give up articulating a pain that is still felt may seem cruel and impossible to meet. We would argue instead that the “turn to the future” that theorists such as Brown and Grosz callfor, to revitalise feminism and other emancipatory politics, need not be conceived of as a brute rejection of the past. Indeed, Brown herself recognises the problems involved here, stating that [since] erased histories and historical invisibility are themselves suchintegral elements of the pain inscribed in most subjugated identities[then] the counsel of forgetting, at least in its unreconstructedNietzschean form, seems inappropriate if not cruel (1995: 74). She implies, in fact, that the demand exerted by those in painmay be no more than the demand to exorcise that pain throughrecognition: “all that such pain may long for – more than revenge– is the chance to be heard into a certain release, recognised intoself-overcoming, incited into possibilities for triumphing over, and hence, losing itself” (1995: 74-75). Brown wishes to establish the political importance of remembering “painful” historical events but with a crucial caveat: that the purpose of remembering pain is to enable its release . The challenge then, according to her,is to create a political culture in which this project does not mutate into one of remembering pain for its own sake. Indeed, if Brown feels that this may be “a pass where we ought to part with Nietzsche” (1995: 74), then Freud may be a more suit-able companion. Since his early work with Breuer, Freud’s writ-ings have suggested the (only apparent) paradox that remember-ing is often a condition of forgetting. The hysterical patient, who is doomed to repeat in symptoms and compulsive actions a past she cannot adequately recall, is helped to remember that trau-matic past in order then to move beyond it: she must remember inorder to forget and to forget in order to be able to live in the present. 7 This model seems to us to be particularly helpful for thedilemma articulated by both Brown (1995) and Kilby (2002),insisting as it does that “forgetting” (at least, loosening the holdof the past, in order to enable the future) cannot be achieved without ﬁrst remembering the traumatic past. Indeed, this wouldseem to be similar to the message of Beloved , whose central motif of haunting (is the adult woman, “Beloved”, Sethe’s murderedchild returned in spectral form?) dramatises the tendency of theunanalysed traumatic past to keep on returning, constraining, asit does so, the present to be like the past, and thereby, disallow-ing the possibility of a future different from that past. As Sarah Ahmed argues in her response to Brown, “in order to break the seal of the past, in order to move away from attach-ments that are hurtful, we must ﬁrst bring them into the realm of political action” (2004: 33). We would add that the task of analysing the traumatic past, and thus opening up the possibility of political action, is unlikely to be achievable by individuals on their own, but that this, instead, requires a “community” of participants dedicated to the serious epistemic work of rememberingand interpreting the objective social conditions that made up thatpast and continue in the present. The “pain” of historical injury is not simply an individual psychological issue, but stems from objective social conditions which perpetuate, for the most part, forms of injustice and inequality into the present. In sum, Brown presents too stark a choice between past andfuture. In the example of Beloved with which we began thisarticle, Paul D’s acceptance of Sethe’s experiences of slavery asdistinct from his own, enable them both to arrive at new under-standings of their experience. Such understanding is a way of partially “undoing” the (effects of) the past and coming to terms with the locatedness of one’s being in the world (Mohanty 1995). As this example shows, opening up a future, and attending to theongoing effects of a traumatic past, are only incorrectly under-stood as alternatives. A second set of problems with Brown’s critique of identity poli-tics emerge from what we regard as her tendency to individualise social problems as problems that are the possession and theresponsibility of the “wounded” group. Brown suggests that the problems associated with identity politics can be overcome through a “shift in the character of political expression and politi-cal claims common to much politicised identity” (1995: 75). She deﬁnes this shift as one in which identity would be expressed in terms of desire rather than of ontology by supplanting the language of “I am” with the language of “I want this for us” (1995:75). Such a reconﬁguration, she argues, would create an opportu-nity to “rehabilitate the memory of desire within identiﬁcatory processes…prior to [their] wounding” (1995: 75). It would fur-ther refocus attention on the future possibilities present in theidentity as opposed to the identity being foreclosed through its attention to past-based grievances.

#### The aff is IDENTITY but not POLITICS---failure to envision a future in which their identity claims will no longer be needed results in a reactionary politics that entrenches the status quo --- we aren’t saying we need to reject identity but rather prioritize politics.

**Bhambra and Margree** **10**– Gurminder K, U Warwick, and Victoria, School of Humanities, U Brighton (Identity Politics and the Need for a ‘Tomorrow’, Economic & Political

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The quotation with which this article begins comes from the end of the novel where the character Paul D is speak-ing to fellow former slave Sethe of the need to move be- yond the terms of a past disﬁgured by slavery. We begin with this for two reasons. First, it expresses the central problematic ad-dressed within this article: the question of the place of history in the present, and how this helps or hinders the opening up of future possibilities. Second, the novel addresses how the opening up of a new future can also be achieved by shifts in understand-ing which result from allowing alternative interpretations of the past. Speciﬁcally in Beloved , Paul D moves from a condemnation of Sethe for her alleged inhumanity in having killed her own child (“you got two legs, not four, Sethe” ((1987) 1997: 165)), to a new understanding of the “gendered division of labour on which slavery was built” (Mohanty 2000: 61) and thus to acceptance of the validity of her claims to have killed as a human being , and as a mother (to save her own child from becoming a slave like her-self, to refuse to be a reproducer of slaves). As such, Paul D arrives at a fuller understanding of their shared historical experience as slaves, and this new knowledge constitutes the basis for develop-ing the “tomorrow” of which he speaks.¶ In what follows we use the metaphor of “tomorrow” in order to address contemporary debates about “identity politics”. Recent years have witnessed a general backlash against identity politics both in the academy and the public sphere (Bickford 1997, Young1997, Farred 2000, Bramen 2002). Among the various pro-tagonists of this “backlash”, Bramen (2002) gives particular atten-tion to work by Wendy Brown (1995) on “wounded attachments”. This is her term for a condition in which politicised identities, based upon experiences of injustice and discrimination, begin to“fetishise” (Ahmed 2004) their own wounding. For Brown, this results in a reactionary politics aimed at recrimination, instead of action to redress the injustice. Our intention in the present article is to situate ourselves within this debate about the value of iden-tity politics as well as to engage with the speciﬁc issues raised by Brown’s work. We will argue that the objections to “identity “raised by Brown and others must be taken seriously, but that this need not lead to a wholesale abandonment of the politics of identity. Rather, we wish to demonstrate that the problem with identity politics is the way in which the “identity” very often comes to re-place the “politics”. To avoid such a substitution, we argue that “identity” may be re-theorised as that which is continually pro-duced and reproduced by political projects in the present, and on the basis of a shared vision of the future. The argument of this article is thus that politicised identities might instead be thought of in terms of an explicit afﬁrmation of the provisionality of a political identity that is oriented to a “tomorrow” in which the identity will no longer be required. In this way, the power of “identity” as a site of resistance is maintained, while ameliorating the conservative effects of the entrenched identities that Brown criticises. As such, this article also addresses the wider contemporary debate in emancipatory politics, which concerns the proper orientation of radical politics in terms of the tense of political dis-course. The key issue here is that of the extent to which political discourse should be focused around the past – on origins, memory, history, trauma and so forth – or the extent to which it should be future-oriented. Critics such as Brown (1995) and Grosz (2000)have expressed a fear that too great a weight upon the past has proved constraining for radical movements, and that an emphasis upon the future – the (more) just future that political action intends to bring about – is required as a corrective to this (Ahmed2004). However, such a demand brings with it the vexed question of the place of memory, and speciﬁcally, the memorialising of pain and exclusion. As Brown’s own equivocation on the issue suggests, “the counsel of forgetting [...] seems inappropriate if not cruel”(p 74) for many oppressed groups who have yet to have their pain recognised, or to understand themselves the deferred effects of atraumatic past (Kilby 2002). The arguments presented in this paper are threefold. First, we argue for a rethinking of “politicised identities” in terms of a commitment to a desired future, as a corrective to the conservative effects that frequently accompany “identity” (here identiﬁed as “exclusionary politics” and “reiﬁcation of identities”). Second, we argue, however, that such an emphasis upon the future need not and should not entail an abandonment of the commitment to address traumatic pasts. Third, we argue that a productive identity politics is one which understands the identity of the political group-ing as provisional, since it is based on the need to respond to an existing injustice, and therefore, oriented to a future in which that injustice, and hence, the need for the identity claim, is no longer pre-sent. Central to the development of our thesis will be an engagement with work on experience and identity by Satya Mohanty, and com-munities and knowledge by Lynn Hankinson Nelson.

#### Policy solutions are key, reject their improbable alternative --- our evidence is Latin America specific

**Giordano and Li 12** - \*Paolo, PhD in Economics from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris, Lead Economist @ the Integratoin and Trade Sector of the IADB, \*\*Kun, Research Fellow @ IADB

(“An Updated Assessment of the Trade and Poverty Nexus in Latin America,” p. 375-377)

Despite the move towards more open trade regimes, Latin American economies are still ¶ relatively closed to international trade. Under the pressure of globalisation, it is likely that in the ¶ coming years the region will need to open further and adjust to compete in an increasingly ¶ challenging global environment. Latin America being one of the most unequal regions of the ¶ world, the assessment of the trade and poverty nexus is crucial to devise policies aiming at ¶ better distributing the gains from trade. Latin America-specific research on this topic will ¶ provide policymakers and stakeholders with evidence necessary to underpin a debate which ¶ seems to be nurtured more by anxiety than rigorous knowledge. ¶ In this light, it is useful to refer to a few conclusions with the aim of building up a solid base ¶ for policy debates and future research.¶ There is a gap in the availability of methodologies to explore the link between macro policy ¶ reforms like trade liberalisation and micro-economic determinants of welfare and poverty. It is ¶ therefore crucial to invest in the generation of data and research techniques, to adapt the ¶ research agenda to the specificity of Latin America and to consider qualitative issues that are ¶ difficult to measure. Meanwhile, normative statements referring to the trade policy nexus should ¶ cautiously consider the limitations of current positive knowledge.¶ Trade openness, inequality and poverty are wide multidimensional concepts. Measuring and ¶ attributing causal relations among these variables without carefully qualifying the specific ¶ dimensions explored or the particular transmission mechanisms at play may be misleading. It is ¶ important to disentangle the specific dimension of the trade and poverty nexus from the wider ¶ debate on globalisation and financial integration, the competing concepts of relative and ¶ absolute inequality and the objective and subjective dimension of poverty and deprivation.¶ Despite the impossibility to rigorously and unambiguously assert that trade openness is ¶ conducive to growth and poverty reduction, the preponderance of evidence supports this ¶ conclusion. However, the majority of empirical macro studies also show that the impact of trade ¶ on growth and poverty is also generally small and that the causes of indigence are to be found ¶ elsewhere. But it is in fact extremely arduous to find evidence that supports the notion that trade ¶ protection is good for the poor. The question is therefore how to make trade and growth more ¶ pro-poor and not how to devise improbable alternatives to trade integration aiming at improving ¶ the livelihood of the poor.¶ Specific evidence on Latin America reveals that deductive generalisations of the neoclassical ¶ trade theory and global cross-country empirical studies may be of little help in understanding ¶ the trade and poverty nexus in the region. Several factors may explain why the integration of ¶ Latin America into the global economy may not necessarily bring about rising wages of ¶ unskilled workers and poverty reduction. The most compelling arguments are related to the ¶ existence of rigidities in the labour markets, the historical pattern of protection that created rents ¶ in unskilled intensive sectors, the emergence of low wage countries such as China and India that ¶ shifts the comparative advantage of Latin American economies, and institutional factors that ¶ protract the effects of an initial unequal distribution of factor endowments against the poor.¶ Trade liberalisation may in fact be associated with rising inequality. But country case studies ¶ present contrasting indications. Although there is some evidence of rising inequality in the ¶ aftermath of trade opening, such as in the case of Mexico, Colombia, Argentina and Chile, it ¶ seems that the specific effects of trade liberalisation are small or indirect. Skill-biased technical ¶ change, often directly related with the increase of foreign direct investment or with capital ¶ account liberalisation, seems to have a stronger explanatory power than trade liberalisation. ¶ There is also little evidence that trade opening has generated more informality. On the other ¶ hand, the case of Brazil, where trade liberalisation seems to have contributed to the reduction of ¶ wage inequality, is illustrative of the conditions under which trade reforms may have ¶ progressive distributive effects¶ The empirical analysis addressing the direct effect of trade integration on poverty reveals a ¶ similar landscape. Trade integration seems to be good for the poor but the effects are small. ¶ Generalisations should be taken with a great deal of caution because this is a domain where data ¶ may present considerable shortcomings. In any event it seems that foreign trade reforms are ¶ more important for poverty reduction than unilateral ones or than the national component of ¶ reciprocal trade reforms. The countries of the region may therefore expect further contributions ¶ of trade integration to poverty reduction, particularly from the liberalisation of the agriculture ¶ sector where the greatest pockets of residual protectionism are still concentrated. However, ¶ predicting ex ante the pro-poor effects of trade reforms is an extremely sensitive task highly¶ dependent on the quality of the data and the correct specification of the simulation instruments. ¶ It is hard to overstate the importance of strengthening the capacity of policymaking in this area.

#### Too many structural barriers to solve disposability

**Lindberg-Aganga, 11 –** (Amanda, Washington College of Law, “Disposable Victims: How the TVPA Fails to Protect Victims of Human Trafficking,” ExpressO, 2011, http://works.bepress.com/amanda\_lindberg-aganga/1)//HO

Despite naming victim protection as one of the three major goals of the TVPA, the reality has fallen far short of the kinds of protections that should and can be made available to victims in the United States. Victims who are identified and whose traffickers face prosecution may sometimes not be eligible for long-term T-visa status and other protections. Authorities fail to identify thousands of victims each year. Those that are identified still face red tape, and victims who have committed crimes or been forced to commit crimes through their trafficking experience may be prosecuted for those crimes, creating tension between the priority of prosecuting perpetrators of trafficking and often coerced immigration offences.¶ This paper argues that Congress’ approach to and subsequent execution of victim protection through the TVPA and reauthorization bills has undermined one of the foundational purposes of the TVPA: to provide protection and assistance to victims of trafficking. This shortfall is the result of multiple factors, including insufficient training of immigration and law enforcement officials, unnecessary barriers between victims and services, and a tension between immigration policy and the aims of the TVPA vis-à-vis assisting victims. First, I will frame the issue of human trafficking in the United States today, and then will discuss the TVPA’s legislative background and text. Part IV will argue that mechanisms for gathering data and refining victim identification are insufficient. Part V proposes that even once victims are identified, there are unnecessary and unconscionable barriers to assisting many victims. Part VI concludes with recommendations to improve victim identification and services throughout the victim’s contact with United States authorities and service providers, recalling that a victim’s experience does not end with the conviction of his or her trafficker.

#### Status quo solves Poverty – Benefit programs in mexico and Brazil significantly reduced poverty and are modeled globally – peer reviewed

**Rosenberg 11** – (Tina, columnist for the New York Times “To Beat Back Poverty, Pay the Poor” 1/3/11 <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/01/03/to-beat-back-poverty-pay-the-poor/?_r=0>) DF

The program, called Bolsa Familia (Family Grant) in Brazil, goes by different names in different places. In Mexico, where it first began on a national scale and has been equally successful at reducing poverty, it is Oportunidades. The generic term for the program is conditional cash transfers. The idea is to give regular payments to poor families, in the form of cash or electronic transfers into their bank accounts, if they meet certain requirements. The requirements vary, but many countries employ those used by Mexico: families must keep their children in school and go for regular medical checkups, and mom must attend workshops on subjects like nutrition or disease prevention. The payments almost always go to women, as they are the most likely to spend the money on their families. The elegant idea behind conditional cash transfers is to combat poverty today while breaking the cycle of poverty for tomorrow.¶ Most of our Fixes columns so far have been about successful-but-small ideas. They face a common challenge: how to make them work on a bigger scale. This one is different. Brazil is employing a version of an idea now in use in some 40 countries around the globe, one already successful on a staggeringly enormous scale. This is likely the most important government anti-poverty program the world has ever seen. It is worth looking at how it works, and why it has been able to help so many people.¶ In Mexico, Oportunidades today covers 5.8 million families, about 30 percent of the population. An Oportunidades family with a child in primary school and a child in middle school that meets all its responsibilities can get a total of about $123 a month in grants. Students can also get money for school supplies, and children who finish high school in a timely fashion get a one-time payment of $330.¶ A family living in extreme poverty in Brazil doubles its income when it gets the basic benefit.¶ Bolsa Familia, which has similar requirements, is even bigger. Brazil’s conditional cash transfer programs were begun before the government of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, but he consolidated various programs and expanded it. It now covers about 50 million Brazilians, about a quarter of the country. It pays a monthly stipend of about $13 to poor families for each child 15 or younger who is attending school, up to three children. Families can get additional payments of $19 a month for each child of 16 or 17 still in school, up to two children. Families that live in extreme poverty get a basic benefit of about $40, with no conditions.¶ Do these sums seem heartbreakingly small? They are. But a family living in extreme poverty in Brazil doubles its income when it gets the basic benefit. It has long been clear that Bolsa Familia has reduced poverty in Brazil. But research has only recently revealed its role in enabling Brazil to reduce economic inequality.¶ The World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank are working with individual governments to spread these programs around the globe, providing technical help and loans. Conditional cash transfer programs are now found in 14 countries in Latin America and some 26 other countries, according to the World Bank. (One of the programs was in New York City — a small, privately-financed pilot program called Opportunity NYC. A preliminary evaluation showed mixed success, but it is too soon to draw conclusions.) Each program is tailored to local conditions. Some in Latin America, for example, emphasize nutrition. One in Tanzania is experimenting with conditioning payments on an entire community’s behavior.¶ The program fights poverty in two ways. One is straightforward: it gives money to the poor. This works. And no, the money tends not to be stolen or diverted to the better-off. Brazil and Mexico have been very successful at including only the poor. In both countries it has reduced poverty, especially extreme poverty, and has begun to close the inequality gap.¶ The idea’s other purpose — to give children more education and better health — is longer term and harder to measure. But measured it is — Oportunidades is probably the most-studied social program on the planet. The program has an evaluation unit and publishes all data. There have also been hundreds of studies by independent academics. The research indicates that conditional cash transfer programs in Mexico and Brazil do keep people healthier, and keep kids in school.¶ In Mexico today, malnutrition, anemia and stunting have dropped, as have incidences of childhood and adult illnesses. Maternal and infant deaths have been reduced. Contraceptive use in rural areas has risen and teen pregnancy has declined. But the most dramatic effects are visible in education. Children in Oportunidades repeat fewer grades and stay in school longer. Child labor has dropped. In rural areas, the percentage of children entering middle school has risen 42 percent. High school inscription in rural areas has risen by a whopping 85 percent. The strongest effects on education are found in families where the mothers have the lowest schooling levels. Indigenous Mexicans have particularly benefited, staying in school longer.

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#### The response to bad policies should be scientifically and economically informed policymaking, which only our framework encourages

Drew Thornley 9 - independent policy analyst focused primarily on energy, environmental, and natural resources, Energy & The Environment: Myths & Facts, He currently teaches business law at Concordia University in Austin, Texas. Thornley graduated summa cum laude with a B.A. in economics from The University of Alabama in 2002 and received a J.D. from Harvard Law School in 2005, Manhattan Institute, 2009, http://www.manhattan-institute.org/energymyths/myth11.htm

In a democracy, a well-informed public can play an important role in helping elected officials make wise policy decisions. But many Americans believe in energy myths that shape their views and influence public-policy debates. Consider some of the most widely accepted ideas and how energy-policy decisions may reflect these beliefs.¶ The belief that nuclear energy is unsafe has resulted in an unwritten moratorium on new nuclear power plants. Since the partial meltdown of a nuclear reactor at Three Mile Island in 1979, not a single nuclear reactor has been built in the United States. Moreover, in 1977 President Jimmy Carter outlawed the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel, even though almost all the material in a nuclear rod can be safely reused following the first nuclear cycle. Though no one has ever died from the production of nuclear power in the U.S., though we have safely generated nuclear power and stored nuclear waste for decades, and though other countries are increasingly turning to nuclear power to help meet their energy needs—notably France, which generates 80 percent of its electricity from nuclear power—fear has held nuclear energy advancement hostage for thirty years. These unfounded fears have caused us to miss out on three decades’ worth of safe, reliable power that produces virtually zero carbon emissions. And we’ve lost all that time, too, which we could have spent training a workforce to wield and manage nuclear power technology.¶ Additionally, the notion that offshore drilling is environmentally dangerous has kept off-limits abundant domestic sources of oil and natural gas, making the U.S. the only country with significant known reserves of oil and natural gas that refuses to tap them. Since the 1969 oil spill off Santa Barbara’s coast, much of the public has viewed oil drilling as overly harmful to our ocean waters; but the track record of offshore drilling reveals a history of safety and of minimal environmental impact. Since 1975, offshore drilling in the Exclusive Economic Zone (within 200 miles of the U.S. coast) has a safety record of 99.999 percent, meaning that only 0.0001 percent of the oil produced has been spilled.[146] In spite of oil’s safety record, however, large portions of our oil- and natural gas–rich coastal waters remain off-limits to exploration and development. The result: U.S. dependence on foreign sources of energy has grown over time, as we have neglected to reap the benefits—economically and geopolitically—of our abundant natural resources.¶ Just as misguided fears may stymie the responsible development and use of certain resources, unrealistic hopes may accelerate the rollout of others—more appealing philosophically but less efficient economically. The deeply held view that renewable fuels hold immediate promise arguably played a part in the nation’s aggressive move toward corn ethanol. Hoping that corn ethanol can play a large role in powering our nation’s vehicles, the U.S. Congress increased the amount of ethanol that must be blended into our transportation-fuel mix from 9 billion gallons in 2008 to 10.5 billion gallons in 2009 and 15 billion gallons in 2015. As it turns out, such a decision was premature. Just months after Congress upped the mandate, the tide of public opinion turned against corn ethanol, as the burning of large portions of our nation’s corn crop helped raise food prices worldwide, and as new research revealed that the massive land clearing required for the corn-ethanol business potentially increases, rather than decreases, the amount of carbon in the atmosphere. In spite of billions of taxpayer-subsidized dollars and protective tariffs, the domestic ethanol industry fell into disarray, with dozens of ethanol refiners going bankrupt because of falling ethanol prices and resulting excess refining capacity. The corn-ethanol debacle is a prime example of the law of unintended consequences and of the potential of myth-based thinking to lead to premature—and, ultimately, unsuccessful—energy policies that harm the economy and, often, even the environment.¶ Similarly, we may be acting too quickly to limit carbon-dioxide emissions, despite indications that the Earth’s climate is not warming as quickly as many believe. According to computer models and media accounts, the Earth’s temperature is on a breakaway upward trajectory. However, though the Earth’s average temperature increased about one degree Fahrenheit during the twentieth century, its climb was not constant. Rather, two distinct warming periods were separated by a period of global cooling. Additionally, satellite data indicate that the second warming period of the twentieth century has recently halted and, perhaps, is in reverse. Computer models did not project such a shift. We simply cannot be sure we understand the myriad intricacies of global climate dynamics, at least not sufficiently to justify sweeping attempts to regulate carbon dioxide, the supposed chief culprit of climate change. Particularly since such regulations would come at enormous economic cost—potentially hitting every industry, business, and consumer—the risks of rushing to judgment are substantial. Unless we proceed cautiously, aggressive climate measures could raise energy and electricity prices, curtail economic output, and reduce overall employment.¶ Along with unconfirmed fears of humans’ impact on climate, the mistaken belief that U.S. cities are becoming more polluted has sparked opposition to building new coal-fired power plants. Though the idea that carbon dioxide is a pollutant is recent (and unproven) and though air quality in our cities has steadily improved for decades, many oppose new coal plants. If carried to its logical extreme, misplaced fears about climate and pollution could bar not only new coal plants but could also shut down existing coal plants, effectively closing off the source of half of our nation’s electricity supply.¶ Finally, due to the inefficiencies of renewable energies and alternative fuels, the possibility of U.S. energy independence anytime in the near future is a myth. However, the U.S. is well positioned to meet our future energy needs, for instead of focusing all our resources on a single energy source or energy supplier, we have a diversified portfolio of energy resources and numerous supplies that act as an effective hedge against supply disruptions. For example, contrary to popular opinion, the U.S. imports oil from dozens of nations and is not overly reliant on any single country or region. Only 16 percent of our 2007 oil imports came from the Persian Gulf, for example, while over 61 percent of the petroleum consumed in the U.S. in 2007 was either produced here or imported from Canada and Mexico, our immediate neighbors. In spite of such balance, misplaced fears that we are overly dependent on dangerous regimes for our oil supply could hasten government mandates and subsidies for unproven technologies that divert resources from more efficient uses—and raise the overall cost of energy for consumers.¶ Misguided energy policies ultimately tend to produce economic harm, both to producers and consumers. Though its economic impact is often overlooked, energy policy affects everyone’s pocketbook. Higher energy prices inevitably lead to higher prices and job losses throughout the economy. Additionally, since the poorest households spend the largest share of their incomes on energy, policies that raise the price of energy disproportionately hurt the poor**.** Politicians would do well to remember this as they consider President Obama’s plan to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions approximately 83 percent by 2050.[147]According to the Congressional Budget Office, just a 15 percent reduction in emissions from 1998 levels would impose an additional $680 (measured in constant 2006 dollars) in costs on the poorest 20 percent of our population, the largest percentage increase (3.3 percent) of the five economic quintiles.[148]¶ As our survey shows, many Americans hold inaccurate ideas about key energy issues. From classrooms to press rooms to legislative halls, energy myths abound. The pervasiveness of such misunderstandings about energy often leads to energy policies driven by emotion**,** rather than by facts; to premature, rather than prudent, legislation and regulations; and to constrictive, rather than growth-oriented, economic outcomes.¶ Instead of rushing to judgment based on political expediency, unproven theories, or fear, policymakers should focus on realistic energy policies that meet our needs today without creating liabilities for us tomorrow. Scientific, technological, and economic realities, rather than myths, must guide energy-policy decisions. Separating myths from realities is essential if Americans are to continue to depend on reliable and affordable sources of energy.

#### 3) Even if our framework is ineffective, their’s is the political equivalent of burying your head in the sand --- ignoring pragmatic policy details leaves the Left completely unequipped to prevent domination

**McClean 1** (David E., Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy, http://www.american-philosophy.org/archives/past\_conference\_programs/pc2001/discussion%20papers/david\_mcclean.htm)

I would like to suggest that it is time for American social critics who are enamored with this group, those who actually want to be relevant, to recognize that they have a disease, and a disease regarding which I myself must remember to stay faithful to my own twelve step program of recovery. The disease is the need for elaborate theoretical "remedies" wrapped in neological and multi-syllabic jargon. These elaborate theoretical remedies are more "interesting, " to be sure, than the pragmatically settled questions about what shape democracy should take in various contexts, or whether private property should be protected by the state, or regarding our basic human nature (described, if not defined (heaven forbid!), in such statements as "We don't like to starve" and "We like to speak our minds without fear of death" and "We like to keep our children safe from poverty"). As Rorty puts it, "When one of today's academic leftists says that some topic has been 'inadequately theorized,' you can be pretty certain that he or she is going to drag in either philosophy of language, or Lacanian psychoanalysis, or some neo-Marxist version of economic determinism. . . . These futile attempts to philosophize one's way into political relevance are a symptom of what happens when a Left retreats from activism and adopts a spectatorial approach to the problems of its country. Disengagement from practice produces theoretical hallucinations"(italics mine).(1) Or as John Dewey put it in his The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy, "I believe that philosophy in America will be lost between chewing a historical cud long since reduced to woody fiber, or an apologetics for lost causes, . . . . or a scholastic, schematic formalism, unless it can somehow bring to consciousness America's own needs and its own implicit principle of successful action." Those who suffer or have suffered from this disease Rorty refers to as the Cultural Left, which left is juxtaposed to the Political Left that Rorty prefers and prefers for good reason. Another attribute of the Cultural Left is that its members fancy themselves pure culture critics who view the successes of America and the West, rather than some of the barbarous methods for achieving those successes, as mostly evil, and who view anything like national pride as equally evil even when that pride is tempered with the knowledge and admission of the nation's shortcomings. In other words, the Cultural Left, in this country, too often dismiss American society as beyond reform and redemption. And Rorty correctly argues that this is a disastrous conclusion, i.e. disastrous for the Cultural Left. I think it may also be disastrous for our social hopes, as I will explain. Leftist American culture critics might put their considerable talents to better use if they bury some of their cynicism about America's social and political prospects and help forge public and political possibilities in a spirit of determination to, indeed, achieve our country - the country of Jefferson and King; the country of John Dewey and Malcom X; the country of Franklin Roosevelt and Bayard Rustin, and of the later George Wallace and the later Barry Goldwater. To invoke the words of King, and with reference to the American society, the time is always ripe to seize the opportunity to help create the "beloved community," one woven with the thread of agape into a conceptually single yet diverse tapestry that shoots for nothing less than a true intra-American cosmopolitan ethos, one wherein both same sex unions and faith-based initiatives will be able to be part of the same social reality, one wherein business interests and the university are not seen as belonging to two separate galaxies but as part of the same answer to the threat of social and ethical nihilism. We who fancy ourselves philosophers would do well to create from within ourselves and from within our ranks a new kind of public intellectual who has both a hungry theoretical mind and who is yet capable of seeing the need to move past high theory to other important questions that are less bedazzling and "interesting" but more important to the prospect of our flourishing - questions such as "How is it possible to develop a citizenry that cherishes a certain hexis, one which prizes the character of the Samaritan on the road to Jericho almost more than any other?" or "How can we square the political dogma that undergirds the fantasy of a missile defense system with the need to treat America as but one member in a community of nations under a "law of peoples?" The new public philosopher might seek to understand labor law and military and trade theory and doctrine as much as theories of surplus value; the logic of international markets and trade agreements as much as critiques of commodification, and the politics of complexity as much as the politics of power (all of which can still be done from our arm chairs.) This means going down deep into the guts of our quotidian social institutions, into the grimy pragmatic details where intellectuals are loathe to dwell but where the officers and bureaucrats of those institutions take difficult and often unpleasant, imperfect decisions that affect other peoples' lives, and it means making honest attempts to truly understand how those institutions actually function in the actual world before howling for their overthrow commences. This might help keep us from being slapped down in debates by true policy pros who actually know what they are talking about but who lack awareness of the dogmatic assumptions from which they proceed.

#### 4) Speaking the language of experts--- solves cession of science and politics to ideological elites who dominate the argumentative frame

**Hoppe 99** Robert Hoppe is Professor of Policy and knowledge in the Faculty of Management and Governance at Twente University, the Netherlands. "Argumentative Turn" Science and Public Policy, volume 26, number 3, June 1999, pages 201–210 works.bepress.com

ACCORDING TO LASSWELL (1971), policy science is about the production and application of knowledge of and in policy. Policy-makers who desire to tackle problems on the political agenda successfully, should be able to mobilise the best available knowledge. This requires high-quality knowledge in policy. Policy-makers and, in a democracy, citizens, also need to know how policy processes really evolve. This demands precise knowledge of policy.¶ There is an obvious link between the two: the more and better the knowledge of policy, the easier it is to mobilise knowledge in policy. Lasswell expresses this interdependence by defining the policy scientist's operational task as eliciting the maximum rational judgement of all those involved in policy-making.¶ For the applied policy scientist or policy analyst this implies the development of two skills. First, for the sake of mobilising the best available knowledge in policy, he/she should be able to mediate between different scientific disciplines. Second, to optimise the interdependence between science in and of policy, she/he should be able to mediate between science and politics. Hence Dunn's (1994, page 84) formal definition of policy analysis as an applied social science discipline that uses multiple research methods in a context of argumentation, public debate [and political struggle] to create, evaluate critically, and communicate policy-relevant knowledge.¶ Historically, the differentiation and successful institutionalisation of policy science can be interpreted as the spread of the functions of knowledge organisation, storage, dissemination and application in the knowledge system (Dunn and Holzner, 1988; van de Graaf and Hoppe, 1989, page 29). Moreover, this scientification of hitherto 'unscientised' functions, by including science of policy explicitly, aimed to gear them to the political system. In that sense, Lerner and Lasswell's (1951) call for policy sciences anticipated, and probably helped bring about, the scientification of politics.¶ Peter Weingart (1999) sees the development of the science-policy nexus as a dialectical process of the scientification of politics/policy and the politicisation of science. Numerous studies of political controversies indeed show that science advisors behave like any other self-interested actor (Nelkin, 1995). Yet science somehow managed to maintain its functional cognitive authority in politics. This may be because of its changing shape, which has been characterised as the emergence of a post-parliamentary and post-national network democracy (Andersen and Burns, 1996, pages 227-251).¶ National political developments are put in the background by ideas about uncontrollable, but apparently inevitable, international developments; in Europe, national state authority and power in public policy-making is leaking away to a new political and administrative elite, situated in the institutional ensemble of the European Union. National representation is in the hands of political parties which no longer control ideological debate. The authority and policy-making power of national governments is also leaking away towards increasingly powerful policy-issue networks, dominated by functional representation by interest groups and practical experts.¶ In this situation, public debate has become even more fragile than it was. It has become diluted by the predominance of purely pragmatic, managerial and administrative argument, and under-articulated as a result of an explosion of new political schemata that crowd out the more conventional ideologies. The new schemata do feed on the ideologies; but in larger part they consist of a random and unarticulated 'mish-mash' of attitudes and images derived from ethnic, local-cultural, professional, religious, social movement and personal political experiences.¶ The market-place of political ideas and arguments is thriving; but on the other hand, politicians and citizens are at a loss to judge its nature and quality.¶ Neither political parties, nor public officials, interest groups, nor social movements and citizen groups, nor even the public media show any inclination, let alone competency, in ordering this inchoate field. In such conditions, scientific debate provides a much needed minimal amount of order and articulation of concepts, arguments and ideas. Although frequently more in rhetoric than substance, reference to scientific 'validation' does provide politicians, public officials and citizens alike with some sort of compass in an ideological universe in disarray.¶ For policy analysis to have any political impact under such conditions, it should be able somehow to continue 'speaking truth' to political elites who are ideologically uprooted, but cling to power; to the elites of administrators, managers, professionals and experts who vie for power in the jungle of organisations populating the functional policy domains of post-parliamentary democracy; and to a broader audience of an ideologically disoriented and politically disenchanted citizenry.

#### The argument that politics is in a state of terminal decay is not only false but it essentializes politics as inherently dangerous --- this creates a self-fulfilling prophecy and results in massive state-based violence

**Duarte 4** - André Duarte, Professor of Philosophy at the Federal University of Brazil, November 7, 2004, “Biopolitics and the dissemination of violence: the Arendtian critique of the present,” online: [http://web.archive.org/web/20041107231353/http://hannaharendt.net/research/biopolitics.html](http://web.archive.org/web/20041107231353/http:/hannaharendt.net/research/biopolitics.html)

It would be hard to find another thesis in Political Theory that is more assertive and unquestionable than the traditional identification of violence and politics; this is true to such an extent that the possibility of a non-violent politics or of tracing a conceptual distinction between power and violence becomes a chimera. No one doubts that violence is crucially inherent to political processes, and if it is true that not all violent phenomena are political phenomena, we feel more than certain that there would be no politics without violence or beyond it. Have we not been sufficiently warned - by political thinkers as different as Marx, Weber or Schmitt - that violence pertains to the core of the political? But, on the other hand, does the mere repetition of so-called truisms help us in any way to elucidate the most important political phenomena of our present?

As we know, Hannah Arendt is among those very few thinkers in contemporary political theory who dared to refuse the strict identification of politics and violence, arguing that violence is not necessarily inherent to the political, or that violence and power are not the same. In works such as The Human Condition and On Violence, among others, Arendt tried to demonstrate that while power is spontaneously generated by collective and concerted actions of a plurality of citizens, violence is mute and intended to disperse, silence and isolate them, disrupting the civic bounds that tie them together in acts and speeches. While power is an end in itself, since it is the very amalgam that unifies political agents in the public space, violence is purely instrumental, since it is a means to achieve a definite end through coercion. In short, while power may generate the establishment of a transitory consensus, which does not eliminate the possibility of dissent and conflicts, pure violence is merely destructive, being incapable of creating anything new, and so on.

In the present text, however, I do not intend to follow up and discuss the Arendtian analysis on the philosophical origins of the traditional equation of politics and violence, nor will I explore the extremely important consequences of her distinction between power and violence regarding the possibility of a radically democratic politics. What concerns me here is to explore Arendt’s diagnosis of the present, in which politics has been transformed into a wide variety of different violent phenomena. Only if we do not consent in repeating the old and traditional identification of politics and violence will we be able to reconsider and rethink the meaning of our present experience of the political ‘as’ violence. After all, Arendt’s thesis that power and violence are not the same - since the fundamental political phenomenon is not domination, but the collective generation of novelty in deeds and speeches – does not contradict her view that, throughout Western history and up to the present – or perhaps even more so nowadays –, politics has been experienced as violence. In fact, preventive wars have been declared and promoted by countries that represent themselves as absolute good fighting absolute evil in order to save humanity and to prevent future possible evil deeds. To achieve these goals, such countries may disregard previous international juridical agreements thus imposing their political and economic hegemony in an increasingly more violent and insecure world. Suicidal fundamentalists, secret organizations or even the regular armed forces of a State continuously launch terrorist attacks aiming at no less than the complete annihilation of its opponents. It is also well known that the twentieth century actually began with the utilization of chemical and bacteriological mass destructive weapons whose manufacture rapidly became more and more lethal, culminating with nuclear weapons able to destroy all life on the planet.With considerable frequency States do impose preventive and repressive policies against immigrants and refugees, as well as against political movements that organize the unemployed, non-conformists of all sorts, displaced and homeless people, among many other ‘undesirable’ social groups. Last but not least, consider the so called ‘human waste’ that cannot be integrated in the capitalist system of globalized production and consumption, a whole mass of human beings that has to be seductively domesticated or put under strictly repressive vigilance so that new superfluous human beings can be constantly produced and reproduced. By considering these different contemporary experiences of politics ‘as’ violence, one should inquire: is there any link or bond between them? Has Arendt anything to say in order to render them more understandable?

No text deleted I believe that she does have many important things to say about those phenomena and to start trying to answer the above mentioned questions I would like to propose a rather unusual hypothesis for Arendt’s readers: the notion of biopolitics, which is not an Arendtian one, would be the missing link that fully articulates Arendt’s reflections concerning the tragic contemporary shifts of the political, in The Human Condition, with her close analysis of totalitarian regimes, in The Origins of Totalitarianism. In other words, the notion of biopolitics would permit us to highlight the Arendtian diagnosis of the present in terms of the dissemination of violence and of the growing meaninglessness of the political in our bureaucratized, mass- and market-oriented representative democracies, that is, our actually existent democracies. This hypothesis is unconventional not only because the notion of biopolitics is absent in Arendt’s thought, but also because it opens the path to some conclusions that she did not expressly or fully develop. However, as I will argue, if those conclusions stray from the exact meaning of Arendt’s texts, they certainly do not contradict the spirit of Arendt’s work on politics. This interpretive approach is inspired by Giorgio Agamben’s work, Homo sacer: sovereign power and bare life, in which he argues that both Arendt and Foucault were the first contemporary thinkers to understand the radical changes suffered by the political in modern times. According to Agamben, these changes culminate in the Nazi and Stalinist extermination camps with the transformation of citizens in the “bare life” (nuda vita) of the homo sacer, the prototype of a man whose murder is no crime. According to Agamben’s researches, the homo sacer was an old and rather obscure juridical figure of the Roman law that designated a man who had been excluded from both divine and human legislation. In other words, the paradox that the homo sacer – the sacrificial man – embodied in himself was that the only way in which he still belonged to the code of the Roman law was by means of his total exclusion from it. In other words, the homo sacer was deprived of any legal protection against anyone who attempted to murder him, providing that this murder was not supported by legal procedures or religious rites. This is not the place for extensive commentaries on Agamben’s work, nor will I attempt to compare thinkers as different as Arendt and Foucault. Rather, I would like to stress the aspects in which Arendt’s, Foucault’s and Agamben’s reflections converge, tracing a biopolitical diagnosis of the present. In short, I believe that the introduction of the notion of biopolitics in Arendt’s thinking, which is not at all arbitrary, as I will try to demonstrate, would permit us to better understand the correlation between the most important manifestations of contemporary political violence: the extraordinary violence of totalitarian disaster, and the ordinary violence of our mass- and market-democracies, corroded by the loss of any radical political alternative to capitalism. Although assuming the risks of reading Arendt beyond Arendt, I believe that I remain faithful to the core of her own thinking: at last, was it not she herself that emphasized interweaving political thought and the crucial political experiences of the present? In order to justify introducing the notion of biopolitics where it does not originally appear, it is necessary to understand in what sense biopolitical violence has become the common denominator of contemporary politics, reducing the distance between modern mass representative democracies and totalitarian regimes. This idea has to be carefully developed since, as it is well known, Arendt considered totalitarianism to be a disruptive and unprecedented regime, one that broke with all past forms of political domination and violence, such as dictatorships, tyrannies and despotisms. In her detailed analysis of Nazi and Stalinist totalitarianism, in The Origins of Totalitarianism, Arendt developed a careful evaluation of the structural characteristics they shared and distinguished them from all other political regimes. It is not my objective to counter her argument on the crucial structural differences that make all the difference between our actually existing democracies and totalitarian regimes, but to stress that biopolitical violence has become the common material underlying our contemporary political experiences. It is not a matter of merely blurring all differences and thus of simplistically identifying totalitarianism and representative democracies, although one should also be attentive to the political blackmail implied by the obstinate repetition of a simplistic opposition of totalitarianism and mass democracies. Slavoj Zizek has aptly described the ideological use of the concept of totalitarianism as a helpful admonition that actually uses the specter of a possible resurgence of totalitarian regimes to undermine any radical political alternative. This political blackmail works like this: it is better to accept the inequalities and absurdities of capitalism with its liberal economic and political foundations than to abolish it through totalitarian and genocidal regimes. However, I believe that Zizek goes too far when he detects this ideological misuse of the notion of totalitarianism in Arendt’s reflections since her own critical analysis of totalitarianism was never meant as a blind embrace of liberal democracies, an aspect that was perceived as an unacceptable betrayal by critics such as Sheldon Wolin, among others. To talk about totalitarianism today does not necessarily imply that one is threatening the critics of liberal democracy with the risks of the reappearance of the Goulag or of Auschwitz, since the critical detection of some rather dangerous continuities regarding the historical background in which both totalitarianism and liberal democracies have appeared is a crucial aspect of Arendt’s and Agamben’s analyses, as I will try to show. In other words, the analysis of totalitarianism remains a fundamental way of realizing and understanding the totalitarian dangers that surround our actually existing democracies. What really matters now is to understand the rather perverse biopolitical mechanisms through which human beings have been both included and excluded from the political and economical spheres in mass- and market oriented democracies and in totalitarian regimes. Moreover, to consider totalitarianism as a disruptive event in Western history does not mean to refuse understanding it as a historical phenomenon, that is, as the crystallization of different historical elements that have become constitutive of the political in late modern times and, therefore, also have something to do with liberal democracies. In other words, although totalitarian regimes should not be considered as the necessary pitfall of Modernity, they should never be viewed as a mere accident in Modernity’s path. To recall Zygmunt Bauman’s Arendtian inspired analysis, totalitarianism has to be understood in the historic context rendered possible by the conjunction of modern science and technology, bureaucratic administration and mass murder, all of which are suddenly brought together by the desire of purifying and embellishing the so- called “garden of politics” . One should not forget that if such a desire is less present in liberal democracies than in totalitarian regimes, both of them share a substantially common historical background. In fact, many of those modern historical elements that crystallized in totalitarian regimes still remain vastly present in our times, such as racism, xenophobia, political apathy and indifference, economic and territorial imperialism, the use of lies and violence in mass proportions as a means to dominate whole populations, the multiplication of homelessness, of refugees, of those with no country, as well as the growing superfluousness of a huge mass of human beings deprived of citizenship and economic dignity. Under these conditions we should be attentive not only to the possible appearance of new totalitarian regimes, but also to the quasi-totalitarian elements that stand right in the core of our representative mass democracies. At the end of her analysis of totalitarianism, Arendt herself warned us that as long as huge masses of superfluous human beings still abound in the present world it would always remain very tempting to any regime to resort to totalitarian measures in order to ‘solve’ contemporary political dilemmas: The danger of the corpse factories and holes of oblivion is that today, with populations and homelessness everywhere on the increase, masses of people are continuously rendered superfluous if we continue to think of our world in utilitarian terms. Political, social, and economic events everywhere are in a silent conspiracy with totalitarian instruments devised for making men superfluous. (…) The Nazis and the Bolsheviks can be sure that their factories of annihilation which demonstrate the swiftest solution to the problem of overpopulation, of economically superfluous and socially rootless human masses, are much of an attraction as a warning. Totalitarian solutions may well survive the fall of totalitarian regimes in the form of strong temptations which will come up whenever it seems impossible to alleviate political, social, or economic misery in a manner worth of man. Towards the notion of biopolitics in Arendt’s thought What does it mean to characterize the present equation of politics and violence in terms of the paradigm of biopolitics? And how can this non-Arendtian notion make any sense in Arendt’s work? Let us begin with the first question. My contention is that the peculiar trait of the political since the turn of the nineteen century up to the contemporary world is the paradox of the simultaneous elevation of life to the status of supreme good and the multiplication of instances in which life is degraded to the utmost. I think that the constitutive element of the political in the present is the reduction of citizenship to the lower level of “bare life”, as Agamben understands it, an operation that implies a certain politicization of life through which human life is simultaneously divided into the categories of life included and protected by the political and economical community and life excluded and unprotected, left to degradation and annihilation. The answer to the second question, that is, how the notion of biopolitics fit into Arendt’s work, is contained in a nutshell in Arendt’s thesis regarding the “unnatural growth of the natural”, a rather peculiar formula with which she intended to define the main historical transformations suffered by the political in the late modern age. The Arendtian formula presented in The Human Condition comprises different historical phenomena originating from the outcome of the Industrial Revolution, such as the generalization of the capitalist form of production of wealth in abundance; the widening of the realm of human necessities, such as laboring and consuming, up to the point in which life itself, that is, the eternal life process of the human species, became the supreme good and the most important political subject-matter; the elevation of laboring activity to the level of the most important human activity; the reduction of men to the status of the animal laborans, the prototype of man conceived as a living being whose main necessities are tied down to the continuous cycle of laboring and consuming; the requirement of the continuous production and reproduction of goods in abundance, so that nature was reduced to no more than a stock of natural resources abused to the point of almost disappearing from the surface of the planet; finally, the transformation of politics into the administrative office responsible for the promotion of human happiness by securing the private vital interests of the animal laborans. In order to guarantee them it was necessary that the public sphere be transformed into a social one, i.e., into the market of private and economic exchanges devoted to the production and reproduction of abundant goods destined to almost immediate consumption. These goods have to be continuously produced and reproduced through ever- increasing laboring activity in order to be massively consumed, thus generating an unbreakable cycle. Arendt’s thesis is that from the nineteenth century onwards the political and its constitutive elements have become increasingly over-determined by private social and economic interests –governed today by financial globalization and free-market ideological discourses – to the extent that it has been transformed into the activity of managing the production and reproduction of the animal laborans’ life and happiness. To put it in Antonio Negri’s and Michael Hardt’s terms, the industrial and financial powers of the present produce not only commodities, but also subjectivities, needs, social relations, bodies and minds, since they actually produce the producers. The most evident consequence of this historical process is that we do not even know if there is still any space left for the establishment of new radical political alternatives, since all State policies, most specially in underdeveloped countries, are always predetermined by the rather unstable flows of international financial investments and stock-exchange fluctuations. The results of these historical changes promoted by the advance of capitalism imply many losses, according to Arendt: the loss of the political as the constituting space opened up and sustained by new political relations in the world, with the consequent surrendering of the spaces of freedom to that of necessity; the loss of free and spontaneous action to repetitive and predictable behavior; the invasion and destruction of the public and shared common space by private lobbies and other hidden pressure groups which easily escape the mechanisms of public vigilance; the substitution of blind and mute violence for the possibility of persuasively exchanging opinions; the submission of the plurality of political ideas to the so-called unique thinking governed by the inexorable laws of the economic market; the weakening of the citizen’s ability to consent and dissent and the increase of their tendency to blindly obey; in short, the obfuscation of people’s ability to bring about political novelties through common creativity by the tedious reduction of the exercise of freedom to the solitary instant of depositing a vote; and the reduction of the political arena to the disputes among the highly enclosed and bureaucratized party machines, not to mention repressive State actions and the media campaigns of demoralization mobilized against all those political agents that do not accept the so called rules of the game – in the media’s general discourse they will be called anarchistic rioters, anti-system terrorists and the like. The contemporary social production of wealth in abundance as connected to mass consumerism has transformed human beings into laboring animals and the political citizen into a consumering agent in the democratic-supermarket: s/he has a certain variety of opinions to choose among, provided that s/he does not question the limited political options offered by the whole system. And how could one question a political system in which all political parties declare that their aim is to protect citizens’ life interests and life quality? As Agamben has stated, to question the intrinsic limitations of our political system has become more and more difficult since political debates today have taken on the task of caring, controlling and enjoying the benefits of bare life: traditional political distinctions (such as right and left, liberalism and totalitarianism, private and public) have lost their clarity and intelligibility, entering into a zone of indetermination, ever since bare life became their fundamental determination. When “capitalism has become one with reality”, a historical situation that has been aptly characterized by Santiago Lopez Petit under the concept of “postmodern fascism”, there appears a time in which, according to Marina Garcés, “we are condemned to make choices in an elective space in which there are no options. Everything is possible, but we can do nothing”. In other words, our actual political experience is the experience of the vanishing of all creative political alternatives, since the practices and discourses of the so called anti-globalization movements – “another globalization is possible”, and the like – are to a large extent unable to create real alternatives to the economic roles that they are intent on confronting. These historic transformations have not only wrought more violence at the core of the political but have also redefined its character by giving rise to biopolitical violence. As we have stated, what characterizes biopolitics is the dynamic of both protecting and abandoning life through its inclusion and exclusion from the political and economic community. Thus, in Arendtian terms, the aspect that best describes biopolitical danger is the risk of converting the animal laborans into what Agamben has described as the homo sacer, the human being that can be put to death by anyone and whose death does not imply any crime whatsoever. In other terms, when politics is conceived of as biopolitics, in the sense of increasing life and happiness of the national animal laborans, the Nation-state becomes more and more violent and murderous. If we link Arendt’s thesis from The Human Condition to those defended in The Origins of Totalitarianism we understand that the Nazi and Stalinist extermination camps were the most refined laboratories designed for the annihilation of the “bare life” of the animal laborans, although they were not the only instances devoted to human slaughter. Hannah Arendt does not center her analysis only on the process of the extermination itself; she also discusses the historical process under which large-scale exterminations were rendered possible: the emergence of the animal laborans out of uprootedness and superfluousness of modern masses. She gives us a hint of this understanding when she affirms, in “Ideology and Terror: a new form of government”, a text written in 1953 and later added to the second edition of The Origins of Totalitarianism, in 1958, that Isolation is that impasse into which men are driven when the political sphere of their lives is destroyed. (…) Isolated man who lost his place in the political realm of action is deserted by the world of things as well, if he is no longer recognized as homo faber but treated as an animal laborans whose necessary ‘metabolism with nature’ is of concern of no one. Isolation then become loneliness. (…) Loneliness, the common ground for terror, the essence of totalitarian government, and for ideology or logicality, the preparation of its executioners and victims, is closely connected with uprootedness and superfluousness which have been the curse of modern masses since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution and have become acute with the rise of imperialism at the end of the last century and the break-down of political institutions and social traditions in our own time. To be uprooted means to have no place in the world, recognized and guaranteed by others; to be superfluous means not to belong to the world at all. The historical process of converting the homo faber, the prototype of the human being as the creator of durable objects and institutions, into the animal laborans and, later on, into the homo sacer, can be retraced in Arendtian terms to the nineteenth century wave of imperialist colonization. In this process, European countries imposed well-planned administrative genocide in African territories as a means of domination and exploitation. As argued in the second volume of The Origins of Totalitarianism, European colonialist countries combined racism and bureaucracy and thus promoted the “most terrible massacres in recent history, the Boers’ extermination of the Hottentot tribes, the wild murdering by Carl Peters in German Southeast Africa, the decimation of the peaceful Congo population – from 20 to 40 million reduced to 8 million people; and finally, perhaps the worst of all, it resulted in the triumphant introduction of such means of pacification into ordinary, respectable foreign policies”. This vital equation between protecting and destroying life was also at the core of the two World Wars, as well as in many other local warlike conflicts, in the course of which whole populations have become stateless or deprived of a free political space. It is more than symptomatic that, in spite of all their structural political differences, the United States of Roosevelt, the Soviet Russia of Stalin, the Nazi Germany of Hitler and the Fascist Italy of Mussolini were all conceived of as States devoted to the production and reproduction of the needs of the national animal laborans. According to Agamben, since our contemporary politics does not recognizes no other value than life, Nazism and Fascism, that is, regimes which have taken bare life as its supreme political criterion, are bound to remain unfortunately timely. Finally, it is quite obvious that this same vital logic of enforcing and annihilating life still continues to be effective both in post-industrial and in underdeveloped countries, since economic growth depends on the increase of unemployment and on many forms of political exclusion. When politics is reduced to the tasks of enforcing, preserving and promoting life and happiness of the animal laborans it really does not matter if those objectives require increasingly violent acts, both in national and international milieus. Therefore, it should not be surprising if today the legality or illegality of the State’s violent acts have become a secondary aspect in political discussions, since what really matters is to protect and stimulate the life of the National (or, depending on the case, Western) animal laborans. In order to maintain the sacrosanct ideals of increased mass production and increased mass consumerism developed countries can ignore the finite character of natural reserves that can jeopardize the future of humanity and thus refuse to sign International Protocols regarding the conservation of natural resources and diminishing the emission of dangerous polluting gases. They can also launch preventive humanitarian attacks, interventions or wars, disregard basic civil rights everywhere, create detention camps that escape all legislation, like Guantánamo, enforce the Airport jails where suspects are kept incommunicable, or multiply refugee camps for those who no longer have a homeland or have been evacuated from zones of conflict. Some countries have even imprisoned whole populations in ghettos or built up concrete walls to physically isolate them from other communities and thus give rise to new forms of social, political and economical apartheid. In short, there are countries that can allow themselves to impose the highest level of violence possible against suspect individuals or political regimes – the so-called “rogue-countries”, les États voyous – which, in one way or another, supposedly interfere with the security, maintenance and growth of their own national life cycle. If, according to Arendt, the common world is the institutional in-between space that should survive the natural cycle of life and death of human generations, what happens in modern mass societies based on continuous laboring and consuming activities is the progressive abolition of the institutional artificial barriers that separate and protect the human world from the forces of nature. This is what explains the contemporary sensation of vertigo, instability and unhappiness, as well as the impossibility of combining stability and novelty in order to think and act in a politically creative way. However, what should not be missed in the Arendtian argument is that in the context of a “waste economy, in which things must be almost as quickly devoured and discarded as they have appeared in the world, if the process itself is not to come to a sudden catastrophic end”, it becomes not only possible, but also necessary, that people be taken as raw material ready to be consumed, discarded or annihilated. Therefore, when Arendt announces the “grave danger that eventually no object of the world will be safe from consumption and annihilation through consumption”, we should also remember that human annihilation, elevated to the status of a supreme and managed end in totalitarian regimes, still continues to occur, although in different degrees and by different methods, in the contemporary dark holes of the oblivion such as miserably poor Third World neighborhoods and Penitentiaries, underpaid and infra-human labor camps, not to mention slave labor camps, always in the name of protecting the vital interests of the animal laborans. To talk about the process of human consumption is not to employ a metaphoric language but to properly describe the matter in question. Heidegger had already realized it when in the notes written during the late thirties and later published under the title of Overcoming Metaphysics. In these notes he stated that the differences between war and peace had already been blurred in a society in which “metaphysical man, the animal rationale, gets fixed as the laboring animal”, so that “labor is now reaching the metaphysical rank of the unconditional objectification of everything present”. Heidegger had also already understood that once the world becomes fully determined by the cyclical “circularity of consumption for the sake of consumption” it is at the brink of becoming an “unworld” (Unwelt), since “man, who no longer conceals his character of being the most important raw material, is also drawn into the process. Man is ‘the most important raw material’ because he remains the subject of all consumption”. After the Second World War and the dissemination of detailed information concerning the death factories Heidegger pushed his criticisms even further, since he then acknowledged that even the understanding of man in terms of both subject and object of the consumption process was inadequate to describe the whole process of planned mass annihilation. He then came to understand this process of human mass dehumanization in terms of the conversion of man into nothing more than an “item of the reserve fund for the fabrication of corpses” (Bestandestücke eines Bestandes der Fabrikation von Leichen), always ready to be manipulated, managed and destined to technological production and destruction. What happened in the “extermination camps” (Vernichtungslägern) was not that millions of people met death as their own most fundamental possibility; much to the contrary, their essential possibility of dying was definitely stolen from them and they merely “passed away” in the process of being “unconspicuously liquidated” (unauffälig liquidiert). Men as an animal laborans (Arendt), as homo sacer (Agamben), as an item of the reserve fund (Heidegger) are descriptions of the very same process of dehumanization by means of which humankind and human life are reduced to the lowest status of living and unqualified raw material. As argued by Agamben, when it becomes impossible to differentiate between biós and zóe, that is, when bare and unqualified life is transformed into a qualified “form of life”, we can then recognize the emergence of a biopolitical epoch in which States promote the animalization of man by policies that aim at both protecting and destroying human life. Such considerations favor Agamben’s thesis concerning the widespread presence of the homo sacer in the contemporary world: “if it is true that un-sacrificial life is the figure that our time proposes to us, although life has become eliminable in an unprecedented measure, then the bare life of the homo sacer concerns us in a particular way. (…) If today there is not a single predetermined figure of the sacrificial man, perhaps that is because all of us have virtually become homines sacri”. By discussing the changes in the way power was conceived of and exercised at the turn of the nineteen-century, Foucault had firstly realized that when life turned out to be a constitutive political element, one that had to be carefully managed, calculated, ruled and normalized by means of different ‘caring’ policies, giving rise to biopolitical measures, these policies soon became murderous ones. When the Sovereign’s actions became destined to promote and stimulate the growth of life beyond the task of merely imposing violent death, wars turned into more and more bloodshed and extermination became a regular procedure both within and outside of the Nation. After the constitution of the modern biopolitical paradigm, says Foucault, political conflicts aim at preserving and intensifying the life of the winners, so that enemies cease to be political opponents and come to be seen as biological entities: it is not enough to defeat them, they must be exterminated since they constitute risks to the health of the race, people or community. Foucault thus characterizes the historical consequences that the emergence and consolidation of the modern biopolitical paradigm implied at the turn to the nineteen-century: death that was based on the right of the sovereign is now manifested as simply the reverse of the right of the social body to ensure, maintain or develop its life. Yet wars were never as bloody as they have been since the nineteenth-century, and all things being equal, never before did regimes visit such holocausts on their own populations. But this formidable power of death … now presents itself as the counterpart of a power that exerts a positive influence on life that endeavors to administer, optimize, and multiply it, subjecting it to precise controls and comprehensive regulations. Wars are no longer waged in the name of a sovereign who must be defended; they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone; entire populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital. It is as managers of life and survival, of bodies and the race, that so many regimes have been able to wage so many wars, causing so many men to be killed. And through a turn that closes the circle, as the technology of wars have caused them to tend increasingly toward all-out destruction, the decision that initiates them and the one that terminates them are in fact increasingly informed by the naked question of survival. The atomic situation is now at the end of point of this process: the power to expose a whole population to death is the underside of the power to guarantee an individual’s continued existence. The principle underlying the tactics of battle – that one has to be capable of killing in order to go on living – has become the principle that defines the strategy of states. But the existence in case is no longer the juridical existence of sovereignty; at stake is the biological existence of a population. If genocide is indeed the dream of modern powers, this is not because of a recent return of the ancient right to kill; it is because power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population. Thus, under the biopolitical paradigm “the other’s death is not only merely my life, in the sense of my personal security; the other’s death, the death of the bad race, of the inferior race (or of the degenerated or abnormal), is what will render life in general saner; saner and more pure”. In On Violence, Arendt argued a similar thesis concerning the violent character of racist or naturalist conceptions of politics. According to Arendt, “nothing could be theoretically more dangerous than the tradition of organic thought in political matters”, in which power and violence are interpreted in terms of biological metaphors that can only induce and produce more violence, especially where racial matters are involved. Racism as an ideological system of thought is inherently violent and murderous because it attacks natural organic data that, as such, cannot be changed by any power or persuasion, so that all that can be done when conflicts become radicalized is to “exterminate” the other. Biopolitical violence, the specific character of different violent phenomena underlying both totalitarianism and the quasi-totalitarian elements of modern mass democracies, is the tragic inheritance sustained by all kinds of naturalized conceptions of the political. According to her views, all forms of naturalizing the political harm the egalitarian political artificiality without which no defense and “validation of human freedom and dignity” are possible. It was the analysis of the terrible experience of both political and economic refugees, of those interned in different kinds of concentration camps, of those left with no home and all those who have lost their own place in the world, that showed her that nature – and, of course, human nature – cannot ground and secure any right or any democratic politics. She herself suffered the consequences of being left with no homeland between 1933 and 1951. This denial of any rights whatsoever showed her the paradox that the naturalistic understanding and foundation of the Rights of Man implied, since once those rights ceased to be recognized and enforced by a political community, their “inalienable” character simply vanished, living unprotected exactly those very human beings that mostly needed them: “The Rights of Man, supposedly inalienable, proved to be unenforceable … whenever people appeared who were no longer citizens of a sovereign state”. The core of her argument is that the loss of the Rights of Man did not per se deprive a human being of his/her life, liberty, property, equality before the law, freedom of expression or the pursuit of happiness; the real “calamity” was that people in these circumstances “no longer belong to any community whatsoever. Their plight is not that they are not equal before the law, but that no law exists for them”. In other words, nationalistic and racialized biopolitics has produced a huge mass of people that have no access to what Arendt has called as the “right to have rights” insofar as they have been stripped of their “right to belong to some kind of organized community”: “Man, it turns out, can lose all so-called Rights of Man without losing his essential quality as man, his human dignity. Only the loss of a polity itself expels him from humanity”. The “abstract nakedness” of merely being a human being is not a trustful substitute for the artificial character of all the pacts freely consented to by active citizens. By analyzing the dynamic of the extermination camps, Arendt understood that ‘humanity’ goes far beyond the notion of the human being a mere natural living being with its minimum natural denominator: “human beings can be transformed into specimens of the human animal, and that man’s ‘nature’ is only ‘human’ insofar as it opens up to man the possibility of becoming something highly unnatural, that is, a man” . In other words, humanity, when it is politically understood, does not reside in the natural fact of being alive, since human beings depend on artificial legal and political institutions to protect them. The Arendtian rejection of understanding the human being as a living being in the singular, as well as her postulation of human plurality as the condition of all innovative politics depend on her thesis that politics has to do with the formation of a common world in the course of people’s acting and exchanging opinions. Politics depends on the human capacities to agree and disagree, so that everything that is mysteriously given to us by nature becomes politically irrelevant. For Arendt, equality is not a natural gift, but a political construction oriented by the “principle of justice”. In other words, political equality is the result of agreements through which people decide to grant themselves equal rights, since the political sphere is based on the assumption that equality can be forged by those who act and exchange opinions among themselves and thus change the world in which they live in. According to Arendt, there can be no democratic politics worthy of the name unless everyone, regardless of their nationality, is included in the political and economic community of a definite State intending to recognize and protect them as their citizens; otherwise, no human being can discover his/her own place in the world. Agamben’s thesis goes even further than Arendt’s in detecting the perplexities inherent to the traditional foundation of the Rights of Man. By following up and radicalizing Arendt’s reflections, he discovers in the text of the Declaration of the Rights of Man a fundamental piece of modern biopolitics since these rights constitute the very inscription of naked life into the political-juridical order. According to Agamben, in the Declarations of the Rights of Man of 1789 natural bare life is both the foundational source and the carrier of the rights of man, since the man’s bare life – or, more precisely, the very fact of being born in a certain territory – is the element that effects the transition from the Ancient regime’s principle of divine sovereignty to modern sovereignty concentrated in the Nation-State: It is not possible to understand the development as well as the national and biopolitical ‘vocation’ of the National-State in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, if one forgets that in its own basis we find out not man as the free and conscious subject but, mostly, man’s bare life, the mere fact of being born, which, in the transition from the ancient subject to the citizen, was invested as such as the principle of sovereignty.

To conclude this text, I would like to emphasize that Arendt’s main reflections concerning totalitarianism still remain relevant nowadays, especially when directed towards the feebleness of actually existing democracies. The core of Arendt’s diagnosis of the present is that whenever politics has mostly to do with the maintenance and increase of the vital metabolism of affluent Nation-states, it will be indispensable to reduce the animal laborans to the even more degrading status of the homo sacer, of bare and unprotected life that can be delivered to oblivion and to death. Our actual understanding of politics as the administrative promotion of abundance and the happiness of the human being as an animal laborans has as its correlates economic and political exclusion, prejudices, violence and genocides against the naked life of the homo sacer. I also believe that Arendt can shed light on our current dilemmas, providing us theoretical elements for a critical diagnosis of the present as well as for the opening of new possibilities for collective action in the world. Arendt was a master of chiaroscuro political thinking in the sense that she was never blind to the contrasts between the open possibilities of radically renovating the political and the strict chains of a logic that binds violence and political exclusion under a biopolitical paradigm. If we still want to remain with Arendt, then we have to attentively think and consciously seek to participate in new spaces and new forms of life devoted to political association, action and discussion, wherever and whenever they seem to subvert the tediously multiplication of the same in its many different everyday manifestations. Arendt did not want to propose any political utopia but nor was she convinced that our political dilemmas had no other possible outcome, as if history had come to a tragic end. Neither a pessimist nor an optimist, she only wanted to understand the world in which she lived in and to stimulate us to continue thinking and acting in the present. At least, if a radically new political alternative can still come to be in our world, the responsibility for it will always be ours. Therefore, if we wish to remain faithful to the spirit of Arendt’s political thinking, then we should think and act politically without constraining our thinking and acting to any previously defined understanding of what politics ‘is’ or ‘should’ be. In other words, the political challenge of the present is to multiply the forms, possibilities and spaces in which we can perform our political actions. These can be strategic actions destined to enforce political agendas favored by political parties concerned with social justice. They can also be discrete, subversive actions favored by small groups at the margins of the bureaucratized party machines that promote political intervention free of teleological or strategic intents, since their goal is to sustain an intense and radical politicization of existence. Finally, there are also actions in which ethical openness towards otherness becomes fully political: small and rather inconspicuous actions of acknowledging, welcoming, and extending hospitality and solidarity towards others.