### 1NC

#### Resolved requires affirmation of the resolution and negation of the resolution by the negative

Parcher 1—Jeff Parcher, Former Debate Coach at Georgetown University [Feburary 2001, http://www.ndtceda.com/archives/200102/0790.html]

(1) Pardon me if I turn to a source besides Bill. American Heritage Dictionary: Resolve: 1. To make a firm decision about. 2. To decide or express by formal vote. 3. To separate something into constiutent parts See Syns at \*analyze\* (emphasis in orginal) 4. Find a solution to. See Syns at \*Solve\* (emphasis in original) 5. To dispel: resolve a doubt. - n 1. Frimness of purpose; resolution. 2. A determination or decision. (2) The very nature of the word "resolution" makes it a question. American Heritage: A course of action determined or decided on. A formal statemnt of a deciion, as by a legislature. (3) The resolution is obviously a question. Any other conclusion is utterly inconcievable. Why? Context. The debate community empowers a topic committee to write a topic for ALTERNATE side debating. The committee is not a random group of people coming together to "reserve" themselves about some issue. There is context - they are empowered by a community to do something. In their deliberations, the topic community attempts to craft a resolution which can be ANSWERED in either direction. They focus on issues like ground and fairness because they know the resolution will serve as the basis for debate which will be resolved by determining the policy desireablility of that resolution. That's not only what they do, but it's what we REQUIRE them to do. We don't just send the topic committee somewhere to adopt their own group resolution. It's not the end point of a resolution adopted by a body - it's the prelimanary wording of a resolution sent to others to be answered or decided upon. (4) Further context: the word resolved is used to emphasis the fact that it's policy debate. Resolved comes from the adoption of resolutions by legislative bodies. A resolution is either adopted or it is not. It's a question before a legislative body. Should this statement be adopted or not. (5) The very terms 'affirmative' and 'negative' support my view. One affirms a resolution. Affirmative and negative are the equivalents of 'yes' or 'no' - which, of course, are answers to a question.

#### USFG should is governmental action

Ericson, 03 (Jon M., Dean Emeritus of the College of Liberal Arts – California Polytechnic U., et al., The Debater’s Guide, Third Edition, p. 4)

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

#### Prefer our interpretation:

#### Limits – A limited point of stasis is necessary for effective limits which provide equitable ground to both sides – this does not exclude their content but does require them to be topical

O’Donnell 2004, Timothy M. O’Donnell, Director of Debate, University of Mary Washington, 2004, “And the Twain Shall Meet: Affirmative Framework Choice and the Future of Debate”, DOC, http://groups.wfu.edu/debate/MiscSites/DRGArticles/DRGArtiarticlesIndex.htm

Given that advocates on all sides have dug in their heels, it does not take much to imagine that if the current situation continues to persist, the debate “community” will eventually splinter along ideological lines with break out groups forming their own organizations designed to safeguard their own sacrosanct approaches to debate. It has happened before. Yet, while debate has witnessed such crises in the past, the present era of discontent seemingly threatens the very existence of the activity as both a coherent, competitive enterprise and a rewarding, educational co-curricular activity. The origins of the present crisis have many contributing causes, including the advent of mutual preference judging, the postmodern, performative, and activist turns in scholarly circles, the dawn of the information revolution and its attendant technologies, as well as a growing resource disparity between large and small debate programs. There appears to be no mutually agreeable solution. Simply put, there is little consensus about what ought to be the focus of debate, or even what constitutes good debate. Moreover, there appears to be no agreement about what question the judge ought to be answering at the end of the debate. In the present milieu, these questions and many more are literally up for grabs.

The product of this disagreement has been a veritable boon for the negative. We need to look no further than the caselist from the 2004 National Debate Tournament (NDT) to witness the wide variety of strategic tools that the negative now has in its arsenal. In one or more debates at this tournament, the negative team attempted to alter the ground for evaluating the debate by criticizing: the use of problem-solution thinking (or the lack thereof), the will to control present in the affirmative’s opening speech act, the reliance on and use of the state, the illusory belief in fiat, the affirmative’s relationship to the “other,” the embracing or eschewing of policymaking, the ethics of the affirmative, the rhetoric of the affirmative, the representations of the affirmative, the debate community as a whole, the debate community’s practices, the affirmative’s style of debate, the type of evidence the affirmative used (including an over or under reliance on experts), the affirmative’s failure to focus on the body, the revolutionary or anti-revolutionary nature of the affirmative, the piecemeal (or lack there of) nature of change advocated by the affirmative, the desires emanating from the affirmative debaters and/or their opening speech act, the identify formation instantiated by the affirmative, the metaphors inspired by the affirmative, and the very act of voting affirmative. And this is only a partial list.

To make the point another way, it is quite likely that an affirmative team on the 2003-2004 college topic who advocated that the United States should cede political control over reconstruction in Iraq to the United Nations – certainly one of the most pressing issues of the day – could have made it through whole tournaments, indeed large portions of the whole season, without ever discussing the merits of U.S. policy in Iraq after the opening affirmative speech. Such a situation seems problematic at best. That the negative’s strategic arsenal has grown so large that negative teams are tempted to eschew consideration of the important issues of the day (in the case of Iraq, an issue with geopolitical repercussions that will echo for the rest of our lives) for competitive reasons seems more than problematic. In fact, it is downright tragic.

What is so tragic about all of this is that a debater could go through an entire debate career with very little effort to go beyond meta-argument or arguments about argument (i.e. debate theory). The sad fact is that, more often than not, the outcome of any given debate today hinges less on the substantive issues introduced by the affirmative’s first speech, than it does on the resolution of these meta-arguments. These so-called “framework” debates about what the question of the debate ought to be, while somewhat interesting, have little practical application to the circumstances of our times and in my judgment, at least, are less intellectually rewarding than their counterparts. In fact, in a situation where the merits of the public policy issues staked out by the year’s resolution along with the critical issues that those policies raise are no longer the focus of the debate – because the negative can shift the question – why have a resolution at all? The disastrous implications of this trend in academic debate are appearing at the very moment that the academy is being urged to take seriously the goal of educating citizens.

In a world where proponents for any one of the varied questions are equally strident in staking out their views about what the debate ought to be about, agreement seems to be impossible. To be sure, there is value in each of these views. Public policy is important. The political consequences of policies are important. The language used in constructing policies is important. The presentational aspects of policy are important. The epistemological, ontological, and ethical underpinnings of policies are important. And so on. What are we to do then in situations where advocates on all sides make more or less equally compelling claims? As an educator, I am interested in having the students that I work with ask and answer all of these questions at one time or another. As a coach, I am interested in having them have a predictable set of arguments to prepare for. Thus, the question for me is, how can we have a game in which they have such an opportunity? The argument of this essay seeks to chart a partial answer to this question. It involves staking out a compromise position that recognizes that there is value in a wide variety of perspectives and that all deserve an equal opportunity to be represented in competitive debates.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a framework consists of “a set of standards, beliefs, or assumptions” that govern behavior. When we speak of frameworks in competitive academic debate we are talking about the set of standards, beliefs, or assumptions that generate the question that the judge ought to answer at the end of the debate. Given that there is no agreement among participants about which standards, beliefs, or assumptions ought to be universally accepted, it seems that we will never be able to arrive at an agreeable normative assumption about what the question ought to be. So the issue before us is how we preserve community while agreeing to disagree about the question in a way that recognizes that there is richness in answering many different questions that would not otherwise exist if we all adhered to a “rule” which stated that there is one and only one question to be answered. More importantly, how do we stop talking past each other so that we can have a genuine conversation about the substantive merits of any one question?

The answer, I believe, resides deep in the rhetorical tradition in the often overlooked notion of stasis. Although the concept can be traced to Aristotle’s Rhetoric, it was later expanded by Hermagoras whose thinking has come down to us through the Roman rhetoricians Cicero and Quintillian. Stasis is a Greek word meaning to “stand still.” It has generally been considered by argumentation scholars to be the point of clash where two opposing sides meet in argument. Stasis recognizes the fact that interlocutors engaged in a conversation, discussion, or debate need to have some level of expectation regarding what the focus of their encounter ought to be. To reach stasis, participants need to arrive at a decision about what the issue is prior to the start of their conversation. Put another way, they need to mutually acknowledge the point about which they disagree.

What happens when participants fail to reach agreement about what it is that they are arguing about? They talk past each other with little or no awareness of what the other is saying. The oft used cliché of two ships passing in the night, where both are in the dark about what the other is doing and neither stands still long enough to call out to the other, is the image most commonly used to describe what happens when participants in an argument fail to achieve stasis. In such situations, genuine engagement is not possible because participants have not reached agreement about what is in dispute. For example, when one advocate says that the United States should increase international involvement in the reconstruction of Iraq and their opponent replies that the United States should abandon its policy of preemptive military engagement, they are talking past each other. When such a situation prevails, it is hard to see how a productive conversation can ensue.

I do not mean to suggest that dialogic engagement always unfolds along an ideal plain where participants always can or even ought to agree on a mutual starting point. The reality is that many do not. In fact, refusing to acknowledge an adversary’s starting point is itself a powerful strategic move. However, it must be acknowledged that when such situations arise, and participants cannot agree on the issue about which they disagree, the chances that their exchange will result in a productive outcome are diminished significantly. In an enterprise like academic debate, where the goals of the encounter are cast along both educational and competitive lines, the need to reach accommodation on the starting point is urgent. This is especially the case when time is limited and there is no possibility of extending the clock. The sooner such agreement is achieved, the better. Stasis helps us understand that we stand to lose a great deal when we refuse a genuine starting point.

How can stasis inform the issue before us regarding contemporary debate practice? Whether we recognize it or not, it already has. The idea that the affirmative begins the debate by using the resolution as a starting point for their opening speech act is nearly universally accepted by all members of the debate community. This is born out by the fact that affirmative teams that have ignored the resolution altogether have not gotten very far. Even teams that use the resolution as a metaphorical condensation or that “affirm the resolution as such” use the resolution as their starting point. The significance of this insight warrants repeating. Despite the numerous differences about what types of arguments ought to have a place in competitive debate we all seemingly agree on at least one point – the vital necessity of a starting point. This common starting point, or topic, is what separates debate from other forms of communication and gives the exchange a directed focus.

#### Limited stasis necessary for education and dialogue – absent a prepared in depth focus debate becomes meaningless

Bassham 07 (Gregory, Professor, Chair of the Philosophy Department, and Director of the Center for Ethics and Public Life – King’s College, et al., Critical Thinking: A Student’s Introduction, p. 3-10)

Critical thinking is what a college education is all about. In many high schools, the emphasis tends to be on “lower-order thinking.” Students are simply expected to passively absorb information and then repeat it back on tests. In col-lege, by contrast, the emphasis is on fostering “higher-order thinking”: the active, intelligent evaluation of ideas and information. This doesn’t mean that factual information and rote learning are ignored in college. But it is not the main goal of a college education to teach students¶ what to think.¶ The main goal is to teach students¶ how to think¶ —that is, how to become independent, self-directed think-ers and learners.¶ W¶ HAT¶ I¶ S¶ C¶ RITICAL¶ T¶ HINKING¶ ?¶ Often when we use the word¶ critical ¶ we mean “negative and fault-ﬁnding. This is the sense we have in mind, for example, when we complain about apparent or a friend who we think is unfairly critical of what we do or say. But¶ critical ¶ also means “involving or exercising skilled judgment or observation.”In this sense critical thinking means thinking clearly and intelligently. More precisely,¶ critical thinking¶ is the general term given to a wide range of cogni-tive skills and intellectual dispositions needed to effectively identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments and truth claims; to discover and overcome personal preconceptions and biases; to formulate and present convincing reasons in sup-port of conclusions; and to make reasonable, intelligent decisions about what to believe and what to do. Put somewhat differently, critical thinking is disciplined thinking governed by clear intellectual standards. Among the most important of these intellectual¶ standards are¶ clarity, precision, accuracy, relevance, consistency, logical cor-rectness, completeness,¶ and¶ fairness.¶ ¶ 1 The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically.¶ —Martin Luther King Jr.¶ The purpose which runs through all other educational purposes—the common thread of education—is the development of the ability to think.¶ —Educational Policies Commission¶ Let’s begin our introduction to critical thinking by looking brieﬂy at each of these important critical thinking standards.¶ Before we can effectively evaluate a person’s argument or claim, we need to understand clearly what he or she is saying. Unfortunately, that can be difﬁcult because people often fail to express themselves clearly. Sometimes this lack of clarity is due to laziness, carelessness, or a lack of skill. At other times it results from a misguided effort to appear clever, learned, or profound. Consider the following passage from philosopher Martin Heidegger’s inﬂuential but notoriously obscure book¶ Being and Time:¶ ¶ Temporality makes possible the unity of existence, facticity, and falling, and in this way constitutes primordially the totality of the structure of care. The items of care have not been pieced together cumulatively any more than temporality itself has been put together “in the course of time” [“mit der Zeit”] out of the future, the having been, and the Present. Temporality “is” not an¶ entity¶ at all. It is not, but it¶ temporalizes¶ itself. . . . Temporality temporalizes, and indeed it tempo-ralizes possible ways of itself. These make possible the multiplicity of Dasein’s modes of Being, and especially the basic possibility of authentic or inauthentic existence.¶ 2¶ ¶ That may be profound, or it may be nonsense, or it may be both. Whatever exactly it is, it is quite needlessly obscure. As William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White remark in their classic¶ The Elements of Style,¶ “[M]uddiness is not merely a disturber of prose, it is also a destroyer of life, of hope: death on the highway caused by a badly worded road sign, heartbreak among lovers caused by a misplaced phrase in a well-intentioned letter. . . .”¶ 3¶ Only by paying careful attention to language can we avoid such needless miscommunications and disappointments. Critical thinkers not only strive for clarity of language but also seek max-imum clarity of thought. As self-help books constantly remind us, to achieve our personal goals in life we need a clear conception of our goals and priori-ties, a realistic grasp of our abilities, and a clear understanding of the problems and opportunities we face. Such self-understanding can be achieved only if we value and pursue clarity of thought.¶ Precision¶ Detective stories contain some of the most interesting examples of critical thinking in ﬁction. The most famous ﬁctional sleuth is, of course, Sherlock Holmes, the immortal creation of British writer Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. In Doyle’s stories Holmes is often able to solve complex mysteries when the bungling detectives from Scotland Yard haven’t so much as a clue. What is the secret of his success? An extraordinary commitment to¶ precision.¶ First, by care-ful and highly trained observation, Holmes is able to discover clues that other shave overlooked. Then, by a process of precise logical inference, he is able to reason from those clues to discover the solution to the mystery. Everyone recognizes the importance of precision in specialized ﬁelds such as medicine, mathematics, architecture, and engineering. Critical thinkers also understand the importance of precise thinking in daily life. They under-stand that to cut through the confusions and uncertainties that surround many everyday problems and issues, it is often necessary to insist on precise answers to precise questions: What exactly is the problem we’re facing? What exactly are the alternatives? What exactly are the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative? Only when we habitually seek such precision are we truly critical thinkers.¶ Accuracy¶ There is a well-known saying about computers: “Garbage in, garbage out. ”Simply put, this means that if you put bad information into a computer, bad information is exactly what you will get out of it. Much the same is true of human thinking. No matter how brilliant you may be, you’re almost guaran-teed to make bad decisions if your decisions are based on false information. A good example of this is provided by America’s long and costly involve-ment in Vietnam. The policymakers who embroiled us in that conﬂict were not stupid. On the contrary, they were, in journalist David Halberstam’s oft-quoted phrase, “the best and the brightest” of their generation. Of course, the reasons for their repeated failures of judgment are complex and controversial; but much of the blame, historians agree, must be placed on false and inad-equate information: ignorance of Vietnamese history and culture, an exaggerated estimate of the strategic importance of Vietnam and Southeast Asia, false assumptions about the degree of popular support in South Vietnam, unduly optimistic assessments of the “progress” of the war, and so on. Had American policymakers taken greater pains to learn the truth about such matters, it is likely they would not have made the poor decisions they did. Critical thinkers don’t merely value the truth; they have a¶ passion¶ for accurate, timely information. As consumers, citizens, workers, and parents, they strive to make decisions that are as informed as possible. In the spirit of Socrates’ famous statement that the unexamined life is not worth living, they never stop learning, growing, and inquiring. ¶ Relevance Anyone who has ever sat through a boring school assembly or watched a mud-slinging political debate can appreciate the importance of staying focused on relevant ideas and information. A favorite debaters’ trick is to try to distract an audience’s attention by raising an irrelevant issue. Even Abraham Lincoln wasn’t above such tricks, as the following story told by his law partner illustrates: In a case where Judge [Stephen T.] Logan—always earnest and grave—opposed him, Lincoln created no little merriment by his reference to Logan’s style of dress. He carried the surprise in store for the latter, till he reached his turn before the jury. Addressing them, he said: “Gentlemen, you must be careful and not permit yourselves to be overcome by the eloquence of counsel for the defense. Judge Logan, I know, is an effective lawyer. I have met him too often to doubt that; but shrewd and careful though he be, still he is sometimes wrong. Since this trial has begun I have discovered that, with all his caution and fastidiousness, he hasn’t knowledge enough to put his shirt on right.” Logan turned red as crimson, but sure enough, Lincoln was correct, for the former had donned a new shirt, and by mistake had drawn it over his head with the pleated bosom behind. The general laugh which followed destroyed the effect of Logan’s eloquence over the jury—the very point at which Lincoln aimed. 4 Lincoln’s ploy was entertaining and succeeded in distracting the attention of the jury. Had the jurors been thinking critically, however, they would have realized that carelessness about one’s attire has no logical relevance to the strength of one’s arguments. Consistency It is easy to see why consistency is essential to critical thinking. Logic tells us that if a person holds inconsistent beliefs, at least one of those beliefs must be false. Critical thinkers prize truth and so are constantly on the lookout for inconsistencies, both in their own thinking and in the arguments and assertions of others. There are two kinds of inconsistency that we should avoid. One is logical inconsistency, which involves saying or believing inconsistent things (i.e., things that cannot both or all be true) about a particular matter. The other is practical inconsistency, which involves saying one thing and doing another. Sometimes people are fully aware that their words conﬂict with their deeds. The politician who cynically breaks her campaign promises once she takes ofﬁce, the TV evangelist caught in an extramarital affair, the drug counselor arrested for peddling drugs—such people are hypocrites pure and simple. From a critical thinking point of view, such examples are not especially interesting. As a rule, they involve failures of character to a greater degree than they do failures of critical reasoning. More interesting from a critical thinking standpoint are cases in which people are not fully aware that their words conﬂ ict with their deeds. Such cases highlight an important lesson of critical thinking: that human beings often display a remarkable capacity for self-deception. Author Harold Kushner cites an all-too-typical example: Ask the average person which is more important to him, making money or being devoted to his family, and virtually everyone will answer family without hesitation. But watch how the average person actually lives out his life. See where he really invests his time and energy, and he will give away the fact that he really does not live by what he says he believes. He has let himself be persuaded that if he leaves for work earlier in the morning and comes home more tired at night, he is proving how devoted he is to his family by expending himself to provide them with all the things they have seen advertised. 6 Critical thinking helps us become aware of such unconscious practical inconsistencies, allowing us to deal with them on a conscious and rational basis. It is also common, of course, for people to unknowingly hold inconsistent beliefs about a particular subject. In fact, as Socrates pointed out long ago, such unconscious logical inconsistency is far more common than most people suspect. As we shall see, for example, many today claim that “morality is relative,” while holding a variety of views that imply that it is not relative. Critical thinking helps us recognize such logical inconsistencies or, still better, avoid them altogether. Logical Correctness To think logically is to reason correctly—that is, to draw well-founded conclusions from the beliefs we hold. To think critically we need accurate and well supported beliefs. But, just as important, we need to be able to reason from those beliefs to conclusions that logically follow from them. Unfortunately, illogical thinking is all too common in human affairs. Bertrand Russell, in his classic essay “An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish,” provides an amusing example: I am sometimes shocked by the blasphemies of those who think themselves pious—for instance, the nuns who never take a bath without wearing a bathrobe all the time. When asked why, since no man can see them, they reply: “Oh, but you forget the good God.” Apparently they conceive of the deity as a Peeping Tom, whose omnipotence enables Him to see through bathroom walls, but who is foiled by bathrobes. This view strikes me as curious. 8 As Russell observes, from the proposition 1. God sees everything. the pious nuns correctly drew the conclusion 2. God sees through bathroom walls. However, they failed to draw the equally obvious conclusion that 3. God sees through bathrobes. Such illogic is, indeed, curious—but not, alas, uncommon. Completeness In most contexts, we rightly prefer deep and complete thinking to shallow and superﬁcial thinking. Thus, we justly condemn slipshod criminal investigations, hasty jury deliberations, superﬁcial news stories, sketchy driving directions, and snap medical diagnoses. Of course, there are times when it is impossible or inappropriate to discuss an issue in depth; no one would expect, for example, a thorough and wide-ranging discussion of the ethics of human genetic research in a short newspaper editorial. Generally speaking, however, thinking is better when it is deep rather than shallow, thorough rather than superﬁcial. Fairness Finally, critical thinking demands that our thinking be fair—that is, open minded, impartial, and free of distorting biases and preconceptions. That can be very difﬁ cult to achieve. Even the most superﬁ cial acquaintance with history and the social sciences tells us that people are often strongly disposed to resist unfamiliar ideas, to prejudge issues, to stereotype outsiders, and to identify truth with their own self-interest or the interests of their nation or group. It is probably unrealistic to suppose that our thinking could ever be completely free of biases and preconceptions; to some extent we all perceive reality in ways that are powerfully shaped by our individual life experiences and cultural backgrounds. But as difﬁ cult as it may be to achieve, basic fair-mindedness is clearly an essential attribute of a critical thinker. THE BENEFITS OF CRITICAL THINKING Having looked at some of the key intellectual standards governing critical reasoning (clarity, precision, and so forth), let’s now consider more speciﬁcally what you can expect to gain from a course in critical thinking. Critical Thinking in the Classroom When they ﬁrst enter college, students are sometimes surprised to discover that their professors seem less interested in how they got their beliefs than they are in whether those beliefs can withstand critical scrutiny. In college the focus is on higher-order thinking: the active, intelligent evaluation of ideas and information. For this reason critical thinking plays a vital role throughout the college curriculum. In a critical thinking course, students learn a variety of skills that can greatly improve their classroom performance. These skills include • understanding the arguments and beliefs of others • critically evaluating those arguments and beliefs • developing and defending one’s own well-supported arguments and beliefs Let’s look brieﬂy at each of these three skills. To succeed in college, you must, of course, be able to understand the material you are studying. A course in critical thinking cannot make inherently difﬁcult material easy to grasp, but critical thinking does teach a variety of skills that, with practice, can signiﬁcantly improve your ability to understand the arguments and issues discussed in your college textbooks and classes. In addition, critical thinking can help you critically evaluate what you are learning in class. During your college career, your instructors will often ask you to discuss “critically” some argument or idea introduced in class. Critical thinking teaches a wide range of strategies and skills that can greatly improve your ability to engage in such critical evaluations. You will also be asked to develop your own arguments on particular topics or issues. In an American Government class, for example, you might be asked to write a paper addressing the issue of whether Congress has gone too far in restricting presidential war powers. To write such a paper successfully, you must do more than simply ﬁnd and assess relevant arguments and information. You must also be able to marshal arguments and evidence in a way that convincingly supports your view. The systematic training provided in a course in critical thinking can greatly improve that skill as well. Critical Thinking in the Workplace Surveys indicate that fewer than half of today’s college graduates can expect to be working in their major ﬁ eld of study within ﬁ ve years of graduation. This statistic speaks volumes about changing workplace realities. Increasingly, employers are looking not for employees with highly specialized career skills, since such skills can usually best be learned on the job, but for employees with good thinking and communication skills—quick learners who can solve problems, think creatively, gather and analyze information, draw appropriate conclusions from data, and communicate their ideas clearly and effectively. These are exactly the kinds of generalized thinking and problem-solving skills that a course in critical thinking aims to improve. Critical Thinking in Life Critical thinking is valuable in many contexts outside the classroom and the workplace. Let’s look brieﬂ y at three ways in which this is the case. First, critical thinking can help us avoid making foolish personal decisions. All of us have at one time or another made decisions about consumer purchases, relationships, personal behavior, and the like that we later realized were seriously misguided or irrational. Critical thinking can help us avoid such mistakes by teaching us to think about important life decisions more carefully, clearly, and logically. Second, critical thinking plays a vital role in promoting democratic processes. Despite what cynics might say, in a democracy it really is “we the people” who have the ultimate say over who governs and for what purposes. It is vital, therefore, that citizens’ decisions be as informed and as deliberate as possible. Many of today’s most serious societal problems—environmental destruction, nuclear proliferation, religious and ethnic intolerance, decaying inner cities, failing schools, spiraling health-care costs, to mention just a few—have largely been caused by poor critical thinking. And as Albert Einstein once remarked, “The signiﬁcant problems we face cannot be solved at the level of thinking we were at when we created them.” Third, critical thinking is worth studying for its own sake, simply for the personal enrichment it can bring to our lives. One of the most basic truths of the human condition is that most people, most of the time, believe what they are told. Throughout most of recorded history, people accepted without ques-tion that the earth was the center of the universe, that demons cause disease, that slavery was just, and that women are inferior to men. Critical thinking, honestly and courageously pursued, can help free us from the unexamined assumptions and biases of our upbringing and our society. It lets us step back from the prevailing customs and ideologies of our culture and ask, “This is what I’ve been taught, but is it true?”

#### Stasis key to fairness – otherwise debates have no means to engage – fairness is a necessary condition to make debate fun and enjoyable absent ground and effective preparation incentive to research positions diminishes and active engagement is vastly decreased – fair debate is an activity that ought to be encouraged because it creates equal footing to make debate possible

#### Government engagement – a point of controversy around the government allows for transformative educational value – we don’t have to role play but we should focus our demands towards institutions. The fact that one may not like the government is not a reason to disengage – its all the more reason to engage only by debating about the policy implications about the resolution is debate meaningful.

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

### 1NC

#### The affirmative is at the gates of debate. The gates are wide open but they are incapable of entering. So insistent upon finding acceptance in debate’s symbolic order, they miss the forest for the trees:

The affirmative will provide you an option for the ballot that *feels* *good*. They will say that the ballot means we’ve changed debate, that we’re closer to stopping masculine dominance that your education is a BATTLE.

You will feel like you’ve done something. The creation of this feeling and its *supposed* resolution IS our link. Every problem they have presented is beyond the scope of the ballot or our agency in debate. We can’t resolve institutional racism here, or differential access to the state, or really much of anything. Their vision of what debate can accomplish is unbelievably narcissistic and naively optimistic, as is the idea that performance from within the institutional limits of competitive debate can somehow break those limits.

We will concede, as of the 1NC, that voting affirmative will make you FEEL BETTER than voting negative will. Your desire to do so, and your belief that the ballot really changes things by avoiding complicity in violent systems, is what we criticize—it is a false sense of accomplishment that accomplishes nothing but more talk.

Robyn WIEGMAN Women’s Studies & Literature @ Duke ’12 *Object Lessons* p. 81-85

I V. And When Gender Fails ... If the language of the political I have been using throughout this chapter turns repeatedly to the generic figures of justice and social transformation, this should not be read as evidence that I lack opinions about what would constitute their contemporary realization. Nor is it a reflection of the paucity of agendas that reside within the identity field of study that has chiefly organized this chapter's concerns. My task has been to explore the disciplinary force and affective power of the commitment to political commitment by paying attention to the political as a generic discourse and to the hegemony of the belief that underlies it.37 The terms I have used to do this political desire, field imaginary, field formation, progress narrative, and critical realism-have been aimed at deciphering the conundrums that ensue when the political aspiration to enact justice is a field's self-authorizing disciplinary identity and definitive disciplinary rule. Readers who contend that this itinerary abandons real politics will be missing my point even as they inadvertently confirm it, as one of the primary effects of the disciplinarity that I am tracking here is the demand it exacts on practitioners to deliver just such an accusation: that in the absence of the performance of a decisive political claim there can be no political commitments at all-or only bad ones.38 It is the interpellative force of this accusation and the shame that it both covets and induces that is central to the field's ongoing subject construction. Over time, the threat of the accusation can be so fully ingested that the critic responds to it without it ever being spoken, providing her own political rationales and agenda-setting conclusions as the means to cultivate legitimacy and authority as a practitioner in the field. Such authority, let's be clear, is as intoxicating as it is rewarding, and not just on the grounds of critical capital alone. The ingestion of the disciplinary structure has enormous psychic benefits precisely because of the promise it both makes and helps us hold dear, which is that our relationship to objects and analytics of study, along with critical practice as a whole, can be made commensurate with the political commitments we take them to bear. Hence the field-securing necessity of the very pedagogical lesson this chapter has been tracking, where categories, not critical agencies, are said to fail, and new objects and analytics become the valued terrain for sustaining the progress that underwrites the field imaginary's political dispensation to begin with. The problem at the heart of the progress narrative of gender is not, then, about gender per se nor the belief that gender is now used to defend: that the justice-achieving future we want lives in critical practice, if only its generative relations and epistemological priorities can be properly conceived. Instead, my point has been that the progress narrative is a symptom of the disciplinary apparatus that requires it, which is calculated to overcome the anxiety that not only incites but endlessly nags it-the anxiety raised by the suspicion that what needs to be changed may be beyond our control. To acknowledge this anxiety is not to say that critical practice has no political implications, or that nothing can be done in the face of the emergency of the present, or that the desire for agency of any kind is fantastical in the most negative sense. But it is to suggest that the disciplinary structure is as compensatory as it is ideational, in part because the temporality of historical transformation it must inhabit is both unwieldy and unpredictable. Think here of the differences in historical weight, affect, and transformative appeal between community activisms; revolutionary movements; state-based reform; and organized political participation and then place each of these alongside the threats of recuperation; the evisceration of democratic political forms; and the reduction of citizen sovereignty. These and other forms of transformation and interruption stand in stark contrast to the profound belief that disciplinarity engenders: that knowing will lead to knowing what to do. Linda Zerilli, among others, has challenged the idea that the domain of knowledge can be so prioritized, demonstrating how some of the most profound social normativities are inhabited not where knowledge practices explicate the nuances of their operations but in the reflexes, habits, and the ongoing discernments that feminist critics often quite succinctly understand but cannot undo.39 Her example concerns the gap between our own rather pointed critical knowing of the socially constructed nature of sex and gender and the feminist critic's inhabitations of everyday life in which the categories of men and women are experienced in all their fictional realness. But there are a host of other examples to bear out the point that while ignorance can be a form of privilege, its opposite-critical thinking and the knowing it promises to lead us to-may not finally be able to settle the relation between political aspiration and the agency it hopes to cultivate and command. The void at the heart of the language of "the political," "social change," and "justice" is an effect not of indecision or imprecision, then, but of the complex temporality that structures the field imaginary: where on the one hand the disciplinary commitment to the political is borne in the historical configuration of the present while being bound, on the other hand, to the scene of the future in which the projection of the materialization of justice is forced to live. In this temporal glitch between the inadequate but overwhelming present and the necessity of a future that will evince change, the field imaginary performs and projects, as well as deflects, the anxiety of agency that underwrites it. The familiar debate glossed as theory versus practice is one inflection of the anxiety being highlighted here. While often called a divide, the theory/practice formulation is a dependent relation, more circular than divisional as each "side" repeatedly stresses the incapacities of agency invested in the other. So, for instance, practice is the realist check on theory and its passionate forays into modes of thinking and analysis that love to hone what is more abstract than concrete, more ideational than real, more symptomatic than apparent while theory presses against the insistence for instrumentalized knowledge and destinations of critical thought that can materialize, with expediency, the political desire that motivates it- all this even as the language of theory comes steeped in its own idiom of instrumental function whenever it wagers itself as an analogue for politics as a whole. To take up one side or other of the divide is to reiterate the hopeful belief that agency lives somewhere close by and that with just the right instrument-call it a strategy, an object of study, or an analytic- we can intentionally grasp it. In parsing the theory/practice divide in this way, I am trying to foreground the power of the disciplinary rule that displaces the stakes of the debate by eliding the anxiety of agency that underlies it with the agential projections of critical practice-and further to make clear that the conundrums of disciplinarity and the ideational animations of critique cannot be settled by a rhetorical insistence on critical itineraries alone, whether linked to theory or practice or wrapped in the language of community, public knowledge, policy, or action-oriented research**.** This is because the theory/practice divide is a symptom of the anxiety of agency it evokes and cites, not an acknowledgment of, let alone an engagement with, it. While the repetition of the debate can certainly buttress the hope that what matters is which itinerary of critical practice we choose, it also relieves the field from arriving into the dilemma of its and our own limited agency**,** a limit that is not new but recurrent and part of both the complexity and difficulty of demanding to know how to use knowledge to exact justice from the contemporary world. This is not to say that the compensatory resolutions of the disciplinary pedagogies we learn are false or even that they are insufficient, but rather that there is more at stake than we have dared to think about the disciplinarity through which the object investments of critical practice are now performed. In the opening foray that this chapter delivers into Object Lessons as a whole, the problem that I am naming is simply this: that being made by the world we seek to change is always at odds with the disciplinary demand to make critical practice the means and the measure of our capacity to do so.

#### Commodification link—Trading narrative for the ballot commodifies one’s identity and has limited impact on the culture that one attempt’s to reform—when narrative “wins,” it subverts its own most radical intentions by becoming an exemplar of the very culture under indictment.

Coughlin 95—Anne M. Coughlin, Associate Professor of Law, Vanderbilt Law School [August, 1995, “Regulating the Self: Autobiographical Performances in Outsider Scholarship,” *Virginia Law Review*, 81 Va. L. Rev. 1229, Lexis]

Although Williams is quick to detect insensitivity and bigotry in remarks made by strangers, colleagues, and friends, her taste for irony fails her when it comes to reflection on her relationship with her readers and the material benefits that her autobiographical performances have earned for her. n196 Perhaps Williams should be more inclined to thank, rather than reprimand, her editors for behaving as readers of autobiography invariably do. When we examine this literary faux pas - the incongruity between Williams's condemnation of her editors and the professional benefits their publication secured her - we detect yet another contradiction between the outsiders' use of autobiography and their desire to transform culture radically. Lejeune's characterization of autobiography as a “contract” reminds us that autobiography is a lucrative commodity. In our culture, members of the reading public avidly consume personal stories, n197 which surely explains why first-rate law journals and academic presses have been eager to market outsider narratives. No matter how unruly the self that it records, an autobiographical performance transforms that self into a form of “property in a moneyed economy” n198 and into a valuable intel [\*1283] lectual asset in an academy that requires its members to publish. n199 Accordingly, we must be skeptical of the assertion that the outsiders' splendid publication record is itself sufficient evidence of the success of their endeavor. n200

Certainly, publication of a best seller may transform its author's life, with the resulting commercial success and academic renown. n201 As one critic of autobiography puts it, “failures do not get published.” n202 While writing a successful autobiography may be momentous for the individual author, this success has a limited impact on culture. Indeed, the transformation of outsider authors into “success stories” subverts outsiders' radical intentions by constituting them as exemplary participants within contemporary culture, willing to market even themselves to literary and academic consumers. n203 What good does this transformation do for outsiders who are less fortunate and less articulate than middle-class law professors? n204 Although they style themselves cultural critics, the [\*1284] storytellers generally do not reflect on the meaning of their own commercial success, nor ponder its entanglement with the cultural values they claim to resist. Rather, for the most part, they seem content simply to take advantage of the peculiarly American license, identified by Professor Sacvan Bercovitch, “to have your dissent and make it too.” n205

#### We don’t offer an alternative, we offer a negation. Debate is the *product* of the liberal state and its predominantly white, western universities. Their stand against complicity from within problematic institutions can’t possibly accomplish its end. Instead, it cultivates a “self-congratulatory, self-absorbed narcicism that is nothing if not *thrilling*.”

#### Vote neg to reject the thrill ride. Reject the idea that the ballot can EVER be free of complicity systems of power. Aknowledge the limits of the activity, and the fact that we are already complicit in unethical systems of power by our very presence and participation here.

#### Stop feeling good. Maybe then, we can start actually acting.

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Read together, the first two chapters offer a meditation on the work of identification as central to identity's academic knowledge production. In the opening chapter on the progress of gender, identification is the disciplinary force that weds field domain and object of study into representational coherence, with justice being the effect of methods and interpretative practices that conform to the field imaginary's primary disciplinary demand. This is a convergentist project, in which the political commitment that generates the field imaginary is demonstrated by pursuing coherence, synchronicity, inclusion, and equivalence between the objects, analytics, and methods it institutionally arrays. In the second chapter, identification works not through an affective or rhetorical convergence of social movement with academic knowledge production but on the grounds of attachments that live on this side of institutionalization where posthumanist critiques of representation and agency have generative authority in the anti-integrationist field imaginary of queer theory. This project is aimed at privileging asynchronicity, nonequivalence, incommensurability, and irreducible difference in order to wed critical practice to the political aspirations that attend it. In each of these cases, which speak to the disjunctive temporalities at work within identity knowledge domains, the field imaginary is staked to identificatory grounds, as good and bad objects abound to navigate the relationship between critical practice and social justice. While Ian resists identifying with feminism's convergentist agenda, his queer theoretic invests nonetheless in the field imaginary's golden rule: that objects and analytics of study can be made to deliver everything we want from them. But what about the function of disidentification in generating identification's allure? After all, gender's critical promise is secured by mobilizing disidentifications with women just as the demand to take a break from feminism serves as precondition for igniting the queer theoretic's political ambition . The third and fourth chapters of Object Lessons plumb this aspect of identity's object relations by considering the structure and affect of refusing identification with the figure that founds the field, as in Whiteness Studies and American Studies. In both cases, the field domain is oversaturated by the geopolitical power of its primary object of study, requiring various kinds of critical strategies to answer the call for justice. In "The Political Conscious (Whiteness Studies and the Paradox of Particularity)," I explore the optimistic claim that making whiteness an object of study undermines the disembodied universalism on which white supremacy in Western modernity depends. Through various readings of white particularity in critical and popular discourses alike, the chapter argues against the assumption that white supremacy operates through universalism alone in order to make sense of the elasticity of white power as a transforming historical form. One of my main points here is that white disaffiliation from white supremacy in its segregationist formation is the hegemonic configuration of white supremacy in the post-Civil Rights multiculturalist era-a point that Whiteness Studies must subordinate in order to establish disidentification as the strategic mechanism of white antiracism. Such disidentification banks enormously on the status of white self-consciousness and hence on consciousness itself as an anti racist political instrument. But the idealism that Whiteness Studies bestows on knowing and on a fully conscious subject reiterates the constitution of the humanist subject whose white particularity is submerged by the universalizing dictates of white privilege that travel under the guise of rational man. The "paradox" in the chapter's tide has to do, then, with the problem of making consciousness the centerpiece of a project aimed at undoing the very subject whose privileged consciousness is the universalized condition of whiteness under Western epistemological rule. The massive hope invested in a white subject who can produce the right kind of agency to bring down his own political overordination is surely inspiring, but it hardly predicts a future in which white-on-white preoccupations are deferred. As many readers know, Whiteness Studies faltered quite quickly on the contradictory entanglements of its own political aspirations, as seeking to dismantle the power that an object of study holds in the world by refusing identification with it is no easy feat, especially when a field bears the name of the entity it seeks to oppose and the power the object holds clearly exceeds one's critical identification with it. Add to this the sheer fact that dismantling the iconic status of a critical object is a far cry from dismantling the geopolitical power the object stands for, and one can see how genuinely vexed is the deconstructivist move to attend with rigor to the master term. It might even be harder than trying to collate power for an object of study that is routinely subordinated in the regimes of everyday life since the very act of paying attention to it confers value. In chapter 4, "Refusing Identification (Americanist Pursuits of Global Noncomplicity)," I consider these issues in the context of American Studies where the current critical demand to internationalize the field is bent toward securing a perspective uncontaminated not only by the global authority the object wields but by the critical priorities that dominate its practice in the United States. Djelal Kadir calls these practices "American American Studies," which I contextualize less disparagingly as the New American Studies, whose investments in disentangling critical practice from imperial complicities have already been traced through my explication of the concept of a field imaginary above. By exploring how internationalization tropes the discourse of the "outside" that is central to New American Studies, my chapter argues that internationalist proclamations participate in the same field imaginary that their identificatory refusals otherwise condemn. This argument is not made in order to relish the grand ah-ha, as if learning how to expose someone else's implication in what they protest is an inoculation against revealing my own. I'm more interested in the critical force of the charge and the assurance it routinely delivers that critics are not only in control of their object attachments but that what we say about them is the surest truth of what they mean. The point here is that objects of study are bound to multiple relationships, such that the conscious attempt to refuse an identification is in no way a guarantee that one can, let alone that one has done so. In the fifth chapter, "Critical Kinship (Universal Aspirations and Intersectional Judgements)," I move the conversation about the ideal of noncomplicity and the critic's avowedly conscious intentions to the terrain of intersectional investments in order to consider one of the major lessons the project of this book has taught me: that objects can resist what we try to make of them. The chapter focuses initially on a fascinating case involving a fertility clinic mistake and the two couples-one black, one white- who seek legal custody of the same child. The juridical setting of the story is germane to the itinerary of the chapter, as it is the link between this case and the centrality of "the case study" in intersectional theory that allows me to plot the juridical imaginary that intersectionality relies upon and the consequences of this for feminist commitments to the study of race and gender. Crenshaw's inaugural work on intersectionality was chiefly concerned with employment discrimination and violence against black women, whose "intersectional identity as both women and of color" engendered their dual marginalization "within both" feminist and antiracist discourses. 29 In recent years, intersectionality has been given a life of its own, becoming an imperative to attend evenly and adequately to identity's composite whole: race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, nation, religion, and increasingly age and ability. Such an insistence builds on Crenshaw's own concern for political and legal amelioration and seeks to forge not only analytic bridges but convergences between the political projects engaged by identity politics and the academic domains they name. The case that I bring to the conversation features a white woman who gives birth to a black child whose embryo was not her own. While feminist scholarship has routinely sided with the birth mother in disputes arising from reproductive technologies, often by claiming it as an antiracist position, my discussion situates the case in the historical context of white racial theft of black reproduction, where it is hardly an easy decision to privilege gestational labor-but just as difficult, I contend, not to do so when one considers the way that prioritizing genetics risks reinscribing essentialist understandings of both race and kinship. By reflecting on the way race and gender are incoherently arrayed in the case, such that adjudicating the dispute renders the analysis of its complexity woefully incomplete, the chapter approaches intersectional analysis more as a political aspiration than a methodological resolution to the multiplicities of identity that incite it. In doing so, I track the incommensurabilities that accompany its travels from, first, the specific province oflaw and, second, the particularity of black women's occlusion in U.S. discourses on race and gender.30 "Critical Kinship" thus mediates on the conundrum that the fertility clinic's mistake raises for intersectional inquiries, adding a third category to the important work done by Eve Sedgwick on paranoid and reparative readings: paradigmaticY For it is in the context of its own attachment to paradigmatic reading that intersectional analysis stages its commitment to justice-as if the imbrications of race and gender actually conform to juridical logic, such that knowing which side to take in one case can serve as the precedent for knowing which side to take in every case. In thinking about the problems generated by paradigmatic reading, this chapter explores not only the cost to feminist theory and to the complexity of"black women's experience" of rendering social life through the instrumental reasoning of juridical form, but the security that this relationship to the object of study affords through the guarantee that it promises to deliver: that the object of study, once named, will always be the same. Interpellated now into the field imaginary on intersectionality's own terms, "black women's experience" is interestingly disciplined by the normative account that has come to describe it Idisciplined, that is, in order to be made legible for political amelioration by the reading that intersectionality performs. Such an inquiry into the disciplinary force of political commitment is foregrounded throughout Object Lessons by a studied attention to the field imaginary and its distribution of knowing subjects and their variously coveted, condemned, or refused objects of study. In the final chapter, "The Vertigo of Critique: Rethinking Heteronormativity," I continue this dis- cussion by considering the way that the shape of a question produces the answer it seeks and what happens to critique when the authority of the question is undone. The chapter began as an abstract for a conference presentation on queer cultural investments in gender transitivity. My original intention was to track how sex as the defining object of study for queer scholarship had been eclipsed by the proliferation of gender in order to contribute a queer theoretical approach to the conference focus on heternormativity. In the context of"DoingJustice with Objects," this was the story of gender's ascendency from the other direction, where it was amassing enormous authority to reconfigure queer cultural and theoretical agendas-a story that the focus on its sojourn through feminist contexts tended to elide. But as I pursued the topic, I grew increasingly distracted by my own founding assumptions. What after all was "queer culture" and why did I assume that a commitment to gender's transitivity belonged to queer culture alone? Or more to the point, why was I so willing to repeat the belief that to be against heteronormativity was to be for gender's transitivity, as if the heteronormative could have no investment in gender's transitivity as well? Where did this equation between gender transitivity and antinormativity come from? Was it a historicist reading of gender, a de-biologizing one, or a political one? Or was the equation the consequence of a political commitment that mistook the questions it posed as a materialist reading of the social formation as a whole? These matters made it impossible to write the talk I had promised, propelling me instead into considering this: that the gesture of citing one's queer disidentification with normativity was itself a disciplinary norm, the very position from which practitioners could assume that their critical practice was unquestionably queer. In a certain sense, "The Vertigo of Critique" is the affective center of Object Lessons, if not one of its key starting points, as each chapter grapples in one way or another with the core assumption that critique has taught me: that critical practice is a political counter to normalizing agencies of every kind. 32 Whether in the mode of dialectical materialism, deconstruction, feminist standpoint, critical race, or queer reading, critique has been alluring because of the promise it makes, which is that through the routes and rhetorics of knowledge production we can travel the distance from speculation to truth, from desire to political comprehension, from wanting a different social world to having the faith that we can make it so. To be sure, critique can also be repetitious and exhausting, self-congratulatory and self-absorbed, but the narcissism it cultivates is nothing if not thrilling. Even when cloaked in skepticism, it allows us to proceed as if we are right.33 How can I not want everything that it aims to make true? The book in your hands is a meditation on this question. It both reflects and refracts the history of my own reliance on the practices and procedures of critique and the various ways in which the authority it offers has come to unsettle me. As readers will see, I now worry over its repetitions and prohibitions, find myself estranged by its pace, and am unnerved by what it chooses not to question, know, or love. Most of all, I long to linger in the spaces of what it insists is done. Object Lessons is not an argument against critique as much as an encounter with its excessive reach. It records my growing interest in questioning left political desire for critical practice to rescue us from ... well ... nearly everything, including the very complexity of identity as it moves incongruently and unevenly across analytic, social, psychic, affective, and historical terrains. It seems strange to say this, but critique has come to haunt me because it promises to deliver too much. Object Lessons is not, then, a critique. It is not even a critique of critique. It is not an intervention. I am not trying to make us conscious of critical habits so that we can change them. It is not an argument against other arguments, nor a dismissal of what others have said or done. It is not a new theory. It offers no new objects or analytics of study. It is an inhabitation of the world-making stakes of identity knowledges and the field imaginary that sutures us to them-a performance, in other words, of the risk and reward, the amnesia and optimism, and the fear and pleasure sustained by living with and within them.

#### Narrative Link—The narrative form they choose to present their arguments in subverts its radical content. Their appeal to the ballot to remedy their grievances and the grievances of other outsiders in the debate community only serves to re-inscribe the community’s authority to determine who should and should not receive remedy. The presentation of themselves as the solution mirrors and supports the liberal power relations which produce subordination in the first place

Coughlin 95—Anne M. Coughlin, Associate Professor of Law, Vanderbilt Law School [August, 1995, “Regulating the Self: Autobiographical Performances in Outsider Scholarship,” *Virginia Law Review*, 81 Va. L. Rev. 1229, Lexis]

These speculations suggest that we must qualify, perhaps significantly, the outsiders' assertions concerning the revolutionary power of their narratives. Just like the legal discourse that the outsiders condemn, narrative “presupposes some criteria of relevance” that guide the storyteller's selection, arrangement for emphasis, and causal reordering of the events to be included in the story. n91 As one historian explains, “the narrative can be said to [\*1256] determine the evidence as much as the evidence determines the narrative” because the “evidence only counts as evidence and is only recognized as such in relation to a potential narrative.” n92 Even if we reject White's suspicion that the criterion that guides all narrative accounts of real events is “law, legality, legitimacy, or, more generally, authority,” n93 his theory of narrative meaning still exposes the ambivalent political allegiances of the outsider autobiographies. In these texts, no less than in legal opinions or traditional legal scholarship, our system of law is enthroned as the “central organizing principle of meaning.” n94 Law and the legal academy are the subjects that link together, indeed, call forth, each of the personal experiences recounted. The texts are not a desultory collection of personal reminiscences. Rather, they record only those events that support particular claims against or on behalf of law and the academy. For example, Professor Robin West describes her own promiscuity to support her charge that the definition of “consensual sex” applied by law in rape cases conceals the danger of violent male sexuality that women endure. n95 Professor Patricia Williams elaborates the racist content of episodes from her [\*1257] life to create an occasion for her to display her intellectual prowess and professional accomplishments to an academy reluctant to admit African-American women. n96 And Professor Richard Delgado recalls conversations in which senior colleagues warned him to avoid writing about “civil rights or other “ethnic' subjects” to provide evidence of the jealous insularity and undemocratic character of the mainstream civil rights academy. n97

These texts reveal that the law and its specific institutional interests, both in practice and in the academy, already define the relevant points of intersection for the experiences recounted in the outsider narratives. In other words, the law and the academy implicitly supply the appropriate points of contention for outsider narrators. Just as legal doctrine determines the facts that judges will find, so the conventions, practices, and concerns of law and the academy furnish the space for debate and perhaps even produce the truth that outsider stories report by determining which events are significant (or real) enough to be represented. This is one of a variety of ways, then, in which the narrative form distinctly mitigates the subversive intention of outsider storytelling.

To be sure, each of these texts expresses dissatisfaction with law and the professional academy and offers suggestions for reform. Ironically, this criticism celebrates the power of law and reproduces law's indifference to the marginalized position that African Americans and women occupy within our culture no less forcefully than recourse to litigation would do. Contrary to Richard Delgado's assertion, the storytellers really do not propose to subvert law's authority; n98 rather, they supplicate law to exercise its authority so that outsiders, no less than affluent white men, enjoy the same access to, and power to define, the good life. Among the many grievances they detail, law should be authorized to ease the suffering of the impoverished by advancing basic levels of food, housing, medical care, and education; n99 to protect women from domestic violence and the injury of childbirth; n100 to secure women's [\*1258] erotic pleasure just as it secures that of men; n101 to support the African-American nomos by financing African-American schools, while preserving the opportunity of African-Americans to attend white schools; n102 to remedy the harms that hate speech causes; n103 to relieve outsider employees from the grooming preferences imposed by corporate employers; n104 and to assure that workplaces are safe for all employees. n105

Nor do the storytellers propose to tear down the academy. What they want (and have achieved) is to be welcomed within the academy's gates and to speak from behind its sheltering walls. n106 Thus, the academy should “recruit” and “nurture” as scholars those whom culture has victimized, n107 revise its traditional evaluative standards so as to count outsiders' special experiential wisdom as an intellectual credential, n108 and bestow on them the customary professional titles, accoutrements, and perquisites. n109 [\*1259]

By so grossly streamlining the storytellers' allegations, I do not intend to deride their contribution to our understanding of the practices that have relegated people of color and women to poverty, servitude, and obscurity. Rather, I offer it to emphasize that the storytellers' opposition to law concludes by reaffirming the core values of our legal system. Our appreciation of the injustices their narratives provoke is itself derived from the remedial authority of the law, and the cultural sense of justice the law provides is the context for our understanding.

At this point, I want to anticipate an objection that the storytellers and some of their readers may interject. The objection is this: the outsider storytellers are not merely identifying or trying to repair law's failure to make good on (among others) its promise of equal respect and equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race or gender. Rather, by conferring on law authority to intervene in and remedy a broader range of outsider grievances than liberal individualist ideology would seem to allow, they are producing a revolutionary vision of a human self that is dependent on external assistance for its well-being.

This objection might be a forceful one, particularly if the outsider project began to identify not only the legal mechanisms that consign women and people of color to dependence on social relief, but also those that dictate and support, even as they privilege, the identity of white men. n110 Ultimately, however, the autobiographical self constructed by these texts overwhelms any alternative vision of human nature they might offer. When Richard Delgado identifies the storytellers' desire to elude the role of “supplicant” as one of the primary motivations underlying their project, he never remarks that such desire is produced by and understandable only within a system, such as liberal individualism, that condemns as failures those whose success, if not survival, is attributed to legal [\*1260] or social relief. Thus, even as they demand law's intervention on behalf of other outsiders - African Americans and women condemned to haunt the margins of a community committed to individual solutions n111 - the storytellers are busy proving that they are not supplicants. They achieved their success the liberal way; they earned it. No less than insider texts, the outsider narratives instruct other outsiders that if they would succeed they too must do it by themselves. In the end, therefore, these stories mirror and support the liberal power relations the outsiders would dismantle.

#### The critique is prior—you must examine the question of “why do we desire to produce a resistant scholarship?” first. It’s a prior question to recognize the effect liberal ideology has already had on our ability to shape radical scholarship. Voting aff may feel like a rebellion, but it only further instills a yearning for individual autonomy that liberal ideology has fostered in you. Instills it in judge too—they feel ethically sanitized for voting aff b/c it feels good

Coughlin 95—Anne M. Coughlin, Associate Professor of Law, Vanderbilt Law School [August, 1995, “Regulating the Self: Autobiographical Performances in Outsider Scholarship,” *Virginia Law Review*, 81 Va. L. Rev. 1229, Lexis]

V. Conclusion

Although scholarly articles generally conclude by offering answers, not questions, a question that springs from my criticism is “the impatient question, “What would you have us do?' “ n434 Of course, there will be impatience for an answer only if supporters of the narrative project decide that my observations require, at least, some revision of their agenda, some refocusing of their stories or some retheorization of their stories' connection to law. Certainly, when we reflect on the potential contributions that outsider stories may make to our understanding of the lives of marginalized peoples and of their subjective experiences of pain and pleasure, it seems too extreme to refuse autobiographical tactics altogether, if indeed it were possible to do so. Still, the limited transformation that the stories so far have effected is fully consistent with the liberal ideology outsiders mean to resist. For that reason alone, outsiders may desire to locate other, more promising discursive strategies for legal and political reform.

These observations lead to another question. Are we so captured by culture that it is not possible for us to imagine, let alone author, a resistant scholarship? No less than autobiographical storytelling, we may anticipate, other discursive positions selected by the outsiders will possess or quickly develop a set of conventions that have been molded by, and thus support, contemporary cultural values. Any revolution carried out under the auspices of the academy seems likely to preserve at least as much, if not more, than it destroys. Whatever the prospects for future forms of discourse, it appears that autobiographical discourse, given its roots in a culture of liberal individualism, possesses only a limited capacity to articulate the dynamics necessary for radical social change. By contrast, an alternative discourse might encourage its participants to ponder explicitly the relation between the means of communication and a larger, more inclusive concept of social life. [\*1339]

Perhaps more to the point, the question “What should we do to produce a resistant scholarship?” itself must be examined critically to identify the desire that resides within it and to determine whether that desire is another cunning snare prepared by a liberal culture. The desire to oppose and subdue the established authorities, to sweep aside and go beyond one's antecedents, may feel like rebellion to the oppositionalist critic, as well as to the members of the establishment she opposes. But, we may wonder, is that desire itself an artifact of liberal culture, just another version of the yearning for individual autonomy and success that liberal ideology fosters in its subjects? Unquestionably, this desire and the productive activity it fuels have been the faithful servants of the mainstream academy. The academy may renew itself, indeed, justify its continued existence and expansion, only if each generation of scholars improves upon or, better yet, revises the wisdom its teachers have imparted. Of course, if a slow process of amelioration is occurring, perhaps I should not label this desire a trap. Perhaps the storytellers' failure to oppose seriously the liberal vision should be greeted as evidence of the beneficence of that vision, rather than of the theoretical deficiencies afflicting the narrative program. These speculations might support a fairly modest revision of the narrative project. Since they are in the debt of liberal culture, just as surely as they are in its thrall, the storytellers should acknowledge the existence and extent of their debt, ponder the contributions that liberal individualism has made to their own success, and theorize the connection between their self writings and the social reforms they still envision. This proposal would require the storytellers to abate their inflated claims about the sweeping changes their project will oversee. However, this rhetoric is a crude byproduct of mainstream academic conventions, and its absence will help to clear the way for a focused investigation of the spaces within liberal philosophy that are most receptive to the claims of people subordinated by racism and sexism.

#### Visibility Link—Making the black subject visible provokes surveillance, voyeurism and attempts at imperial possession and incorporation.

Peggy PHELAN Chair NYU Performance Studies Dept. 93 [*Unmarked* p. 7-8]

The current contradiction between “identity politics” with its accent on visibility, and the psychoanalytic/ldeconstructionist mistrust (if visibility as she source of unity or wholeness needs to he refigured, if not resolved. As the left dedicates ever more energy to visibility politics, I am increasingly troubled by the forgetting of the problems of visibility so successfully articulated by feminist film theorists in I he 1970s and 1980s. I am not suggesting that continued invisibility is the “proper” political agenda for the disenfranchised, but. rather that. the binary between the power of visibility and the impotency of invisibility is falsifying. There is real power in remaining unmarked; and there are serious limitations to visual representation as a political goal. Visibility is a trap (“In this matter oft he visible, everything is a trap”: (Lacan *Four Fundamental Concepts*: 93); it summons surveillance and the law; it provokes voyeurism, fetishism, the colonialist/imperial appetite for possession. Yet it retains a certain political appeal. Visibility politics have practical consequences: a line can be drawn between a practice (getting someone seen or read) and a theory (if you are seen it. is harder for “them” to ignore you, to construct a punitive canon); the two can be reproductive. While there is a deeply ethical appeal in the desire for a more inclusive representational landscape and certainly under-represented communities can be empowered by an enhanced visibility, the terms of this visibility often enervate the putative power of these identities. A much more nuanced relationship to the power of visibility needs to be pursued than the Left currently engages.” Arguing that communities of the hitherto under-represented will be made stronger if representational economies reflect and see them, progressive cultural activists have staked a huge amount on increasing and expanding the visibility of racial, ethnic, and sexual “others.” It is assumed that disenfranchised communities who see their members within the representational field will feel great or pride in being Part, of such a community and those who are not in such a community will increase their understanding of the diversity and strength of such communities. Implicit within this argument. are several presumptions which bear further scrutiny: 1) Identities are visibly marked so the resemblance between the African-American on the television and the African-American on the street helps the observer see they are members of the same community. Reading physical resemblance is a way of' identifying community.

2 The relationship between representation and idenity is linear and smoothly mimetic, What one sees is who one is.

3 If one's mimetic likeness is not represented. one is not addressed. 4. Increased visibility equals increased power. Each presumption reflects the ideology of the visible, an ideology which erases the power of the unmarked, unspoken, and unseen.

### Case

#### 1. Appeals to personal experience replace analysis of group oppression with personal testimony. As a result, politics becomes a policing operation—those not in an identity group are denied intellectual access and those within the group who don’t conform to the aff’s terms are excluded. Over time, this strategy LIMITS politics to ONLY the personal. This devastates structural change, and turns the case—it demands that political performance assimilate to very limited norms of experience

Joan SCOTT Harold F. Linder Professor at the School of Social Science in the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton 92 [“Multiculturalism and the Politics of Identity” *October* Summer p. 16-19]

The logic of individualism has structured the approach to multiculturalism in many ways. The call for tolerance of difference is framed in terms of respect for individual characteristics and attitudes; group differences are conceived categorically and not relationally, as distinct entities rather than interconnected structures or systems created through repeated processes of the enunciation of difference. Administrators have hired psychological consulting firms to hold diversity workshops which teach that conflict resolution is a negotation between dissatisfied individuals. Disciplinary codes that punish "hate-speech" justify prohibitions in terms of the protection of individuals from abuse by other individuals, not in terms of the protection of members of historically mistreated groups from discrimination, nor in terms of the ways language is used to construct and reproduce asymmetries of power. The language of protection, moreover, is conceptualized in terms of victimization; the way to make a claim or to justify one's protest against perceived mistreatment these days is to take on the mantle of the victim///////////////MARKED AT////////////

 (The so-called Men's Movement is the latest comer to this scene.) Everyone-whether an insulted minority or the perpetrator of the insult who feels he is being unjustly accused-now claims to be an equal victim before the law. Here we have not only an extreme form of individualizing, but a conception of individuals without agency. There is nothing wrong, on the face of it, with teaching individuals about how to behave decently in relation to others and about how to empathize with each other's pain. The problem is that difficult analyses of how history and social standing, privilege, and subordination are involved in personal behavior entirely drop out. Chandra Mohanty puts it this way: There has been an erosion of the politics of collectivity through the reformulation of race and difference in individualistic terms. The 1960s and '70s slogan "the personal is political" has been recrafted in the 1980s as "the political is personal." In other words, all politics is collapsed into the personal, and questions of individual behaviors, attitudes, and life-styles stand in for political analysis of the social. Individual political struggles are seen as the only relevant and legitimate form of political struggle.5 Paradoxically, individuals then generalize their perceptions and claim to speak for a whole group, but the groups are also conceived as unitary and autonomous. This individualizing, personalizing conception has also been be- hind some of the recent identity politics of minorities; indeed it gave rise to the intolerant, doctrinaire behavior that was dubbed, initially by its internal critics, "political correctness." It is particularly in the notion of "experience" that one sees this operating. In much current usage of "experience," references to structure and history are implied but not made explicit; instead, personal testimony of oppression re- places analysis, and this testimony comes to stand for the experience of the whole group. The fact of belonging to an identity group is taken as authority enough for one's speech; the direct experience of a group or culture-that is, membership in it-becomes the only test of true knowledge. The exclusionary implications of this are twofold: all those not of the group are denied even intellectual access to it, and those within the group whose experiences or interpretations do not conform to the established terms of identity must either suppress their views or drop out. An appeal to "experience" of this kind forecloses discussion and criticism and turns politics into a policing operation: the borders of identity are patrolled for signs of nonconformity; the test of membership in a group becomes less one's willingness to endorse certain principles and engage in specific political actions, less one's positioning in specific relationships of power, than one's ability to use the prescribed languages that are taken as signs that one is inherently “of” the group. That all of this isn't recognized as a highly political process that produces identities is troubling indeed, especially because it so closely mimics the politics of the powerful, naturalizing and deeming as discernably objective facts the prerequisites for inclusion in any group. Indeed, I would argue more generally that separatism, with its strong insistence on an exclusive relationship between group identity and access to specialized knowledge (the argument that only women can teach women's literature or only African-Americans can teach African-American history, for example), is a simultaneous refusal and imitation of the powerful in the present ideological context. At least in universities, the relationship between identity- group membership and access to specialized knowledge has been framed as an objection to the control by the disciplines of the terms that establish what counts as (important, mainstream, useful, collective) knowledge and what does not. This has had an enormously important critical impact, exposing the exclusions that have structured claims to universal or comprehensive knowledge. When one asks not only where the women or African-Americans are in the history curriculum (for example), but why they have been left out and what are the effects of their exclusion, one exposes the process by which difference is enunciated. But one of the complicated and contradictory effects of the implementation of programs in women's studies, African-American studies, Chicano studies, and now gay and lesbian studies is to totalize the identity that is the object of study, reiterating its binary opposition as minority (or subaltern) in relation to whatever is taken as majority or dominant.

#### 2. Personal experience isn’t bad for debate, but debate is bad for personal experience—it forces you, the judge, to render the value of a person’s intimate and many times traumatic experiences—this is epistemically violent and turns the case

Judith BUTLER is Maxine Elliot Professor in the Departments of Rhetoric and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Berkeley, 1 [“Giving an Account of Oneself,” *Diacritics* 31.4 (2001) 22-40, Project Muse]

But here, and for the time being, my concern is with a suspect coherence that sometimes attaches to narrative and, specifically, with the way in which narrative coherence may foreclose upon an ethical resource, namely, an acceptance of the limits of knowability in oneself and others. It may even be that to hold a person accountable for his or her life in narrative form is to require a falsification of that life in the name of a certain conception of ethics. Indeed, if we require that someone be able to tell in story form the reasons why his or her life has taken the path it has, that is, to be a coherent autobiographer, it may be that we prefer the seamlessness of the story to something we might tentatively call the truth of the person, a truth which, to a certain degree, and for reasons we have already suggested, is indicated more radically as an interruption. It may be that stories have to be interrupted, and that for interruption to take place, a story has to be underway. This brings me closer to the account of the transference I would like to offer, a transference that might be understood as a repeated ethical practice. Indeed, [End Page 34] if, in the name of ethics, we require that another do a certain violence to herself, and do it in front of us, offering a narrative account or, indeed, a confession, then, conversely, it may be that by permitting, sustaining, accommodating the interruption, a certain practice of nonviolence precisely follows. If violence is the act by which a subject seeks to reinstall its mastery and unity, then nonviolence may well follow from living the persistent challenge to mastery that our obligations to others require.

Although some would say that to be a split subject, or a subject whose access to itself is opaque and not self-grounding, is precisely not to have the grounds for agency and the conditions for accountability, it may be that this way in which we are, from the start, interrupted by alterity and not fully recoverable to ourselves, indicates the way in which we are, from the start, ethically implicated in the lives of others. The point here is not to celebrate a certain notion of incoherence, but only to consider that our incoherence is ineradicable but nontotalizing, and that it establishes the way in which we are implicated, beholden, derived, constituted by what is beyond us and before us. If we say that the self must be narrated, that only the narrated self can be intelligible, survivable, then we say that we cannot survive with an unconscious. We say, in effect, that the unconscious threatens us with an insupportable unintelligibility, and for that reason we must oppose it. The "I" who makes such an utterance will surely, in one form or another, be besieged precisely by what it disavows. This stand, and it is a stand, it must be a stand, an upright, wakeful, knowing stand, believes that it survives without the unconscious or, if it accepts an unconscious, accepts it as something which is thoroughly recuperable by the knowing "I," as a possession perhaps, believing that the unconscious can be fully and exhaustively translated into what is conscious. It is easy to see this as a defended stance, for it remains to be known in what this particular defense consists. It is, after all, the stand that many make against psychoanalysis itself. In the language which articulates the opposition to a non-narrativizable beginning resides the fear that the absence of narrative will spell a certain threat, a threat to life, and will pose the risk, if not the certainty, of a certain kind of death, the death of a subject who cannot, who can never, fully recuperate the conditions of its own emergence.

But this death, if it is a death, is only the death of a certain kind of subject, one that was never possible to begin with, the death of a fantasy, and so a loss of what one never had.

One goes to analysis, I presume, to have someone receive one's words, and this produces a quandary, since the one who might receive the words is unknown in large part, and so the one who receives becomes, in a certain way, an allegory for reception itself, for the phantasmatic relation to receiving that is articulated to, or at least in the face of, an Other. But if this is an allegory, it is not reducible to a structure of reception that would apply equally well to everyone, although it would give us the general structures within which a particular life might be understood. We, as subjects who narrate ourselves in the first person, encounter in common something of a predicament. Since I cannot tell the story in a straight line, and I lose my thread, and I start again, and I forget something crucial, and it is to hard to think about how to weave it in, and I start thinking, thinking, there must be some conceptual thread that will provide a narrative here, some lost link, some possibility for chronology, and the "I" becomes increasingly conceptual, increasingly awake, focused, determined, it is at this point that the thread must fall apart. The "I" who narrates finds that it cannot direct its narration, finds that it cannot give an account of its inability to narrate, why its narration breaks down, and so it comes to experience itself, or, rather, reexperience itself, as radically, if not irretrievably, unknowing about who it is. And then the "I" is no longer imparting a narrative to a receiving analyst or Other. The "I" is breaking down in certain very specific ways in front of the Other or, to anticipate Levinas, in the face of the Other (originally I wrote, [End Page 35] "the in face of the Other," indicating that my syntax was already breaking down) or, indeed, by virtue of the Other's face. The "I" finds that, in the face of an Other, it is breaking down. It does not know itself, and perhaps it never will. But is that the task, to know itself, to achieve an adequate narrative account of a life? And should it be? Is the task to cover over the breakage, the rupture, which is constitutive of the "I" through a narrative means that quite forcefully binds the elements together in a narration that is enacted as if it were perfectly possible, as if the break could be mended and defensive mastery restored?

#### Disability CANNOT be simplified to a question of the body. PRAGMATISM is a necessary pre-requisite to their Critique.

Vehmas et al. 2009 (Sima, Professor of Special Education at the University of Jyvaskyla; Kristjana, Associate Professor at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Department of Social Work and Health Science; Tom, social scientist with an interest in bioethics, involved in the UK disability movement for twenty years. Introduction in Arguing about Disability, eds. Kristjana Kristiansen, Simo Vehmas and Tom Shakespeare)

In the modern era, disability has been explained by scientific methods, and reduced to an individual's physiological or mental deficiencies. Disability has become, among other phenomena such as alcoholism, homosexuality and criminality, a paradigm case of medicalisation (a term which refers to a process where people and societies are explained increasingly in medical terms). The expression medical model of disability has become a common nickname for a one-sided view that attributes the cause of the individual's deficits either to bad luck (accidents), to inadequate health practices (smoking, bad diet), or to genes. This position views disability as the inevitable product of the individual's biological defects, illnesses or characteristics. Disability becomes a personal tragedy that results from the individual's pathological condition (Barnes et al. 1999; Oliver 1990, 1996; Priestley 2003; Silvers 1998). Since the late 1960s, the one-sided medical understanding of disability has been fiercely criticised. It has been argued that medicine portrays disability in a biased manner that leads to practices and social arrangements that oppress people with impairments; interventions are aimed solely at the 'abnormal' individual while the surrounding environment is left intact. Resources are not directed at changing the environment but rather on ways to 'improve' or 'repair' the impaired individual. This is seen to lead to a social and moral marginalisation of disabled people, preventing their full participation in society. In other words, disability is a social problem that should be dealt with through social interventions, not an individual problem that is to be dealt with through medical interventions. Sociological viewpoints combined with a strong political commitment to the selfempowerment of people with impairments have become the ontological and epistemological foundation for disability studies (e.g., Linton 1998; Oliver 1996; Priestley 2003). Indeed, the way a phenomenon such as disability is understood and explained constitutes the basis for practical interventions aimed at removing the possible hardships associated with disability. A certain view and understanding of disability inevitably directs our responses and actions. In other words, if the cause of impairment and disablement is seen to be spiritual, it is only natural to address the issue with spiritual manoeuvres, such as exorcism and faith-healing. And if disability is understood in terms of medical knowledge and is confused with impairment, then it is only reasonable to concentrate on improving a person's ability with medical interventions. One unfortunate outcome of mechanical applications of either one of these individualistic approaches to disability has been paternalism: making decisions on behalf of others for their own good, even if contrary to their own wishes. Part of paternalism is a kind of expert system where the authorities of relevant knowledge and craft determine how the phenomenon in question should be understood and dealt with. In the religious framework, it is the clergy who are in possession of the truth; in the medical discourse, it is the doctors. In either case, the autonomy of people with impairments has too often been trampled upon, and they become merely passive recipients of the benevolent assistance provided by professionals, and other believers of the dominant disability discourse. The shortcomings of individualistic approaches to disability thus seem clear, and the emergence of a social understanding of disability has been a welcome change to disability discourse and institutional responses to disabled people's lives. The field of disability studies has been dominated by sociology and, in the USA, also by the humanities. The research conducted is mostly empirical with the aim of verifying certain premises. For example, in the UK, disability is often seen to be a matter of oppression, and the function of research is to a large extent to clarify how people with impairments are actually oppressed. However, if disability as a social phenomenon is understood in terms of oppression and discrimination, it would seem vital to make closer analyses of concepts such as health, normality, well-being, discrimination, justice and equality - the kind of concepts that have long been discussed in philosophy. However, very little theoretical work has been done concerning the key concepts and underlying assumptions of disability studies. Hence, this book aims to contribute to the development of disability theory and a more profound understanding of the phenomenon.

### 1NR

#### Read the aff as an autopoetic system that pervades their ability to create progress.

Bryant 12 (Levi Bryant, “McKenzie Wark: How Do You Occupy an Abstraction?” Larval Subjects, 8/4/2012, <http://larvalsubjects.wordpress.com/2012/08/04/mckenzie-wark-how-do-you-occupy-an-abstraction/> spelling errors fixed in brackets)

Here I’m also inclined to say that we need to be clear about system references in our political theorizing and action. We think a lot about the content of our political theorizing and positions, but I don’t think we think a lot about how our political theories are supposed to actually act in the world. As a result, much contemporary leftist political theory ends up in a performative contradiction. It claims, following Marx, that [its] aim is not to represent the world but to change it, yet it never escapes the burrows of academic journals, conferences, and presses to actually do so. Like the Rat-Man’s obsessional neurosis where his actions in returning the glasses were actually designed to fail, there seems to be a built in tendency in these forms of theorization to unconsciously organize their own failure. And here I can’t resist suggesting that this comes as no surprise given that, in Lacanian terms, the left is the position of the hysteric and as such has “a desire for an unsatisfied desire”. In such circumstances the worst thing consists in getting what you want. We on the left need to traverse our fantasy so as to avoid this sterile and self-defeating repetition; and this entails shifting from the position of political critique (hysterical protest), to political construction– actually envisioning and building alternatives. So what’s the issue with system-reference? The great autopoietic sociological systems theorist, Niklas Luhmann, makes this point nicely. For Luhmann, there are intra-systemic references and inter-systemic references. Intra-systemic references refer to processes that are strictly for the sake of reproducing or maintaining the system in question. Take the example of a cell. A cell, for-itself, is not for anything beyond itself. The processes that take place within the cell are simply for continuing the existence of the cell across time. While the cell might certainly emit various chemicals and hormones as a result of these processes, from its own intra-systemic perspective, it is not for the sake of affecting these other cells with those hormones. They’re simply by-products. Capitalism or economy is similar. Capitalists talk a good game about benefiting the rest of the world through the technologies they produce, the medicines they create (though usually it’s government and universities that invent these medicines), the jobs they create, etc., but really the sole aim of any corporation is identical to that of a cell: to endure through time or reproduce itself through the production of capital. This production of capital is not for anything and does not refer to anything outside itself. These operations of capital production are intra-systemic. By contrast, inter-systemic operations would refer to something outside the system and its auto-reproduction. They would be for something else. Luhmann argues that every autopoietic system has this sort of intra-systemic dimension. Autopoietic systems are, above all, organized around maintaining themselves or enduring. This raises serious questions about academic political theory. Academia is an autopoietic system. As an autopoietic system, it aims to endure, reproduce itself, etc. It must engage in operations or procedures from moment to moment to do so. These operations consist in the production of students that eventually become wars or professors, the writing of articles, the giving of conferences, the production of books and classes, etc. All of these are operations through which the academic system maintains itself across time. The horrifying consequence of this is that the reasons we might give for why we do what we do might (and often) have little to do with what’s actually taking place in system continuance. We say that our articles are designed to demolish capital, inequality, sexism, homophobia, climate disaster, etc., but if we look at how this system actually functions we suspect that the references here are only intra-systemic, that they are only addressing the choir [of] other academics, that they are only about maintaining that system, and that they never proliferate through the broader world. Indeed, our very style is often a big fuck you to the rest of the world as it requires expert knowledge to be comprehended, thereby insuring that it can have no impact on broader collectives to produce change. Seen in this light, it becomes clear that our talk about changing the world is a sort of alibi, a sort of rationalization, for a very different set of operations that are taking place. Just as the capitalist says he’s trying to benefit the world, the academic tries to say he’s trying to change the world when all he’s really doing is maintaining a particular operationally closed autopoietic system. How to break this closure is a key question for any truly engaged political theory. And part of breaking that closure will entail eating some humble pie. Adam Kotsko wrote a wonderful and hilarious post on the absurdities of some political theorizing and its self-importance today. We’ve failed horribly with university politics and defending the humanities, yet in our holier-than-thou attitudes we call for a direct move to communism. Perhaps we need to reflect a bit on ourselves and our strategies and what political theory should be about. Setting all this aside, I think there’s a danger in Wark’s claims about abstraction (though I think he’s asking the right sort of question). The danger in treating hyperobjects like capitalism as being everywhere and nowhere is that our ability to act becomes paralyzed. As a materialist, I’m committed to the thesis that everything is ultimately material and requires some sort of material embodiment. If that’s true, it follows that there are points of purchase on every object, even where that object is a hyperobject. This is why, given the current form that power takes or the age of hyperobjects, I believe that forms of theory such as new materialism, object-oriented ontology, and actor-network theory are more important than ever (clearly the Whiteheadians are out as they see everything as internally related, as an organism, and therefore have no way of theorizing change and political engagement; they’re quasi-Hegelian, justifying even the discord in the world as a part of “god’s” selection and harmonization of intensities). The important thing to remember is that hyperobjects like capitalism are unable to function without a material base. They require highways, shipping routes, trains and railroads, fiber optic cables for communication, and a host of other things besides. Without what Shannon Mattern calls “infrastructure”, it’s impossible for this particular hyperobject exists. Every hyperobject requires its arteries. Information, markets, trade, require the paths along which they travel and capitalism as we know it today would not be possible without its paths. The problem with so much political theory today is that it focuses on the semiosphere in the form of ideologies, discourses, narratives, laws, etc., ignoring the arteries required for the semiosphere to exercise its power. For example, we get OWS standing in front of Wall Street protesting– engaging in a speech act –yet one wonders if speech is an adequate way of addressing the sort of system we exist in. Returning to system’s theory, is the system of capital based on individual decisions of bankers and CEO’s, or does the system itself have its own cognition, it’s own mode of action, that they’re ineluctably trapped in? Isn’t there a sort of humanist prejudice embodied in this form of political engagement? It has value in that it might create larger collectives of people to fight these intelligent aliens that live amongst us (markets, corporations, etc), but it doesn’t address these aliens themselves because it doesn’t even acknowledge their existence. What we need is a politics adequate to hyperobjects, and that is above all a politics that targets arteries. OOO, new materialism, and actor-network theory are often criticized for being “apolitical” by people who are fascinated with political declarations, who are obsessed with showing that your papers are in order, that you’ve chosen the right team, and that see critique and protest as the real mode of political engagement. But it is not clear what difference these theorists are making and how they are escaping intra-systemic self-reference and auto-reproduction. But the message of these orientations is “to the things themselves!”, “to the assemblages themselves!” “Quit your macho blather about where you stand, and actually map power and how it exercises itself!” And part of this re-orientation of politics, if it exists, consists in rendering deconstruction far more concrete. Deconstruction would no longer show merely the leaks in any system and its diacritical oppositions, it would go to the things themselves. What does that mean? It means that deconstruction would practice onto-cartography or identify the arteries by which capitalism perpetuates itself and find ways to block them. You want to topple the 1% and get their attention? Don’t stand in front of Wall Street and bitch at bankers and brokers, occupy a highway. Hack a satellite and shut down communications. Block a port. Erase data banks, etc. Block the arteries; block the paths that this hyperobject requires to sustain itself. This is the only way you will tilt the hands of power and create bargaining power with government organs of capital and corporations. You have to hit them where they live, in their arteries. Did anyone ever change their diet without being told that they would die? Your critique is an important and indispensable step, but if you really wish to produce change you need to find ways to create heart attacks and aneurysms. Short of that, your activity is just masturbation. But this requires coming to discern where the arteries are and doing a little less critique of cultural artifacts and ideologies. Yet choose your targets carefully. The problem with the Seattle protests was that they chose idiotic targets and simply acted on impotent rage. A window is not an artery. It doesn’t organize a flow of communication and capital. It’s the arteries that you need to locate. I guess this post will get Homeland Security after me.

#### Can the subaltern speak – Their arguments are about the efficacy of the ballot are all from FORMER DEBATERS who already prescribe to the thrill ride of debate. Their mis-understanding of the distinct subject of the subaltern and attempts at a change in episteme to correct oppressive imperial practices re-creates oppression through linguistic masking.

Spivak 88 (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Columbia University, Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture "Can the Subaltern Speak?" <http://www.maldura.unipd.it/dllags/docentianglo/materiali_oboe_lm/2581_001.pdf>)

‘At the regional and local levels [the dominant indigenous groups] . . . if belonging to social strata hierarchically inferior to those of the dominant all-Indian groups acted in the interests of the latter and not in conformity to interests corresponding truly to their own social being.’ When these writers speak, in their essentializing language, of a gap between interest and action in the intermediate group, their conclusions are closer to Marx than to the self-conscious naivete of Deleuze’s pronouncement on the issue. Guha, like Marx, speaks of interest in terms of the social rather than the libidinal being. The Name-of-the-Father imagery in The Eighteenth Brumaire can help to emphasize that, on the level of class or group action, ‘true correspondence to own being’ is as artificial or social as the patronymic.

So much for the intermediate group marked in item 3. For the ‘true’ subaltern group, whose identity is its difference, there is no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself; the intellectual’s solution is not to abstain from representation. The problem is that the subject’s itinerary has not been traced so as to offer an object of seduction to the representing intellectual. In the slightly dated language of the Indian group, the question becomes, How can we touch the consciousness of the people, even as we investigate their politics? With what voice-consciousness can the subaltern speak? Their project, after all, is to rewrite the development of the consciousness of the Indian nation. The planned discontinuity of impe¬rialism rigorously distinguishes this project, however old-fashioned its articulation, from ‘rendering visible the medical and juridical mechanisms that surrounded the story [of Pierre Riviere].’ Foucault is correct in suggesting that ‘to make visible the unseen can also mean a change of level, addressing oneself to a layer of material which had hitherto had no perti¬nence for history and which had not been recognized as having any moral, aesthetic or historical value.’ It is the slippage from rendering visible the mechanism to rendering the individual, both avoiding ‘any kind of analysis of [the subject] whether psychological, psychoanalytical or linguistic,’ that is consistently troublesome (Foucault 1980: 49-50)...

When we come to the concomitant question of the consciousness of the subaltern, the notion of what the work cannot say becomes important. In the semioses of the social text, elaborations of insurgency stand in the place of ‘the utterance.’ The sender - ‘the peasant’ - is marked only as a pointer to an irretrievable consciousness. As for the receiver, we must ask who is ‘the real receiver’ of an ‘insurgency?’ The historian, transforming ‘insurgency’ into ‘text for knowledge,’ is only one ‘receiver’ of any collec¬tively intended social act. With no possibility of nostalgia for that lost origin, the historian must suspend (as far as possible) the clamor of his or her own consciousness (or consciousness-effect, as operated by disciplinary training), so that the elaboration of the insurgency, packaged with an insurgent-consciousness, does not freeze into an ‘object of investigation,’ or, worse yet, a model for imitation. ‘The subject’ implied by the texts of insurgency can only serve as a counterpossibility for the narrative sanctions granted to the colonial subject in the dominant groups. The postcolonial intellectuals learn that their privilege is their loss. In this they are a para¬digm of the intellectuals

#### Their arguments about personal agency are ultimately conservative and de-politicizing – arguments for localizing activism within the purview of social location are the equivalent of privatizing social change, creating us as dependent on the necessity of their advocacy. The more successful their strategy is the more damage it does by making institutions necessary to our understanding of social change

Hershock 99 East-West Center, 1999.  [“Changing the way society changes”, Journal of Buddhist Ethics, 6, 154; <http://jbe.gold.ac.uk/6/hershock991.html>]

The trouble is that, like other technologies biased toward control, t**he more successful legislation becomes, the more it renders itself necessary.** Because it aims at rigorous definition -- at establishing hard boundaries or limits -- **crossing the threshold of legislative utility means creating conditions under which the definition of freedom becomes so complex as to be self-defeating. Taken to its logical end, legally-biased social activism is thus liable to effect an infinite density of protocols for maintaining autonomy, generating a matrix of limits on discrimination that would finally be conducive to what might be called "axiological entropy" -- a state in which movement in any direction is equally unobstructed** *and* **empty of dramatic potential. Contrary to expectations, complete "freedom of choice" would not mean the elimination of all impediments to meaningful improvisation, but rather an erasure of the latter's conditions of possibility.** The effectiveness and efficiency of "hard," control-biased technologies depend on our using natural laws -- horizons of possibility -- as fulcrums for leveraging or dictating changes in the structure of our circumstances. Unlike improvised contributions to changes taking place in our situation, dictating the terms of change effectively silences our situational partners. **Technological authority thus renders our circumstances mute and justifies ignoring the contributions that might be made by the seasons or the spiritual force of the mountains to the meaning -- the direction of movement -- of our ongoing patterns of interdependence. With the "perfection" of technically-mediated control, our wills would know no limit. We would be as gods, existing with no imperatives, no external compulsions, and no priorities. We would have no reason to do one thing first or hold one thing, and not another, as most sacred or dear. Such "perfection" is, perhaps, as fabulous and unattainable as it is finally depressing. Yet the vast energies of global capital are committed to moving in its direction, for the most part quite uncritically. The consequences -- as revealed in the desecration and impoverishing of both 'external' and 'internal' wilderness (for instance, the rainforests and our imaginations) -- are every day more evident. The critical question we must answer is whether the "soft" technologies of legally-biased and controlled social change commit us to an equivalent impoverishment and desecration.** The analogy between the dependence of technological progress on natural laws and that of social activism on societal laws is by no means perfect. Except among a scattering of philosophers and historians of science, for example, the laws of nature are not viewed as changeable artifacts of human culture. But for present purposes, the analogy need only focus our attention on the way legal institutions -- like natural laws -- do not prescriptively determine the shape of all things to come, but rather establish generic limits for what relationships or states of affairs are factually admissible. **Laws that guarantee certain "freedoms" necessarily also prohibit others. Without the fulcrums of** *unallowable* **acts, the work of changing a society would remain as purely idealistic as using wishful thinking to move mountains. Changing legal institutions at once forces and enforces societal reform. By affirming and safeguarding those freedoms or modes of autonomy that have come to be seen as generically essential to 'being human', a legally-biased social activism cannot avoid selectively limiting the ways we engage with one another. The absence of coercion may be a basic aim of social activism, but if our autonomy is to be guaranteed both fair and just, its basic strategy must be one of establishing non-negotiable constraints on how we co-exist. Social activism is thus in the business of striking structural compromises between its ends and its means -- between particular freedoms and general equality, and between practical autonomy and legal anonymity.** By shifting the locus of freedoms from unique persons to generic citizens -- and in substantial sympathy with both the Platonic renunciation of particularity and the scientific discounting of the exceptional and extraordinary -- **social activist methodology promotes dramatic anonymity in order to universally realize the operation of 'blind justice'. Much as hard technologies of control silence the contributions of wilderness and turn us away from the rewards of a truly joint improvisation of order, the process of social activism reduces the relevance of the always unique and unprecedented terrain of our interdependence. This is no small loss. The institutions that guarantee our generic independence effectively pave over those vernacular relationships through which our own contributory virtuosity might be developed and shared -- relationships out of which the exceptional meaning of our immediate situation might be continuously realized.** In contrast with Buddhist emptiness -- a practice that entails attending to the mutual relevance of all things -- **both the aims and strategies of social activism are conducive to an evacuation of the conditions of dramatic virtuosity, a societal depletion of our resources for meaningfully improvised and liberating intimacy with all things.**

#### And, their desire for immediate solvency cloaks desire to win in the language of political effectiveness. Voting aff and voting neg have the same immediate effects – a debate wins and a debate team loses. Lets get our collective heads out of our asses and realize the limits of our activity

Robyn **WIEGMAN** Women’s Studies & Literature @ Duke **’12** *Object Lessons* p.313-314

The Vertigo of Critique But critique of any kind is a curious sort of work. The actual labor of it requires endurance, and like most kinds of endurance it is easy to be tricked by the fantasy of closure necessary to arrive at the end. This is why some of us invest overly in the plan as if it holds the power of the future's perfection, while others interpret the cultivation of immunity to doubt as sheer bravado and self-assertion. Because critical anxieties tend to coalesce around the threat of endless postponement, it is routine to be relieved by any kind of arrival, even those that portray its author as disheveled or half-dead. Prematurity, on the other hand, is hardly a risk, since academic life never considers early arrival at the finish an ill. The fantasy of closure refuses the possibility that talent lies in the ability to let the process itself prevail. This is the case, I think, no matter how valuable scholars might actually find the practice of critical thinking, or how pleasurable it can be to inhabit the struggle with language that the labor of writing entails. Closure is, after all, necessary, not just for the academic professional in need of a recent publication, but also, more urgently, for the political demands implicit in left identity critique. How else will the failure of the future be averted, if it is not possible to find better ways to understand the world we seek to change, or if we fail to understand the change we need to imagine or, worse, if we cannot imagine the change we need to understand? These questions demonstrate the broader stakes of any project's devolution and why critique is most often the device used to discern how other people's ideas are inadequate to the desires we have invested in them, not the means of tracking the failures and inconsistencies in our own. So how did my own fantasy of closure fail? Had I begun with the wrong question? Did my title misconceive? Was my opening statement weak? Or did I simply misapprehend what mattered about the question when it arrived into critical legibility? These are all possibilities, but it is most likely that I enjoyed the fact that the value of the question lay in what it allowed me to ignore. There's pleasure, after all, in thinking that we can think our way somewhere, and more than a little pleasure in thinking that we might get there when others cannot. This is not a pleasure identity knowledge workers typically acknowledge, in part because we are too busy making claims for the world-making labor that critique entails, which repeatedly cloaks professional investments in the noble rhetoric of the political desire that incites it. But to openly embrace the pleasure that comes from the limits and prohibitions which the question routinely orders? That risks revealing much more than we want to know, including our love of disciplinary blindnesses and the methodological circumscriptions that guarantee them, as well as our need to reward ourselves by accomplishing tasks that bolster our belief that we can. This might be one way of explaining why the rhetoric of critique can function as a practice of self-assurance or how, to put it slightly differently, the present is overwhelmed, if not overdetermined, by the anxiety and compulsion of arriving at the end. Anticipation may be admissible as a kind of pleasure, but deferrals and dead ends are serious forms of deprivation.