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#### The affirmative’s failure to advance a topical defense of federal policy undermines debate’s transformative and intellectual potential

#### “USFG should” means the debate is only about government policy

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

The Proposition of Policy: Urging Future Action In policy propositions, each topic contains certain key elements, although they have slightly different functions from comparable elements of value-oriented propositions. 1. An agent doing the acting ---“The United States” in “The United States should adopt a policy of free trade.” Like the object of evaluation in a proposition of value, the agent is the subject of the sentence. 2. The verb should—the first part of a verb phrase that urges action. 3. An action verb to follow should in the should-verb combination. For example, should adopt here means to put a program or policy into action through 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.

Resolved is legislative

AOS 4, Army Officer School, 5-12, “# 12, Punctuation – The Colon and Semicolon”, http://usawocc.army.mil/IMI/wg12.htm)

The colon introduces the following: a.  A list, but only after "as follows," "the following," or a noun for which the list is an appositive: Each scout will carry the following: (colon) meals for three days, a survival knife, and his sleeping bag. The company had four new officers: (colon) Bill Smith, Frank Tucker, Peter Fillmore, and Oliver Lewis. b.  A long quotation (one or more paragraphs): In The Killer Angels Michael Shaara wrote: (colon) You may find it a different story from the one you learned in school. There have been many versions of that battle [Gettysburg] and that war [the Civil War]. (The quote continues for two more paragraphs.) c.  A formal quotation or question: The President declared: (colon) "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." The question is: (colon) what can we do about it? d.  A second independent clause which explains the first: Potter's motive is clear: (colon) he wants the assignment. e.  After the introduction of a business letter: Dear Sirs: (colon) Dear Madam: (colon) f.  The details following an announcement For sale: (colon) large lakeside cabin with dock g.  A formal resolution, after the word "resolved:" Resolved: (colon) That this council petition the mayor.

#### First, a limited topic of discussion that provides for equitable ground is key to productive inculcation of decision-making and advocacy skills in every and all facets of life---even if their position is contestable that’s distinct from it being valuably debatable---this still provides room for flexibility, creativity, and innovation, but targets the discussion to avoid mere statements of fact---T debates also solve any possible turn

Steinberg & Freeley 8 \*Austin J. Freeley is a Boston based attorney who focuses on criminal, personal injury and civil rights law, AND \*\*David L. Steinberg , Lecturer of Communication Studies @ U Miami, Argumentation and Debate: Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making pp45-

Debate is a means of settling differences, so there must be a difference of opinion or a conflict of interest before there can be a debate. If everyone is in agreement on a tact or value or policy, there is no need for debate: the matter can be settled by unanimous consent. Thus, for example, it would be pointless to attempt to debate "Resolved: That two plus two equals four," because there is simply no controversy about this statement. (Controversy is an essential prerequisite of debate. Where there is no clash of ideas, proposals, interests, or expressed positions on issues, there is no debate. In addition, debate cannot produce effective decisions without clear identification of a question or questions to be answered. For example, general argument may occur about the broad topic of illegal immigration. How many illegal immigrants are in the United States? What is the impact of illegal immigration and immigrants on our economy? What is their impact on our communities? Do they commit crimes? Do they take jobs from American workers? Do they pay taxes? Do they require social services? Is it a problem that some do not speak English? Is it the responsibility of employers to discourage illegal immigration by not hiring undocumented workers? Should they have the opportunity- to gain citizenship? Docs illegal immigration pose a security threat to our country? Do illegal immigrants do work that American workers are unwilling to do? Are their rights as workers and as human beings at risk due to their status? Are they abused by employers, law enforcement, housing, and businesses? I low are their families impacted by their status? What is the moral and philosophical obligation of a nation state to maintain its borders? Should we build a wall on the Mexican border, establish a national identification can!, or enforce existing laws against employers? Should we invite immigrants to become U.S. citizens? Surely you can think of many more concerns to be addressed by a conversation about the topic area of illegal immigration. Participation in this "debate" is likely to be emotional and intense. However, it is not likely to be productive or useful without focus on a particular question and identification of a line demarcating sides in the controversy. To be discussed and resolved effectively, controversies must be stated clearly. Vague understanding results in unfocused deliberation and poor decisions, frustration, and emotional distress, as evidenced by the failure of the United States Congress to make progress on the immigration debate during the summer of 2007.

Someone disturbed by the problem of the growing underclass of poorly educated, socially disenfranchised youths might observe, "Public schools are doing a terrible job! They are overcrowded, and many teachers are poorly qualified in their subject areas. Even the best teachers can do little more than struggle to maintain order in their classrooms." That same concerned citizen, facing a complex range of issues, might arrive at an unhelpful decision, such as "We ought to do something about this" or. worse. "It's too complicated a problem to deal with." Groups of concerned citizens worried about the state of public education could join together to express their frustrations, anger, disillusionment, and emotions regarding the schools, but without a focus for their discussions, they could easily agree about the sorry state of education without finding points of clarity or potential solutions. A gripe session would follow. But if a precise question is posed—such as "What can be done to improve public education?"—then a more profitable area of discussion is opened up simply by placing a focus on the search for a concrete solution step. One or more judgments can be phrased in the form of debate propositions, motions for parliamentary debate, or bills for legislative assemblies. The statements "Resolved: That the federal government should implement a program of charter schools in at-risk communities" and "Resolved: That the state of Florida should adopt a school voucher program" more clearly identify specific ways of dealing with educational problems in a manageable form, suitable for debate. They provide specific policies to be investigated and aid discussants in identifying points of difference.

To have a productive debate, which facilitates effective decision making by directing and placing limits on the decision to be made, the basis for argument should be clearly defined. If we merely talk about "homelessness" or "abortion" or "crime'\* or "global warming" we are likely to have an interesting discussion but not to establish profitable basis for argument. For example, the statement "Resolved: That the pen is mightier than the sword" is debatable, yet fails to provide much basis for clear argumentation. If we take this statement to mean that the written word is more effective than physical force for some purposes, we can identify a problem area: the comparative effectiveness of writing or physical force for a specific purpose.

Although we now have a general subject, we have not yet stated a problem. It is still too broad, too loosely worded to promote well-organized argument. What sort of writing are we concerned with—poems, novels, government documents, website development, advertising, or what? What does "effectiveness" mean in this context? What kind of physical force is being compared—fists, dueling swords, bazookas, nuclear weapons, or what? A more specific question might be. "Would a mutual defense treaty or a visit by our fleet be more effective in assuring Liurania of our support in a certain crisis?" The basis for argument could be phrased in a debate proposition such as "Resolved: That the United States should enter into a mutual defense treatv with Laurania." Negative advocates might oppose this proposition by arguing that fleet maneuvers would be a better solution. This is not to say that debates should completely avoid creative interpretation of the controversy by advocates, or that good debates cannot occur over competing interpretations of the controversy; in fact, these sorts of debates may be very engaging. The point is that debate is best facilitated by the guidance provided by focus on a particular point of difference, which will be outlined in the following discussion.

#### Second, discussion of specific policy-questions is crucial for skills development---we control uniqueness: university students already have preconceived and ideological notions about how the world operates---government policy discussion is vital to force engagement with and resolution of competing perspectives to improve social outcomes, however those outcomes may be defined---and, it breaks out of traditional pedagogical frameworks by positing students as agents of decision-making

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

These government or quasi-government think tank simulations often provide very similar lessons for high-level players as are learned by students in educational simulations. Government participants learn about the importance of understanding foreign perspectives, the need to practice internal coordination, and the necessity to compromise and coordinate with other governments in negotiations and crises. During the Cold War, political scientist Robert Mandel noted how crisis exercises and war games forced government officials to overcome ‘‘bureaucratic myopia,’’ moving beyond their normal organizational roles and thinking more creatively about how others might react in a crisis or conflict.6 The skills of imagination and the subsequent ability to predict foreign interests and reactions remain critical for real-world foreign policy makers. For example, simulations of the Iranian nuclear crisis\*held in 2009 and 2010 at the Brookings Institution’s Saban Center and at Harvard University’s Belfer Center, and involving former US senior officials and regional experts\*highlighted the dangers of misunderstanding foreign governments’ preferences and misinterpreting their subsequent behavior. In both simulations, the primary criticism of the US negotiating team lay in a failure to predict accurately how other states, both allies and adversaries, would behave in response to US policy initiatives.7

By university age, students often have a pre-defined view of international affairs, and the literature on simulations in education has long emphasized how such exercises force students to challenge their assumptions about how other governments behave and how their own government works.8 Since simulations became more common as a teaching tool in the late 1950s, educational literature has expounded on their benefits, from encouraging engagement by breaking from the typical lecture format, to improving communication skills, to promoting teamwork.9 More broadly, simulations can deepen understanding by asking students to link fact and theory, providing a context for facts while bringing theory into the realm of practice.10 These exercises are particularly valuable in teaching international affairs for many of the same reasons they are useful for policy makers: they force participants to ‘‘grapple with the issues arising from a world in flux.’’11 Simulations have been used successfully to teach students about such disparate topics as European politics, the Kashmir crisis, and US response to the mass killings in Darfur.12 Role-playing exercises certainly encourage students to learn political and technical facts\* but they learn them in a more active style. Rather than sitting in a classroom and merely receiving knowledge, students actively research ‘‘their’’ government’s positions and actively argue, brief, and negotiate with others.13 Facts can change quickly; simulations teach students how to contextualize and act on information.14

#### Effective decision-making outweighs---

#### Key to social improvements in every and all facets of life

Steinberg & Freeley 8 \*Austin J. Freeley is a Boston based attorney who focuses on criminal, personal injury and civil rights law, AND \*\*David L. Steinberg , Lecturer of Communication Studies @ U Miami, Argumentation and Debate: Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making pp9-10

If we assume it to be possible without recourse to violence to reach agreement on all the problems implied in the employment of the idea of justice we are granting the possibility of formulating an ideal of man and society, valid for all beings endowed with reason and accepted by what we have called elsewhere the universal audience.14

I think that the only discursive methods available to us stem from techniques that are not demonstrative—that is, conclusive and rational in the narrow sense of the term—but from argumentative techniques which are not conclusive but which may tend to demonstrate the reasonable character of the conceptions put forward. It is this recourse to the rational and reasonable for the realization of the ideal of universal communion that characterizes the age-long endeavor of all philosophies in their aspiration for a city of man in which violence may progressively give way to wisdom.13

Whenever an individual controls the dimensions of" a problem, he or she can solve the problem through a personal decision. For example, if the problem is whether to go to the basketball game tonight, if tickets are not too expensive and if transportation is available, the decision can be made individually. But if a friend's car is needed to get to the game, then that person's decision to furnish the transportation must be obtained.

Complex problems, too, are subject to individual decision making. American business offers many examples of small companies that grew into major corporations while still under the individual control of the founder. Some computer companies that began in the 1970s as one-person operations burgeoned into multimillion-dollar corporations with the original inventor still making all the major decisions. And some of the multibillion-dollar leveraged buyouts of the 1980s were put together by daring—some would say greedy—financiers who made the day-to-day and even hour-to-hour decisions individually.

When President George H. W. Bush launched Operation Desert Storm, when President Bill Clinton sent troops into Somalia and Haiti and authorized Operation Desert Fox, and when President George W. Bush authorized Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom in Iraq, they each used different methods of decision making, but in each case the ultimate decision was an individual one. In fact, many government decisions can be made only by the president. As Walter Lippmann pointed out, debate is the only satisfactory way the exact issues can be decided:

A president, whoever he is, has to find a way of understanding the novel and changing issues which he must, under the Constitution, decide. Broadly speaking ... the president has two ways of making up his mind. The one is to turn to his subordinates—to his chiefs of staff and his cabinet officers and undersecretaries and the like—and to direct them to argue out the issues and to bring him an agreed decision…

The other way is to sit like a judge at a hearing where the issues to be decided are debated. After he has heard the debate, after he has examined the evidence, after he has heard the debaters cross-examine one another, after he has questioned them himself he makes his decision…

It is a much harder method in that it subjects the president to the stress of feeling the full impact of conflicting views, and then to the strain of making his decision, fully aware of how momentous it Is. But there is no other satisfactory way by which momentous and complex issues can be decided.16

John F. Kennedy used Cabinet sessions and National Security Council meetings to provide debate to illuminate diverse points of view, expose errors, and challenge assumptions before he reached decisions.17 As he gained experience in office, he placed greater emphasis on debate. One historian points out: "One reason for the difference between the Bay of Pigs and the missile crisis was that [the Bay of Pig\*] fiasco instructed Kennedy in the importance of uninhibited debate in advance of major decision."18 All presidents, to varying degrees, encourage debate among their advisors.

We may never be called on to render the final decision on great issues of national policy, but we are constantly concerned with decisions important to ourselves for which debate can be applied in similar ways. That is, this debate may take place in our minds as we weigh the pros and cons of the problem, or we may arrange for others to debate the problem for us. Because we all are increasingly involved in the decisions of the campus, community, and society in general, it is in our intelligent self-interest to reach these decisions through reasoned debate.

#### Only portable skill---means our framework turns case

Steinberg & Freeley 8 \*Austin J. Freeley is a Boston based attorney who focuses on criminal, personal injury and civil rights law, AND \*\*David L. Steinberg , Lecturer of Communication Studies @ U Miami, Argumentation and Debate: Critical Thinking for Reasoned Decision Making pp9-10

After several days of intense debate, first the United States House of Representatives and then the U.S. Senate voted to authorize President George W. Bush to attack Iraq if Saddam Hussein refused to give up weapons of mass destruction as required by United Nations's resolutions. Debate about a possible military\* action against Iraq continued in various governmental bodies and in the public for six months, until President Bush ordered an attack on Baghdad, beginning Operation Iraqi Freedom, the military campaign against the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein. He did so despite the unwillingness of the U.N. Security Council to support the military action, and in the face of significant international opposition.

Meanwhile, and perhaps equally difficult for the parties involved, a young couple deliberated over whether they should purchase a large home to accommodate their growing family or should sacrifice living space to reside in an area with better public schools; elsewhere a college sophomore reconsidered his major and a senior her choice of law school, graduate school, or a job. Each of these\* situations called for decisions to be made. Each decision maker worked hard to make well-reasoned decisions.

Decision making is a thoughtful process of choosing among a variety of options for acting or thinking. It requires that the decider make a choice. Life demands decision making. We make countless individual decisions every day. To make some of those decisions, we work hard to employ care and consideration; others seem to just happen. Couples, families, groups of friends, and coworkers come together to make choices, and decision-making homes from committees to juries to the U.S. Congress and the United Nations make decisions that impact us all. Every profession requires effective and ethical decision making, as do our school, community, and social organizations.

We all make many decisions even- day. To refinance or sell one's home, to buy a high-performance SUV or an economical hybrid car. what major to select, what to have for dinner, what candidate CO vote for. paper or plastic, all present lis with choices. Should the president deal with an international crisis through military invasion or diplomacy? How should the U.S. Congress act to address illegal immigration?

Is the defendant guilty as accused? Tlie Daily Show or the ball game? And upon what information should I rely to make my decision? Certainly some of these decisions are more consequential than others. Which amendment to vote for, what television program to watch, what course to take, which phone plan to purchase, and which diet to pursue all present unique challenges. At our best, we seek out research and data to inform our decisions. Yet even the choice of which information to attend to requires decision making. In 2006, TIMI: magazine named YOU its "Person of the Year." Congratulations! Its selection was based on the participation not of ''great men" in the creation of history, but rather on the contributions of a community of anonymous participants in the evolution of information. Through blogs. online networking. You Tube. Facebook, MySpace, Wikipedia, and many other "wikis," knowledge and "truth" are created from the bottom up, bypassing the authoritarian control of newspeople. academics, and publishers. We have access to infinite quantities of information, but how do we sort through it and select the best information for our needs?

The ability of every decision maker to make good, reasoned, and ethical decisions relies heavily upon their ability to think critically. Critical thinking enables one to break argumentation down to its component parts in order to evaluate its relative validity and strength. Critical thinkers are better users of information, as well as better advocates.

Colleges and universities expect their students to develop their critical thinking skills and may require students to take designated courses to that end. The importance and value of such study is widely recognized.

Much of the most significant communication of our lives is conducted in the form of debates. These may take place in intrapersonal communications, in which we weigh the pros and cons of an important decision in our own minds, or they may take place in interpersonal communications, in which we listen to arguments intended to influence our decision or participate in exchanges to influence the decisions of others.

Our success or failure in life is largely determined by our ability to make wise decisions for ourselves and to influence the decisions of others in ways that are beneficial to us. Much of our significant, purposeful activity is concerned with making decisions. Whether to join a campus organization, go to graduate school, accept a job oiler, buy a car or house, move to another city, invest in a certain stock, or vote for Garcia—these are just a few of the thousands of decisions we may have to make. Often, intelligent self-interest or a sense of responsibility will require us to win the support of others. We may want a scholarship or a particular job for ourselves, a customer for out product, or a vote for our favored political candidate.

#### Effective deliberation is the lynchpin of solving all existential global problems

Christian O. Lundberg 10 Professor of Communications @ University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, “Tradition of Debate in North Carolina” in Navigating Opportunity: Policy Debate in the 21st Century By Allan D. Louden, p311

The second major problem with the critique that identifies a naivety in articulating debate and democracy is that it presumes that the primary pedagogical outcome of debate is speech capacities. But the democratic capacities built by debate are not limited to speech—as indicated earlier, **debate builds capacity for critical thinking**, analysis of public claims, **informed decision making**, and **better public judgment**. If the picture of modem political life that underwrites this critique of debate is a pessimistic view of increasingly labyrinthine and bureaucratic administrative politics, rapid scientific and technological change outpacing the capacities of the citizenry to comprehend them, and ever-expanding insular special-interest- and money-driven politics, it is a **puzzling solution, at best, to argue that these conditions warrant giving up on debate**. If democracy is open to rearticulation, it is open to rearticulation precisely because **as the challenges of modern political life proliferate, the citizenry's capacities can change**, which is one of the primary reasons that theorists of democracy such as Ocwey in The Public awl Its Problems place such a high premium on education (Dewey 1988,63, 154). Debate provides an indispensible form of education in the modem articulation of democracy because it **builds precisely the skills that allow the citizenry to research and be informed** about policy decisions that impact them, to son rhroueh and evaluate the evidence for and relative merits of arguments for and against a policy in an increasingly infonnation-rich environment, and to prioritize their time and political energies toward policies that matter the most to them.

The merits of debate as a tool for building democratic capacity-building take on a special significance in the context of information literacy. John Larkin (2005, HO) argues that one of the primary failings of modern colleges and universities is that they have not changed curriculum to match with the challenges of a new information environment. This is a problem for the course of academic study in our current context, but perhaps more important, argues Larkin, for the future of a citizenry that will need to make evaluative choices against an increasingly complex and multimediatcd information environment (ibid-). Larkin's study tested the benefits of debate participation on information-literacy skills and concluded that in-class debate participants reported significantly higher self-efficacy ratings of their ability to navigate academic search databases and to effectively search and use other Web resources:

To analyze the self-report ratings of the instructional and control group students, we first conducted a multivariate analysis of variance on all of the ratings, looking jointly at the effect of instmction/no instruction and debate topic . . . that it did not matter which topic students had been assigned . . . students in the Instnictional [debate) group were significantly more confident in their ability to access information and less likely to feel that they needed help to do so----These findings clearly indicate greater self-efficacy for online searching among students who participated in (debate).... These results constitute strong support for the effectiveness of the project on students' self-efficacy for online searching in the academic databases. There was an unintended effect, however: After doing ... the project, instructional group students also felt more confident than the other students in their ability to get good information from Yahoo and Google. It may be that the library research experience increased self-efficacy for any searching, not just in academic databases. (Larkin 2005, 144)

Larkin's study substantiates Thomas Worthcn and Gaylcn Pack's (1992, 3) claim that debate in the college classroom plays a critical role in fostering the kind of **problem-solving skills** demanded by the increasingly rich media and information environment of modernity. Though their essay was written in 1992 on the cusp of the eventual explosion of the Internet as a medium, Worthcn and Pack's framing of the issue was prescient: the primary question facing today's student has changed from how to best research a topic to the crucial question of learning how to best evaluate which arguments to cite and rely upon from an easily accessible and veritable cornucopia of materials.

There are, without a doubt, a number of important criticisms of employing debate as a model for democratic deliberation. But cumulatively, the evidence presented here warrants strong support for expanding debate practice in the classroom as a technology **for enhancing democratic deliberative capacities**. The unique combination of critical thinking skills, research and information processing skills, oral communication skills, and capacities for listening and thoughtful, open engagement with hotly contested issues argues for debate as a **crucial component of a rich and vital democratic life**. In-class debate practice both aids students in achieving the best goals of college and university education, and serves as an unmatched practice for creating thoughtful, engaged, open-minded and self-critical students who are open to the possibilities of **meaningful political engagement** and **new articulations of democratic life.**

Expanding this practice is crucial, if only because the more we produce citizens that can actively and effectively engage the political process, the more likely we are to **produce revisions of democratic life** that are **necessary if democracy is not only to survive, but to thrive**. Democracy faces a myriad of challenges, including: domestic and international **issues of class, gender, and racial justice**; wholesale **environmental destruction** and the potential for **rapid climate change**; emerging **threats to international stability** in the form of terrorism, intervention and new possibilities for great power conflict; and increasing **challenges of rapid globalization** including an increasingly volatile global economic structure. More than any specific policy or proposal, an **informed and active citizenry that deliberates with greater skill** and sensitivity provides one of the best hopes for responsive and effective democratic governance, and by extension, one of the last best hopes for dealing with the **existential challenges** to democracy [in an] increasingly complex world.

### Dialogue DA

#### Topical fairness requirements are key to effective dialogue—monopolizing strategy and prep makes the discussion one-sided and subverts any meaningful neg role

Galloway 7—Samford Comm prof (Ryan, Contemporary Argumentation and Debate, Vol. 28, 2007)

Debate as a dialogue sets an argumentative table, where all parties receive a relatively fair opportunity to voice their position. Anything that fails to allow participants to have their position articulated denies one side of the argumentative table a fair hearing. The affirmative side is set by the topic and fairness requirements. While affirmative teams have recently resisted affirming the topic, in fact, the topic selection process is rigorous, taking the relative ground of each topic as its central point of departure.¶ Setting the affirmative reciprocally sets the negative. The negative crafts approaches to the topic consistent with affirmative demands. The negative crafts disadvantages, counter-plans, and critical arguments premised on the arguments that the topic allows for the affirmative team. According to fairness norms, each side sits at a relatively balanced argumentative table.¶ When one side takes more than its share, competitive equity suffers. However, it also undermines the respect due to the other involved in the dialogue. When one side excludes the other, it fundamentally denies the personhood of the other participant (Ehninger, 1970, p. 110). A pedagogy of debate as dialogue takes this respect as a fundamental component. A desire to be fair is a fundamental condition of a dialogue that takes the form of a demand for equality of voice. **Far from** being **a banal request for links** to a disadvantage, fairness is a demand for respect, a demand to be heard, a demand that a voice backed by literally months upon **months of preparation**, research, and critical thinking not be silenced.¶ Affirmative cases that suspend basic fairness norms **operate to exclude** particular negative strategies. Unprepared, one side comes to the argumentative table unable to meaningfully participate in a dialogue. They are unable to “understand what ‘went on…’” and are left to the whims of time and power (Farrell, 1985, p. 114). Hugh Duncan furthers this line of reasoning:¶ Opponents not only tolerate but honor and respect each other because in doing so they enhance their own chances of thinking better and reaching sound decisions. Opposition is necessary because it sharpens thought in action. We assume that argument, discussion, and talk, among free an informed people who subordinate decisions of any kind, because it is only through such discussion that we reach agreement which binds us to a common cause…If we are to be equal…relationships among equals must find expression in many formal and informal institutions (Duncan, 1993, p. 196-197).¶ **Debate compensates for the exigencies of the world by offering a framework that maintains equality for the sake of the conversation** (Farrell, 1985, p. 114).¶ For example, an affirmative case on the 2007-2008 college topic might defend neither state nor international action in the Middle East, and yet claim to be germane to the topic in some way. The case essentially denies the arguments that state action is oppressive or that actions in the international arena are philosophically or pragmatically suspect. Instead of allowing for the dialogue to be modified by the interchange of the affirmative case and the negative response, the affirmative subverts any meaningful role to the negative team, preventing them from offering effective “counter-word” and undermining the value of a meaningful exchange of speech acts. **Germaneness and other substitutes for topical action do not accrue the dialogical benefits** of topical advocacy.

#### True challenges to authority require acts of dialogue and self criticism---they otherwise result in the same authoritative exclusion that they critique

Morson 4—Northwestern prof (Greg, Bakhtinian Perspectives on Language, Literacy, and Learning, 317-23)

Sarah Freedman and Arnetha Ball describe learning as a dialogic process. It is not merely a transmission of knowledge, but an activity in which whole selves are formed and acquire new capacities for development. We live in a world of enormous cultural diversity, and the various languages and points of view – ideologies in Bakhtin’s sense – of students have become a fact that cannot be ignored. Teachers need to enter into a dialogue with those points of view and to help students do the same. For difference may best be understood not as an obstacle but as an opportunity. ¶ The range of “authoritative” and “innerly persuasive discourses” in our classrooms appears to be growing along with our cultural diversity. Freedman and Ball observe: “This rich and complex ‘contact zone’ inside the classroom yields plentiful opportunity for students to decide what will be internally persuasive for them, and consequently for them to develop their ideologies. This diversity presents both challenges and opportunities as teachers seek to guide their students on this developmental journey” (pp. 8– 9, this volume). The journey they have in mind does not so much lead to a particular goal as establish an ever-enriching process of learning. ¶ Freedman and Ball’s approach grows out of Bakhtin’s key concepts, especially one that has been largely neglected in research on him: “ideological becoming” (see Chapter 1, this volume). The implications of the essays in this volume therefore extend well beyond educational theory and practice to the humanities and social sciences generally. How does a thinking person– and we are all thinking people – develop? What happens when ideas, embodied in specific people with particular voices, come into dialogic contact? What factors guide the creation of a point of view on the world? The specific problematic of pedagogy serves as a lens to make the broader implications of such questions clearer.¶ 318¶ Authority and testing ¶ How does a person develop a point of view on the world, a set of attitudes for interpreting and evaluating it ? How systematic is that point of view? Is our fundamental take on the world a philosophy with implicit doctrines or is it more like a set of inclinations and a way of probing? Perhaps it is not one, but a collection of ways of probing, a panoply of skills and habits, which a person tries out one after another the way in which one may, in performing a physical task, reach for one tool after another? What does our point of view have to do with our sense of ourselves, whether as individuals or as members of groups? What role does formal education play in acquiring and shaping it? What happens when contrary evidence confronts us or when the radical uncertainty of the world impinges on us? Whatever that “point of view” is, how does it change over time ? ¶ In any given culture or subculture, there tends to be what Bakhtin would call an “authoritative” perspective. However, the role of that perspective is not necessarily authoritarian. Despite Bakhtin’s experience as a Soviet citizen, where the right perspective on just about all publicly identified perspectives was held to be already known and certain, he was well aware that outside that circle of presumed certainty life was still governed by opinion. It is not just that rival ideologies – Christian, liberal, and many others – were still present; beyond that, each individual’s experiences led to half-formed but strongly held beliefs that enjoyed no formal expression. Totalitarianism was surely an aspiration of the Soviet and other such regimes, but it could never realize its ideal of uniformity–“the new Soviet man” who was all of a piece – for some of the same reasons it could not make a centrally planned economy work. There is always too much contingent, unexpected, particular, local, and idiosyncratic, with a historical or personal background that does not fit. ¶ Bakhtin may be viewed as the great philosopher of all that does not fit. He saw the world as irreducibly messy, unsystematizable, and contingent, and he regarded it as all the better for that. For life to have meaning, it must possess what he called “surprisingness.” If individual people are to act morally, they cannot displace their responsibility onto some systematic ideology, whether Marxist, Christian, or any other. What I do now is not reducible to any ethical, political, or metaphysical system; and I – each “I”– must take responsibility for his or her acts at this moment. As Bakhtin liked to say, there is “no alibi.” ¶ Authoritative words in their fully expressed form purport to offer an alibi. They say, like Dostoevsky’s Grand Inquisitor: we speak the truth and you need not question, only obey, for your conscience to be at rest. Yet, every authoritative word is spoken or heard in a milieu of difference. It may try to insulate itself from dialogue with reverential tones, a special script, and all the other signs of the authority fused to it, but at the margins¶ 319¶ dialogue waits with a challenge: you may be right, but you have to convince me. Once the authoritative word responds to that challenge, it ceases to be fully authoritative. To be sure, it may still command considerable deference by virtue of its past, its moral aura, and its omnipresence. But it has ceased to be free from dialogue and its authority has changed from unquestioned to dialogically tested. Every educator crosses this line when he or she gives reasons for a truth. ¶ My daughter once had a math teacher who, when asked why a certain procedure was used to solve an equation, would reply, “because some old, dead guy said so.” Of course, no answer could be further from the spirit of mathematics, where logic counts for everything and authority for nothing. Nobody proves the Pythagorean theorem by saying Pythagoras said so. Compare this reply with actually showing the logic of a procedure so the student understands the “why.” In that case, one immediately admits that there must be a good reason for proceeding in a certain way, and that it needs to be shown. The procedure does not end up as less sure because of this questioning; quite the contrary. Rather, questioning is seen as intrinsic to mathematics itself, which enjoys its authority precisely because it has survived such questioning. ¶ Even in fields that do not admit of mathematical proof, an authoritative word does not necessarily lose all authority when questioning enters into it. We can give no mathematically sure reason why democracy is preferable to dictatorship or market economies are generally more productive than command economies. But we can give reasons, which admit the possibilities of challenges we had not foreseen and may have to think about. Education and all inquiry are fundamentally different when the need for reasons is acknowledged and when questioning becomes part of the process of learning. Truth becomes dialogically tested and forever testable. ¶ In short, authoritative words may or may not be authoritarian. In the Soviet Union, authoritarian words were the norm and questioning was seen as suspect. One no more questioned Marxism-Leninism than one questioned the law of gravity (a common comparison, suggesting that each was equally sure). What the Party said was right because it was the outcome of sure historical laws guaranteeing the correctness of its rulings. Education reflected this spirit. Bakhtin’s embrace of dialogue, then, challenged not so much the economic or historical theories the regime propounded, but its very concept of truth and the language of truth it embraced. Dialogue by its very nature invites questioning, thrives on it, demands it. ¶ It follows from Bakhtin’s argument that nonauthoritarian authoritative words are not necessarily weaker than authoritarian ones. After all, one may believe something all the more because one has questioned it, provided that defenders have been willing to answer and have been more or less cogent in their defense. They need not answer all objections perfectly – we are often convinced with qualifications, with a “just in case,” with “loopholes.”¶ 320¶ However, they must demonstrate that the authority is based on generally sound reasons. Morever, for many, enormous persuasive power lies in the very fact that the authoritative belief is so widely held. Everyone speaks it, even if with ironizing quotation marks. ¶ An authoritative word of this nonauthoritarian kind functions not as a voice speaking the Truth, but as a voice speaking the one point of view that must be attended to. It may be contested, rejected, or modified, the way in which church dogmas are modified over time by believers, but it cannot be ignored. Think of Huck Finn (discussed by Mark Dressman, this volume). Even when he cannot bring himself to turn in Jim as a runaway slave, he accepts the authority of the social voice telling him that such an action would be right. He does not question that voice, just realizes he will not follow it and will do “wrong.” Much of the moral complexity of this book lies in Huck’s self-questioning, as he does what we believe to be right but what he thinks of as wrong; and if we read this book sensitively, we may ask ourselves how much of our own behavior is Huckish in this respect. Perhaps our failure to live up to our ideals bespeaks our intuition without overt expression that there is something wrong with those ideals. What Huck demonstrates is that there may be a wisdom, even a belief system, in behavior itself: we always know more than we know, and our moral sensitivity may be different from, and wiser than, our professed beliefs. ¶ our own authoritative words ¶ The basic power of an authoritative voice comes from its status as the one that everyone hears. Everyone has heard that democracy is good and apartheid is bad, that the environment needs preserving, that church must not be merged with state; and people who spend their lives in an academic environment may add many more to the list. In our academic subculture, we are, almost all of us, persuaded of the rightness of greater economic equality, of plans for inclusion and affirmative action, of abortion rights, of peace, of greater efforts to reach out to all the people in the world in all their amazing diversity. These are our authoritative voices, and , too, we may accept either because they are simply not to be questioned or because we have sought out intelligent opponents who have questioned them and have thought about, if not ultimately accepted, their answers. Again, educators know the moment when a student from a background different from ours questions one of our beliefs and we experience the temptation to reply like that math teacher. Thinking of ourselves as oppositional, we often forget that we, too, have our own authoritative discourse and must work to remember that, in a world of difference, authority may not extend to those unlike us. ¶ The testable authoritative voice: we hear it always, and though some may disagree with it, they cannot ignore it. Its nonauthoritarian power is based¶ 321¶ above all on its ubiquity. In a society that is relatively open to diverse values, that minimal, but still significant, function of an authoritative voice is the most important one. It demands not adherence but attention. And such a voice is likely to survive far longer than an authoritarian voice whose rejection is necessarily its destruction. We have all these accounts of Soviet dissidents – say, Solzhenitsyn – who tell their story as a “narrative of rethinking” (to use Christian Knoeller’s phrase): they once believed in Communist ideology, but events caused them to raise some questions that by their nature could not be publicly voiced, and that silence itself proved most telling. You can hear silence if it follows a pistol shot. If silence does not succeed in ending private questioning, the word that silence defends is decisively weakened. The story of Soviet dissidents is typically one in which, at some point, questioning moved from a private, furtive activity accompanied by guilt to the opposite extreme, a clear rejection in which the authoritative voice lost all hold altogether. Vulnerability accompanies too much power. ¶ But in more open societies, and in healthier kinds of individual development, an authoritative voice of the whole society, or of a particular community (like our own academic community), still sounds, still speaks to us in our minds. In fact, we commonly see that people who have questioned and rejected an authoritative voice find that it survives within them as a possible alternative, like the minority opinion in a court decision. When they are older, they discover that experience has vindicated some part of what they had summarily rejected. Perhaps the authoritative voice had more to it than we thought when young? Now that we are teachers, perhaps we see some of the reasons for practices we objected to? Can we, then, combine in a new practice both the practices of our teachers and the new insights we have had? When we do, a flexible authoritative word emerges, one that has become to a great extent an innerly persuasive one. By a lengthy process, the word has, with many changes, become our own, and our own word has in the process acquired the intonations of authority. ¶ In much the same way, we react to the advice of our parents. At some point it may seem dated, no more than what an earlier generation unfortunately thought, or we may greet it with the sign of regret that our parents have forgotten what they experienced when our age. However, the dialogue goes on. At a later point, we may say, you know, there was wisdom in what our parents said, only why did they express it so badly? If only I had known! We may even come to the point where we express some modified form of parental wisdom in a convincing voice. We translate it into our own idiolect, confident that we will not make the mistakes of our parents when we talk to our children. Then our children listen, and find our own idiolect, to which we have devoted such painful ideological and verbal work, hopelessly dated, and the process may start again. ¶ It is always a difficult moment when we realize that our own voice is now the authority, especially because we have made it different, persuasive in its¶ 322¶ own terms, not like our parents’ voice. When we reflect on how our children see us, we may even realize that our parents’ authoritative words may not have been the product of blind acceptance, but the result of a process much like our own. They may have done the same thing we did – question, reject, adapt, arrive at a new version – and that rigid voice of authority we heard from them was partly in our own ears. Can we somehow convey to our students our own words so they do not sound so rigid? We all think we can. But so did our parents (and other authorities).¶ Dialogue, Laughter, And Surprise ¶ Bakhtin viewed the whole process of “ideological” (in the sense of ideas and values, however unsystematic) development as an endless dialogue. As teachers, we find it difficult to avoid a voice of authority, however much we may think of ours as the rebel’s voice, because our rebelliousness against society at large speaks in the authoritative voice of our subculture. We speak the language and thoughts of academic educators, even when we imagine we are speaking in no jargon at all, and that jargon, inaudible to us, sounds with all the overtones of authority to our students. We are so prone to think of ourselves as fighting oppression that it takes some work to realize that we ourselves may be felt as oppressive and overbearing, and that our own voice may provoke the same reactions that we feel when we hear an authoritative voice with which we disagree. ¶ So it is often helpful to think back on the great authoritative oppressors and reconstruct their self-image: helpful, but often painful. I remember, many years ago, when, as a recent student rebel and activist, I taught a course on “The Theme of the Rebel” and discovered, to my considerable chagrin, that many of the great rebels of history were the very same people as the great oppressors. There is a famous exchange between Erasmus and Luther, who hoped to bring the great Dutch humanist over to the Reformation, but Erasmus kept asking Luther how he could be so certain of so many doctrinal points. We must accept a few things to be Christians at all, Erasmus wrote, but surely beyond that there must be room for us highly fallible beings to disagree. Luther would have none of such tentativeness. He knew, he was sure. The Protestant rebels were, for a while, far more intolerant than their orthodox opponents. Often enough, the oppressors are the ones who present themselves and really think of themselves as liberators. Certainty that one knows the root cause of evil: isn’t that itself often the root cause? ¶ We know from Tsar Ivan the Terrible’s letters denouncing Prince Kurbsky, a general who escaped to Poland, that Ivan saw himself as someone who had been oppressed by noblemen as a child and pictured himself as the great rebel against traditional authority when he killed masses of people or destroyed whole towns. There is something in the nature of maximal rebellion against authority that produces ever greater intolerance, unless one is very careful. ¶ 323¶ For the skills of fighting or refuting an oppressive power are not those of openness, self-skepticism, or real dialogue. In preparing for my course, I remember my dismay at reading Hitler’s Mein Kampf and discovering that his self-consciousness was precisely that of the rebel speaking in the name of oppressed Germans, and that much of his amazing appeal – otherwise so inexplicable – was to the German sense that they were rebelling victims. In our time, the Serbian Communist and nationalist leader Slobodan Milosevic exploited much the same appeal. Bakhtin surely knew that Communist totalitarianism, the Gulag, and the unprecedented censorship were constructed by rebels who had come to power. His favorite writer, Dostoevsky, used to emphasize that the worst oppression comes from those who, with the rebellious psychology of “the insulted and humiliated,” have seized power – unless they have somehow cultivated the value of dialogue, as Lenin surely had not, but which Eva, in the essay by Knoeller about teaching The Autobiography of Malcolm X, surely had. ¶ Rebels often make the worst tyrants because their word, the voice they hear in their consciousness, has borrowed something crucial from the authoritative word it opposed, and perhaps exaggerated it: the aura of righteous authority. If one’s ideological becoming is understood as a struggle in which one has at last achieved the truth, one is likely to want to impose that truth with maximal authority; and rebels of the next generation may proceed in much the same way, in an ongoing spiral of intolerance. By contrast, if one’s rebellion against an authoritative word is truly dialogic, that is unlikely to happen, or to be subject to more of a self-check if it does. Then one questions one’s own certainties and invites skepticism, lest one become what one has opposed. One may even step back and laugh at oneself. ¶ Laughter at oneself invites the perspective of the other. Laughter is implicitly pluralist. Instead of looking at one’s opponents as the unconditionally wrong, one imagines how one sounds to them. Regarding earlier authorities, one thinks: that voice of authority, it is not my voice, but perhaps it has something to say, however wrongly put. It comes from a specific experience, which I must understand. I will correct it, but to do that I must measure it, test it, against my own experience. Dialogue is a process of real testing, and one of the characteristics of a genuine test is that the result is not guaranteed. It may turn out that sometimes the voice of earlier authority turns out to be right on some point. Well, we will incorporate that much into our own “innerly persuasive voice.” Once one has done this, once one has allowed one’s own evolving convictions to be tested by experience and by other convictions, then one may allow the dialogue to continue.

#### Substantive constraints on the debate are key to actualize effective pluralism and agonistic democracy

John Dryzek 6, Professor of Social and Political Theory, The Australian National University, Reconciling Pluralism and Consensus as Political Ideals, American Journal of Political Science,Vol. 50, No. 3, July 2006, Pp. 634–649

A more radical contemporary pluralism is suspicious of liberal and communitarian devices for reconciling difference. Such a critical pluralism is associated with agonists such as Connolly (1991), Honig (1993), and Mouffe (2000), and difference democrats such as Young (2000). As Honig puts it, “Difference is just another word for what used to be called pluralism” (1996, 60). Critical pluralists resemble liberals in that they begin from the variety of ways it is possible to experience the world, but stress that the experiences and perspectives of marginalized and oppressed groups are likely to be very different from dominant groups. They also have a strong suspicion ofliberal theory that looks neutral but in practice supports and serves the powerful.

Difference democrats are hostile to consensus, partly because consensus decisionmaking (of the sort popular in 1970s radical groups) conceals informal oppression under the guise of concern for all by disallowing dissent (Zablocki 1980). But the real target is political theory that deploys consensus, especially deliberative and liberal theory. Young (1996, 125–26) argues that the appeals to unity and the common good that deliberative theorists under sway of the consensus ideal stress as the proper forms of political communication can often be oppressive. For deliberation so oriented all too easily equates the common good with the interests of the more powerful, thus sidelining legitimate concerns of the marginalized. Asking the underprivileged to set aside their particularistic concerns also means marginalizing their favored forms of expression, especially the telling of personal stories (Young 1996, 126).3 Speaking for an agonistic conception of democracy (to which Young also subscribes; 2000, 49–51), Mouffe states:

To negate the ineradicable character of antagonism and aim at a universal rational consensus— that is the real threat to democracy. Indeed, this can lead to violence being unrecognized and hidden behind appeals to “rationality,” as is often the case in liberal thinking. (1996, 248)

Mouffe is a radical pluralist: “By pluralism I mean the end of a substantive idea of the good life” (1996, 246). But neither Mouffe nor Young want to abolish communication in the name of pluralism and difference; much of their work advocates sustained attention to communication. Mouffe also cautions against uncritical celebration of difference, for some differences imply “subordination and should therefore be challenged by a radical democratic politics” (1996, 247). Mouffe raises the question of the terms in which engagement across difference might proceed. Participants should ideally accept that the positions of others are legitimate, though not as a result of being persuaded in argument. Instead, it is a matter of being open to conversion due to adoption of a particular kind of democratic attitude that converts antagonism into agonism, fighting into critical engagement, enemies into adversaries who are treated with respect. Respect here is notjust (liberal) toleration, but positive validation of the position of others. For Young, a communicative democracy would be composed of people showing “equal respect,” under “procedural rules of fair discussion and decisionmaking” (1996, 126). Schlosberg speaks of “agonistic respect” as “a critical pluralist ethos” (1999, 70).

Mouffe and Young both want pluralism to be regulated by a particular kind of attitude, be it respectful, agonistic, or even in Young’s (2000, 16–51) case reasonable.Thus neither proposes unregulated pluralism as an alternative to (deliberative) consensus. This regulation cannot be just procedural, for that would imply “anything goes” in terms of the substance of positions. Recall thatMouffe rejects differences that imply subordination. Agonistic ideals demand judgments about what is worthy of respect and what is not. Connolly (1991, 211) worriesabout dogmatic assertions and denials of identity that fuel existential resentments that would have to be changed to make agonism possible. Young seeks “transformation of private, self-regarding desires into public appeals to justice” (2000, 51). Thus for Mouffe, Connolly, and Young alike, regulative principles for democratic communication are not just attitudinal or procedural; they also refer to the substance of the kinds of claims that are worthy of respect. These authors would not want to legislate substance and are suspicious of the content of any alleged consensus. But in retreating from “anything goes” relativism, they need principles to regulate the substance of what rightfully belongs in democratic debate.

#### Framework does not deny the embodied nature of knowledge, but rather serves as a regulative ideal that that maintains the conditions for ongoing argumentation---exclusions are inevitable in this process, so ensuring that they occur along RECIPROCAL lines that allow for negative engagement is the only way to foster democratic practices that avoid ARBITRARY exclusions which are worse---this process outweighs the content of the aff

Anderson 6—prof of English at Johns Hopkins (Amanda, The Way We Argue Now, 25-8)

25¶ Whether such a procedural approach actually helps to yield any substantive normative guidance is an issue of debate. Habermas has sought to justify communicative ethics through appeal to the principles of respect and reciprocity that he claims are inherent in linguistic practices geared toward reaching understanding. Attempting to redress the overwhelmingly negative forms of critique characteristic of both the Frankfurt School and poststructuralist traditions, he argues that the logocentrism of Western thought and the powerful instrumentality of reason are not absolute but rather constitute “a systematic foreshortening and distortion of a potential always already operative in the communicative practice of everyday life.” The potential he refers to is the potential for mutual understanding “inscribed into communication in ordinary language.” 7 Habermas acknowledges the dominance and reach of instrumental reason—his project is largely devoted to a systematic analysis of the historical conditions and social effects of that dominance—yet at the same time he wishes to retrieve an emancipatory model of communicative¶ ¶ 26¶ reason derived from a linguistic understanding of intersubjective relations. As Benhabib argues, this form of communicative action, embodied in the highly controversial and pervasively misunderstood concept of the “ideal speech situation,” entails strong ethical assumptions, namely the principles of universal moral respect and egalitarian reciprocity (SS, 29).¶ Habermas has famously argued that he does not believe any metaphysical grounding of such norms is possible; he insists instead that we view the normative constraints of the ideal speech community as “universal pragmatic presuppositions” of competent moral actors who have reached the postconventional stage of moral reasoning. Habermas’s theory combines a “weak transcendental argument” concerning the four types of validity claims operative in speech acts with an empirical reconstruction of psychosocial development derived from Lawrence Kohlberg. Benhabib, though she, too, appeals to socialization processes, distinguishes her position from Habermas’s “weak transcendental argument” by promoting a “historically self-conscious universalism” that locates the ethical principles of respect and reciprocity as “constituents of the moral point of view from within the normative hermeneutic horizon of modernity” (SS, 30). Benhabib’s work thus constitutes, like Habermas’s, a strong defense of specific potentialities of modernity. She differs from him in two key respects, besides the emphasis already outlined. First, she believes that Habermas’s emphasis on consensus seriously distorts his account of communicative ethics. Like others who have argued against the conflation of understanding and consensus, Benhabib champions instead a discourse model of ethics that is geared toward keeping the conversation going:¶ When we shift the burden of the moral test in communicative ethics from consensus to the idea of an ongoing moral conversation, we begin to ask not what all would or could agree to as a result of practical discourses to be morally permissible or impermissible, but what would be allowed and perhaps even necessary from the standpoint of continuing and sustaining the practice of the moral conversation among us. The emphasis now is less on rational agreement, but more on sustaining those normative practices and moral relationships within which reasoned agreement as a way of life can flourish and continue. (SS, 38)8¶ ¶ 27¶ The second significant difference between Habermas and Benhabib is that Benhabib rejects Habermas’s rigid opposition between justice and the good life, an opposition that effectively relegates identity-based politics to a lower plane of moral practice, and that for Benhabib undercuts our ability to apprehend the radical particularity of the other. While she believes in the importance of self-reflexive interrogations of conventional identities and roles, she strongly opposes any ethics or politics that privileges the unencumbered or detached self over the concrete, embodied, situated self. She argues in particular against those liberal models that imagine that conversations of moral justification should take place between individuals who have bracketed their strongest cultural or social identifications and attachments. Instead she promotes what she calls an “interactive universalism”:¶ Interactive universalism acknowledges the plurality of modes of being human, and differences among humans, without endorsing all these pluralities and differences as morally and politically valid. While agreeing that normative disputes can be settled rationally, and that fairness, reciprocity and some procedure of universalizability are constituents, that is, necessary conditions of the moral standpoint, interactive universalism regards difference as a starting point for reflection and action. In this sense, “universality” is a regulative ideal that does not deny our embodied and embedded identity, but aims at developing moral attitudes and encouraging political transformations that can yield a point of view acceptable to all. Universality is not the ideal consensus of fictitiously defined selves, but the concrete process in politics and morals of the struggle of concrete, embodied selves, striving for autonomy. (SS, 153) ¶ This passage encapsulates the core of Benhabib’s position, which attempts to mediate between universalism and particularism as traditionally understood. On the one hand, universalism’s informing principles of rational argumentation, fairness, and reciprocity adjudicate between different positions in the ethicopolitical realm, enabling crucial distinctions between those notions of the good life that promote interactive universalism and those that threaten its key principles. It insists, in other words, that there is a specifiable moral standpoint from which—to take a few prominent examples—Serbian aggression, neo-Nazism, and gay bashing can be definitively condemned. On the other hand, universalism “regards difference as a starting point.” It understands identity as “embodied and embedded” and promotes encounters with otherness so as to nurture the development of a moral attitude that will “yield a point of view acceptable to all.”¶ Of course it must simultaneously be recognized that the “all” here cannot coherently include those who have, according to universalism’s own principles, forfeited their place as equal participants in the ethicopolitical¶ ¶ 28¶ community. Ironically, then, Benhabib’s redefinition of universalism insists on inevitable exclusion, but not in the sense that many poststructuralist and postmodernist cultural critics do, as the hardwired effect of universalism’s false claims to inclusiveness, and as victimizing those disempowered by race, class, gender, or sexuality. Against naive conceptions of inclusiveness and plurality, which ultimately prove self-undermining in their toleration of communities, individuals, and practices that exclude others arbitrarily, interactive universalism claims that certain exclusions are not only justified, but indeed required by the principles of recognition and respect that underpin democratic institutions and practices.

## 2NC

### Top Shelf---Overview---2NC

#### Debate is never the site for social change only for learning the skills to advocate for change---

Atchison and Panetta 9– \*Director of Debate at Trinity University and \*\*Director of Debate at the University of Georgia (Jarrod, and Edward, “Intercollegiate Debate and Speech Communication: Issues for the Future,” The Sage Handbook of Rhetorical Studies, Lunsford, Andrea, ed., 2009, p. 317-334)

The final problem with an individual debate round focus is the role of competition. Creating community change through individual debate rounds sacrifices the “community” portion of the change. Many teams that promote activist strategies in debates profess that they are more interested in creating change than winning debates. What is clear, however, is that the vast majority of teams that are not promoting community change are very interested in winning debates. The tension that is generated from the clash of these opposing forces is tremendous. Unfortunately, this is rarely a productive tension. Forcing teams to consider their purpose in debating, their style in debates, and their approach to evidence are all critical aspects of being participants in the community. However, the dismissal of the proposed resolution that the debaters have spent countless hours preparing for, in the name of a community problem that the debaters often have little control over, does little to engender coalitions of the willing. Should a debate team lose because their director or coach has been ineffective at recruiting minority participants? Should a debate team lose because their coach or director holds political positions that are in opposition to the activist program? Competition has been a critical component of the interest in intercollegiate debate from the beginning, and it does not help further the goals of the debate community to dismiss competition in the name of community change. The larger problem with locating the “debate as activism” perspective within the competitive framework is that it overlooks the communal nature of the community problem. If each individual debate is a decision about how the debate community should approach a problem, then the losing debaters become collateral damage in the activist strategy dedicated toward creating community change. One frustrating example of this type of argument might include a judge voting for an activist team in an effort to help them reach elimination rounds to generate a community discussion about the problem. Under this scenario, the losing team serves as a sacrificial lamb on the altar of community change. Downplaying the important role of competition and treating opponents as scapegoats for the failures of the community may increase the profile of the winning team and the community problem, but it does little to generate the critical coalitions necessary to address the community problem, because the competitive focus **encourages teams to concentrate on how to beat the strategy with little regard for addressing the community problem**. There is no role for competition when a judge decides that it is important to accentuate the publicity of a community problem. An extreme example might include a team arguing that their opponents’ academic institution had a legacy of civil rights abuses and that the judge should not vote for them because that would be a community endorsement of a problematic institution. This scenario is a bit more outlandish but not unreasonable if one assumes that each debate should be about what is best for promoting solutions to diversity problems in the debate community. If the debate community is serious about generating community change, then it is more likely to occur outside a traditional competitive debate. When a team loses a debate because the judge decides that it is better for the community for the other team to win, then they have sacrificed two potential advocates for change within the community. **Creating change through wins generates backlash through losses**. Some proponents are comfortable with generating backlash and argue that the reaction is evidence that the issue is being discussed. From our perspective, the discussion that results from these hostile situations is not a productive one where participants seek to work together for a common goal. Instead of giving up on hope for change and agitating for wins regardless of who is left behind, it seems more reasonable that the debate community should try the method of public argument that we teach in an effort to generate a discussion of necessary community changes. Simply put, debate competitions do not represent the best environment for community change because it is a competition for a win and only one team can win any given debate, whereas addressing systemic century-long community problems requires a tremendous effort by a great number of people.

### 2NC Must Read

#### The premise of their response to framework is that issues of identity/race/culture should be protected from exposure to reason-giving debate---this impedes the culture of democratic debate that’s key to effective decisionmaking in a pluralistic society---it’s also simply wrong to claim that framework oppresses identity or alternate styles---our argument is style-neutral---it simply asks that narrative/experience/etc be used to support a policy conclusion which solves their offense as well as ours

Amanda Anderson 6, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Humanities and English at Brown University, Spring 2006, “Reply to My Critic(s),” Criticism, Vol. 48, No. 2, p. 281-290

MY RECENT BOOK, The Way We Argue Now, has in a sense two theses. In the first place, the book makes the case for the importance of debate and argument to any vital democratic or pluralistic intellectual culture. This is in many ways an unexceptional position, but the premise of the book is that the claims of reasoned argument are often trumped, within the current intellectual terrain, by appeals to cultural identity and what I gather more broadly under the rubric of ethos, which includes cultural identity but also forms of ethical piety and charismatic authority. In promoting argument as a universal practice keyed to a human capacity for communicative reason, my book is a critique of relativism and identity politics, or the notion that forms of cultural authenticity or group identity have a certain unquestioned legitimacy, one that cannot or should not be subjected to the challenges of reason or principle, precisely because reason and what is often called "false universalism" are, according to this pattern of thinking, always involved in forms of exclusion, power, or domination. My book insists, by contrast, that argument is a form of respect, that the ideals of democracy, whether conceived from a nationalist or an internationalist perspective, rely fundamentally upon procedures of argumentation and debate in order to legitimate themselves and to keep their central institutions vital. And the idea that one should be protected from debate, that argument is somehow injurious to persons if it does not honor their desire to have their basic beliefs and claims and solidarities accepted without challenge, is strenuously opposed. As is the notion that any attempt to ask people to agree upon processes of reason-giving argument is somehow necessarily to impose a coercive norm, one that will disable the free expression and performance of identities, feelings, or solidarities. Disagreement is, by the terms of my book, a form of respect, not a form of disrespect. And by disagreement, I don't mean simply to say that we should expect disagreement rather than agreement, which is a frequently voiced-if misconceived-criticism of Habermas. Of course we should expect disagreement. My point is that we should focus on the moment of dissatisfaction in the face of disagreement-the internal dynamic in argument that imagines argument might be the beginning of a process of persuasion and exchange that could end in agreement (or partial agreement). For those who advocate reconciling ourselves to disagreements rather than arguing them out, by contrast, there is a complacent-and in some versions, even celebratory-attitude toward fixed disagreement. Refusing these options, I make the case for dissatisfied disagreement in the final chapter of the book and argue that people should be willing to justify their positions in dialogue with one another, especially if they hope to live together in a post-traditional pluralist society.

One example of the trumping of argument by ethos is the form that was taken by the late stage of the Foucault/Habermas debate, where an appeal to ethos-specifically, an appeal to Foucault's style of ironic or negative critique, often seen as most in evidence in the interviews, where he would playfully refuse labels or evade direct answers-was used to exemplify an alternative to the forms of argument employed by Habermas and like-minded critics. (I should pause to say that I provide this example, and the framing summary of the book that surrounds it, not to take up airtime through expansive self-reference, but because neither of my respondents provided any contextualizing summary of the book's central arguments, though one certainly gets an incremental sense of the book's claims from Bruce Robbins. Because I don't assume that readers of this forum have necessarily read the book, and because I believe that it is the obligation of forum participants to provide sufficient context for their remarks, I will perform this task as economically as I can, with the recognition that it might have carried more weight if provided by a respondent rather than the author.)

The Foucauldian counter-critique importantly emphasizes a relation between style and position, but it obscures (1) the importance or value of the Habermasian critique and (2) the possibility that the other side of the debate might have its own ethos to advocate, one that has precisely to do with an ethos of argument, an ideal of reciprocal debate that involves taking distance on one's pre-given forms of identity or the norms of one's community, both so as to talk across differences and to articulate one's claims in relation to shared and even universal ideals. And this leads to the second thesis of the book, the insistence that an emphasis on ethos and character is interestingly present if not widely recognized in contemporary theory, and one of the ways its vitality and existential pertinence makes itself felt (even despite the occurrence of the kinds of unfair trumping moves I have mentioned). We often fail to notice this, because identity has so uniformly come to mean sociological, ascribed, or group identity-race, gender, class, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, and so forth. Instances of the move toward character and ethos include the later Foucault (for whom ethos is a central concept), cosmopolitanism (whose aspiration it is to turn universalism into an ethos), and, more controversially, proceduralist ethics and politics (with its emphasis on sincerity and civility). Another version of this attentiveness to ethos and character appears in contemporary pragmatism, with its insistence on casualness of attitude, or insouciance in the face of contingency-recommendations that get elevated into full-fledged exemplary personae in Richard Rorty's notion of the "ironist" or Barbara Herrnstein Smiths portrait of the "postmodern skeptic." These examples-and the larger claim they support-are meant to defend theory as still living, despite the many reports of its demise, and in fact still interestingly and incessantly re-elaborating its relation to practice. This second aspect of the project is at once descriptive, motivated by the notion that characterology within theory is intrinsically interesting, and critical, in its attempt to identify how characterology can itself be used to cover or evade the claims of rational argument, as in appeals to charismatic authority or in what I identify as narrow personifications of theory (pragmatism, in its insistence on insouciance in the face of contingency, is a prime example of this second form). And as a complement to the critical agenda, there is a reconstructive agenda as well, an attempt to recuperate liberalism and proceduralism, in part by advocating the possibility, as I have suggested, of an ethos of argument.

Robbins, in his extraordinarily rich and challenging response, zeroes in immediately on a crucial issue: who is to say exactly when argument is occurring or not, and what do we do when there is disagreement over the fundamentals (the primary one being over what counts as proper reasoning)? Interestingly, Robbins approaches this issue after first observing a certain tension in the book: on the one hand, The Way We Argue Now calls for dialogue, debate, argument; on the other, its project is "potentially something a bit stricter, or pushier: getting us all to agree on what should and should not count as true argument." What this point of entry into the larger issue reveals is a kind of blur that the book, I am now aware, invites. On the one hand, the book anatomizes academic debates, and in doing so is quite "debaterly" This can give the impression that what I mean by argument is a very specific form unique to disciplinary methodologies in higher education. But the book is not generally advocating a narrow practice of formal and philosophical argumentation in the culture at large, however much its author may relish adherence to the principle of non-contradiction in scholarly argument. I take pains to elaborate an ethos of argument that is linked to democratic debate and the forms of dissent that constitutional patriotism allows and even promotes. In this sense, while argument here is necessarily contextualized sociohistorically, the concept is not merely academic. It is a practice seen as integral to specific political forms and institutions in modern democracies, and to the more general activity of critique within modern societies-to the tradition of the public sphere, to speak in broad terms. Additionally, insofar as argument impels one to take distance on embedded customs, norms, and senses of given identity, it is a practice that at once acknowledges identity, the need to understand the perspectives of others, and the shared commitment to commonality and generality, to finding a way to live together under conditions of difference.

More than this: the book also discusses at great length and from several different angles the issue that Robbins inexplicably claims I entirely ignore: the question of disagreement about what counts as argument. In the opening essay, "Debatable Performances," I fault the proponents of communicative ethics for not having a broader understanding of public expression, one that would include the disruptions of spectacle and performance. I return to and underscore this point in my final chapter, where I espouse a democratic politics that can embrace and accommodate a wide variety of expressions and modes. This is certainly a discussion of what counts as dialogue and hence argument in the broad sense in which I mean it, and in fact I fully acknowledge that taking distance from cultural norms and given identities can be advanced not only through critical reflection, but through ironic critique and defamiliarizing performance as well. But I do insist-and this is where I take a position on the fundamental disagreements that have arisen with respect to communicative ethics-that when they have an effect, these other dimensions of experience do not remain unreflective, and insofar as they do become reflective, they are contributing to the very form of reasoned analysis that their champions sometimes imagine they must refuse in order to liberate other modes of being (the affective, the narrative, the performative, the nonrational). If a narrative of human rights violation is persuasive in court, or in the broader cultural public sphere, it is because it draws attention to a violation of humanity that is condemned on principle; if a performance jolts people out of their normative understandings of sexuality and gender, it prompts forms of understanding that can be affirmed and communicated and also can be used to justify political positions and legislative agendas.

#### Only we access offense---arguments like framework don’t injure people, but policies do---the idea that they shouldn’t be responsible for producing an argument that allows for clash and rejoinder impedes the democratic decisionmaking necessary to address all their impacts

The idea that a particular style of argument causes personal injury results in censorship

Amanda Anderson 6, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Humanities and English at Brown University, Spring 2006, “Reply to My Critic(s),” Criticism, Vol. 48, No. 2, p. 281-290

Probyns piece is a mixture of affective fallacy, argument by authority, and bald ad hominem. There's a pattern here: precisely the tendency to personalize argument and to foreground what Wendy Brown has called "states of injury." Probyn says, for example, that she "felt ostracized by the books content and style." Ostracized? Argument here is seen as directly harming persons, and this is precisely the state of affairs to which I object. Argument is not injurious to persons. Policies are injurious to persons and institutionalized practices can alienate and exclude. But argument itself is not directly harmful; once one says it is, one is very close to a logic of censorship. The most productive thing to do in an open academic culture (and in societies that aspire to freedom and democracy) when you encounter a book or an argument that you disagree with is to produce a response or a book that states your disagreement. But to assert that the book itself directly harms you is tantamount to saying that you do not believe in argument or in the free exchange of ideas, that your claim to injury somehow damns your opponent's ideas.

When Probyn isn't symptomatic, she's just downright sloppy. One could work to build up the substance of points that she throws out the car window as she screeches on to her next destination, but life is short, and those with considered objections to liberalism and proceduralism would not be particularly well served by the exercise. As far as I can tell, Probyn thinks my discussion of universalism is of limited relevance (though far more appealing when put, by others, in more comfortingly equivocating terms), but she's certain my critique of appeals to identity is simply not able to accommodate the importance of identity in social and political life. As I make clear throughout the book, and particularly in my discussion of the headscarf debate in France, identity is likely to be at the center of key arguments about life in plural democracies; my point is not that identity is not relevant, but simply that it should not be used to trump or stifle argument.

In closing, I'd like to speak briefly to the question of proceduralism's relevance to democratic vitality. One important way of extending the proceduralist arguments put forth by Habeimas is to work on how institutions and practices might better promote participation in democratic life. The apathy and nonparticipation plaguing democratic institutions in the United States is a serious problem, and can be separated from the more romantic theoretical investments in a refusal to accept the terms of what counts as argument, or in assertions of inassimilable difference. With respect to the latter, which is often glorified precisely as the moment when politics or democracy is truly occurring, I would say, on the contrary democracy is not happening then-rather, the limits or deficiencies of an actually existing democracy are making themselves felt. Acknowledging struggle, conflict, and exclusion is vital to democracy, but insisting that exclusion is not so much a persistent challenge for modern liberal democracies but rather inherent to the modern liberal-democratic political form as such seems to me precisely to remain stalled in a romantic critique of Enlightenment. It all comes down to a question of whether one wants to work with the ideals of democracy or see them as essentially normative in a negative sense: this has been the legacy of a certain critique of Enlightenment, and it is astonishingly persistent in the left quarters in the academy. One hears it clearly when Robbins makes confident reference to liberalisms tendency to ignore "the founding acts of violence on which a social order is based." One encounters it in the current vogue for the work of Giorgio Agamben and Carl Schmitt. Saying that a state of exception defines modernity or is internal to the law itself may help to sharpen your diagnoses of certain historical conditions, but if absolutized as it is in these accounts, it gives you nothing but a negative diagnostic and a compensatory flight to a realm entirely other-the kind of mystical, Utopian impulse that flees from these conditions rather than confronts and fights them on terms that derive from the settled-if constantly evolving-normative basis of democratic modernity. If one is outraged by the flagrant disregard of democratic procedures in the current U.S. political regime, then one needs to be able to coherently say why democratic procedures matter, what principles underwrite them, and what historical movements and institutions have helped us to secure and support them. Argument as a critical practice and as a key component of democratic institutions and public debate has a vital role to play in such a task.

### AT: Neg Exclusion

#### Establishing constraints on the topics for discussion in debate does not cause internal exclusion and breaking down those constraints doesn’t solve it because the absence of clash and the refusal of the burden of rejoinder only flips external exclusion---the way to resolve internal exclusion is to broaden the scope of what counts as a persuasive argument within a given topic---for example, our model of debate would welcome the use of narrative and personal experience on behalf of a topical argument---this middle ground most effectively resolves their exclusion arguments

Gert Biesta et al 9, professor of Education and Director of Research at the School of Education, University of Stirling, Susan Verducci , Assistant Professor at the Humanities Department at San José State University, and Michael S. Katz, professor of philosophy and education at San Jose State, Education, Democracy and the Moral Life, 2009, p. 105-107

This example not only shows why the issue of inclusion is so prominent in the deliberative model. It also explains why the deliberative turn has generated a whole new set of issues around inclusion. The reason for this is that deliberation is not simply a form of political decision-making but first and foremost a form of political communication. The inclusion question in deliberative democracy is therefore not so much a question about who should be included - although this question should be asked always as well. It is first and foremost a question about who is able to participate effectively in deliberation. As Dryzek aptly summarises, the suspicion about deliberative democracy is "that its focus on a particular kind of reasonable political interaction is not in fact neutral, but systematically excludes a variety of voices from effective participation in democratic politics" (Dryzek, 2000, p.58). In this regard Young makes a helpful distinction between two forms of exclusion: external exclusion, which is about "how people arc [actually] kept outside the process of discussion and decision-making", and internal exclusion where people are formally included in decision-making processes but where they may find, for example, "that their claims are not taken seriously and may believe that they are not treated with equal respect" (Young, 2000, p.55). Internal exclusion, in other words, refers to those situations in which people "lack effective opportunity to influence the thinking of others even when they have access to fora and procedures of decision-making" (ibid.) which can particularly be the outcome of the emphasis of some proponents of deliberative democracy on "dispassionate, unsituatcd, neutral reason" (ibid. p.63).

To counteract the internal exclusion that is the product of a too narrow focus on argument, Young has suggested several other modes of political communication which should be added to the deliberative process not only to remedy "exclusionary tendencies in deliberative practices" but also to promote "respect and trust" and to make possible "understanding across structural and cultural difference" (ibid. p.57). The first of these is greeting or public acknowledgement. This is about "communicative political gestures through which those who have conflicts . .. recognize others as included in the discussion, especially those with whom they differ in opinion, interest, or social location" (ibid., p.61; emphasis in original). Young emphasises that greeting should be thought of as a starting-point for political interaction. It "precedes the giving and evaluating of reasons" (ibid., p.79) and does so through the recognition of the other parties in the deliberation. The second mode of political communication is rhetoric and more specifically the affirmative use of rhetoric (ibid., p.63). Although one could say that rhetoric only concerns the form of political communication and not its content, the point Young makes is that inclusive political communication should pay attention to and be inclusive about the different forms of expression and should not try to purify rational argument from rhetoric. Rhetoric is not only important because it can help to get particular issues on the agenda for deliberation. Rhetoric can also help to articulate claims and arguments "in ways appropriate to a particular public in a particular situation' (ibid., p.67; emphasis in original). Rhetoric always accompanies an argument by situating it "for a particular audience and giving it embodied style and tone" (ibid., p.79). Young's third mode of political communication is narrative or storytelling. The main function of narrative in democratic communication lies in its potential "to foster understanding among members of a polity with very different experience or assumptions about what is important" (ibid., p.71). Young emphasises the role of narrative in the teaching and learning dimension of political communication. "Inclusive democratic communication", so she argues, "assumes that all participants have something to teach the public about the society in which they dwell together" and also assumes "that all participants are ignorant of some aspects of the social or natural world, and that everyone comes to a political conflict with some biases, prejudices, blind spots, or sterco-types" (ibid., p.77).

It is important to emphasise that greeting, rhetoric and narrative are not meant to replace argumentation. Young stresses again and again that deliberative democracy entails "that participants require reasons of one another and critically evaluate them" (ibid., p.79). Other proponents of the deliberative model take a much more narrow approach and see deliberation exclusively as a form of rational argumentation (e.g. Bcnhabib, 1996) where the only legitimate force should be the "forceless force of the better argument" (Habermas). Similarly, Dryzck, after a discussion of Young's ideas,1 concludes that argument always has to be "central to deliberative democracy" (Dryzek, 2000, p.7l). Although he acknowledges that other modes of communication can be present and that there are good reasons to welcome them, their status is different "because they do not have to be present" (ibid., emphasis added). For Dryzek, at the end of the day, all modes of political communication must live up to the standards of rationality. This does not mean that they must be subordinated to rational argument “but their deployment only makes sense in a context where argument about what is to be done remains central” (ibid., p.168).

### Case

#### This is precisely why autobiography is so easily coopted by liberalism – autobiography IS the practice of the liberal autonomous subject *par excellence* – this same notion of the liberal subject has historically been responsible for the Western conquest of the world.

#### Even if their best intention is to resist the liberal subject, autobiography is understood by its consuming audience as the assertion of the classic autonomous subject – this subverts the political potential of performance by rendering one’s experience legible to the terms of liberalism .

Coughlin 95—associate Professor of Law, Vanderbilt Law School. (Anne, REGULATING THE SELF: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PERFORMANCES IN OUTSIDER SCHOLARSHIP, 81 Va. L. Rev. 1229)

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 intellectual [\*1283] 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

IV. The Autobiographical Self

The outsider narratives do not reflect on another feature of autobiographical discourse that is perhaps the most significant obstacle to their goal to bring to law an understanding of the human self that will supersede the liberal individual. Contrary to the outsiders' claim that their personalized discourse infuses law with their distinctive experiences and political perspectives, numerous historians and critics of autobiography have insisted that those who participate in autobiographical discourse speak not in a different voice, but in a common voice that reflects their membership in a culture devoted to liberal values. n206 As Sacvan Bercovitch puts it, American cultural ideals, including specifically the mythic connection between the "heroic individual ... [and] the values of free enterprise," are "epitomized in autobiography." n207 In his seminal essay on the subject, Professor Georges Gusdorf makes an observation that seems like a prescient warning to outsiders who would appropriate autobiography as their voice. He remarks that the practice of writing about one's own self reflects a belief in the autonomous individual, which is "peculiar to Western man, a concern that has been of good use in his systematic conquest of the [\*1285] universe and that he has communicated to men of other cultures; but those men will thereby have been annexed by a sort of intellectual colonizing to a mentality that was not their own." n208 Similarly, Albert Stone, a critic of American autobiography, argues that autobiographical performances celebrate the Western ideal of individualism, "which places the self at the center of its world." n209 Stone begins to elucidate the prescriptive character of autobiographical discourse as he notes with wonder "the tenacious social ideal whose persistence is all the more significant when found repeated in personal histories of Afro-Americans, immigrants, penitentiary prisoners, and others whose claims to full individuality have often been denied by our society." n210

Precisely because it appeals to readers' fascination with the self-sufficiency, resiliency and uniqueness of the totemic individual privileged by liberal political theory, there is a risk that autobiographical discourse is a fallible, even co-opted, instrument for the social reforms envisioned by the outsiders. By affirming the myths of individual success in our culture, autobiography reproduces the [\*1286] political, economic, social and psychological structures that attend such success. n211 In this light, the outsider autobiographies unwittingly deflect attention from collective social responsibility and thwart the development of collective solutions for the eradication of racist and sexist harms. Although we may suspect in some cases that the author's own sense of self was shaped by a community whose values oppose those of liberal individualism, her decision to register her experience in autobiographical discourse will have a significant effect on the self she reproduces. n212 Her story will solicit the public's attention to the life of one individual, and it will privilege her individual desires and rights above the needs and obligations of a collectivity.

Moreover, literary theorists have remarked the tendency of autobiographical discourse to override radical authorial intention. Even where the autobiographer self-consciously determines to resist liberal ideology and represents her life story as the occasion to announce an alternative political theory, "the relentless individualism of the genre subordinates" her political critique. n213 Inevitably, at least within American culture, the personal narrative engrosses the readers' imagination. Fascinated by the travails and triumphs of the developing autobiographical self, readers tend to construe the text's political and social observations only as another aspect of the author's personality.

Paradoxically, although autobiography is the product of a culture that cultivates human individuality, the genre seems to make available only a limited number of autobiographical protagonists. n214 Many theorists have noticed that when an author assumes the task of defining her own, unique subjectivity, she invariably reproduces herself as a character with whom culture already is well-acquainted. n215 While a variety of forces coerce the autobiographer [\*1287] to conform to culturally sanctioned human models, n216 the pressures exerted by the literary market surely play a significant role. The autobiographer who desires a material benefit from her performance must adopt a persona that is intelligible, if not enticing, to her audience. n217 As I will illustrate in the sections that follow, the outsider narratives capitalize on, rather than subvert, autobiographical protagonists that serve the values of liberalism.

#### The very act of articulating why performance ought be attached to the ballot casts performance within the terms of liberalism’s discursive economy – this reduces their performance to a form of aesthetic formalism, this subordinates the political potential of performance to the narrow disciplinary concerns of academic knowledge production

Phelan ‘96—chair of New York University's Department of Performance Studies (Peggy, Unmarked: the politics of performance, ed published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005,

In his 1981 article Representation and the Limits of Interpretation, Eric E. Peterson delves into the problems of wedding post-structuralism and interpretation in terms of the limits of representation. He concedes that for oral interpretation “representation is a powerful force in the theoretical understanding of our practice. Not only does it allow us to distinguish oral interpretation from similar literary, theatrical, and speech arts; but it also provides a theoretical justification for the existence of oral interpretation as a discipline distinct from other disciplines” (24). Peterson formulated these arguments even before oral interpretation shifted to the broader term performance studies, but his predictions were insightful. Peterson maps out potential disciplinary costs of thinking representation in a certain way. He continues, saying that the cost of “securing this place for oral interpretation is the increasing objectification of our practice and subjectification of our practitioners. By objectifying our practice, we mean that the conceptualization of art as representation precludes the examination of the very activity of representing” (24). This causes the field to continually wrap itself up in disciplinary techniques for the “accumulation of knowledge and the exercise of power” (24) through interpretation, instead of focusing on the eroticization of performance practice itself. Peterson argues for reinvestigating the process of performance as art, not subject-object relations.

## 1NC

### Own terms

#### They are wrong to claim that framework oppresses identity or alternate styles---our argument is style-neutral---it simply asks that narrative/experience/etc be used to support a policy conclusion which solves their offense as well as ours

Amanda Anderson 6, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Humanities and English at Brown University, Spring 2006, “Reply to My Critic(s),” Criticism, Vol. 48, No. 2, p. 281-290

MY RECENT BOOK, The Way We Argue Now, has in a sense two theses. In the first place, the book makes the case for the importance of debate and argument to any vital democratic or pluralistic intellectual culture. This is in many ways an unexceptional position, but the premise of the book is that the claims of reasoned argument are often trumped, within the current intellectual terrain, by appeals to cultural identity and what I gather more broadly under the rubric of ethos, which includes cultural identity but also forms of ethical piety and charismatic authority. In promoting argument as a universal practice keyed to a human capacity for communicative reason, my book is a critique of relativism and identity politics, or the notion that forms of cultural authenticity or group identity have a certain unquestioned legitimacy, one that cannot or should not be subjected to the challenges of reason or principle, precisely because reason and what is often called "false universalism" are, according to this pattern of thinking, always involved in forms of exclusion, power, or domination. My book insists, by contrast, that argument is a form of respect, that the ideals of democracy, whether conceived from a nationalist or an internationalist perspective, rely fundamentally upon procedures of argumentation and debate in order to legitimate themselves and to keep their central institutions vital. And the idea that one should be protected from debate, that argument is somehow injurious to persons if it does not honor their desire to have their basic beliefs and claims and solidarities accepted without challenge, is strenuously opposed. As is the notion that any attempt to ask people to agree upon processes of reason-giving argument is somehow necessarily to impose a coercive norm, one that will disable the free expression and performance of identities, feelings, or solidarities. Disagreement is, by the terms of my book, a form of respect, not a form of disrespect. And by disagreement, I don't mean simply to say that we should expect disagreement rather than agreement, which is a frequently voiced-if misconceived-criticism of Habermas. Of course we should expect disagreement. My point is that we should focus on the moment of dissatisfaction in the face of disagreement-the internal dynamic in argument that imagines argument might be the beginning of a process of persuasion and exchange that could end in agreement (or partial agreement). For those who advocate reconciling ourselves to disagreements rather than arguing them out, by contrast, there is a complacent-and in some versions, even celebratory-attitude toward fixed disagreement. Refusing these options, I make the case for dissatisfied disagreement in the final chapter of the book and argue that people should be willing to justify their positions in dialogue with one another, especially if they hope to live together in a post-traditional pluralist society.

One example of the trumping of argument by ethos is the form that was taken by the late stage of the Foucault/Habermas debate, where an appeal to ethos-specifically, an appeal to Foucault's style of ironic or negative critique, often seen as most in evidence in the interviews, where he would playfully refuse labels or evade direct answers-was used to exemplify an alternative to the forms of argument employed by Habermas and like-minded critics. (I should pause to say that I provide this example, and the framing summary of the book that surrounds it, not to take up airtime through expansive self-reference, but because neither of my respondents provided any contextualizing summary of the book's central arguments, though one certainly gets an incremental sense of the book's claims from Bruce Robbins. Because I don't assume that readers of this forum have necessarily read the book, and because I believe that it is the obligation of forum participants to provide sufficient context for their remarks, I will perform this task as economically as I can, with the recognition that it might have carried more weight if provided by a respondent rather than the author.)

The Foucauldian counter-critique importantly emphasizes a relation between style and position, but it obscures (1) the importance or value of the Habermasian critique and (2) the possibility that the other side of the debate might have its own ethos to advocate, one that has precisely to do with an ethos of argument, an ideal of reciprocal debate that involves taking distance on one's pre-given forms of identity or the norms of one's community, both so as to talk across differences and to articulate one's claims in relation to shared and even universal ideals. And this leads to the second thesis of the book, the insistence that an emphasis on ethos and character is interestingly present if not widely recognized in contemporary theory, and one of the ways its vitality and existential pertinence makes itself felt (even despite the occurrence of the kinds of unfair trumping moves I have mentioned). We often fail to notice this, because identity has so uniformly come to mean sociological, ascribed, or group identity-race, gender, class, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, and so forth. Instances of the move toward character and ethos include the later Foucault (for whom ethos is a central concept), cosmopolitanism (whose aspiration it is to turn universalism into an ethos), and, more controversially, proceduralist ethics and politics (with its emphasis on sincerity and civility). Another version of this attentiveness to ethos and character appears in contemporary pragmatism, with its insistence on casualness of attitude, or insouciance in the face of contingency-recommendations that get elevated into full-fledged exemplary personae in Richard Rorty's notion of the "ironist" or Barbara Herrnstein Smiths portrait of the "postmodern skeptic." These examples-and the larger claim they support-are meant to defend theory as still living, despite the many reports of its demise, and in fact still interestingly and incessantly re-elaborating its relation to practice. This second aspect of the project is at once descriptive, motivated by the notion that characterology within theory is intrinsically interesting, and critical, in its attempt to identify how characterology can itself be used to cover or evade the claims of rational argument, as in appeals to charismatic authority or in what I identify as narrow personifications of theory (pragmatism, in its insistence on insouciance in the face of contingency, is a prime example of this second form). And as a complement to the critical agenda, there is a reconstructive agenda as well, an attempt to recuperate liberalism and proceduralism, in part by advocating the possibility, as I have suggested, of an ethos of argument.

Robbins, in his extraordinarily rich and challenging response, zeroes in immediately on a crucial issue: who is to say exactly when argument is occurring or not, and what do we do when there is disagreement over the fundamentals (the primary one being over what counts as proper reasoning)? Interestingly, Robbins approaches this issue after first observing a certain tension in the book: on the one hand, The Way We Argue Now calls for dialogue, debate, argument; on the other, its project is "potentially something a bit stricter, or pushier: getting us all to agree on what should and should not count as true argument." What this point of entry into the larger issue reveals is a kind of blur that the book, I am now aware, invites. On the one hand, the book anatomizes academic debates, and in doing so is quite "debaterly" This can give the impression that what I mean by argument is a very specific form unique to disciplinary methodologies in higher education. But the book is not generally advocating a narrow practice of formal and philosophical argumentation in the culture at large, however much its author may relish adherence to the principle of non-contradiction in scholarly argument. I take pains to elaborate an ethos of argument that is linked to democratic debate and the forms of dissent that constitutional patriotism allows and even promotes. In this sense, while argument here is necessarily contextualized sociohistorically, the concept is not merely academic. It is a practice seen as integral to specific political forms and institutions in modern democracies, and to the more general activity of critique within modern societies-to the tradition of the public sphere, to speak in broad terms. Additionally, insofar as argument impels one to take distance on embedded customs, norms, and senses of given identity, it is a practice that at once acknowledges identity, the need to understand the perspectives of others, and the shared commitment to commonality and generality, to finding a way to live together under conditions of difference.

More than this: the book also discusses at great length and from several different angles the issue that Robbins inexplicably claims I entirely ignore: the question of disagreement about what counts as argument. In the opening essay, "Debatable Performances," I fault the proponents of communicative ethics for not having a broader understanding of public expression, one that would include the disruptions of spectacle and performance. I return to and underscore this point in my final chapter, where I espouse a democratic politics that can embrace and accommodate a wide variety of expressions and modes. This is certainly a discussion of what counts as dialogue and hence argument in the broad sense in which I mean it, and in fact I fully acknowledge that taking distance from cultural norms and given identities can be advanced not only through critical reflection, but through ironic critique and defamiliarizing performance as well. But I do insist-and this is where I take a position on the fundamental disagreements that have arisen with respect to communicative ethics-that when they have an effect, these other dimensions of experience do not remain unreflective, and insofar as they do become reflective, they are contributing to the very form of reasoned analysis that their champions sometimes imagine they must refuse in order to liberate other modes of being (the affective, the narrative, the performative, the nonrational). If a narrative of human rights violation is persuasive in court, or in the broader cultural public sphere, it is because it draws attention to a violation of humanity that is condemned on principle; if a performance jolts people out of their normative understandings of sexuality and gender, it prompts forms of understanding that can be affirmed and communicated and also can be used to justify political positions and legislative agendas.

### Anti-Blackness

#### Their understanding of anti-blackness is a calcified ideology that’s lost the ability to be self-reflexive about racial progress in society---voting aff only re-enforces a self-fulfilling narrative and re-enforces their investment in disenfranchisement

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Yet, despite being an antique, the old black American narrative of pervasive victimization persists, denying the overwhelming evidence of change since the time of my parents and grandparents, refusing to die as doggedly as the Ptolemaic vision before Copernicus or the notion of phlogiston in the 19th century, or the deductive reasoning of the medieval schoolmen. It has become ahistorical. For a time it served us well and powerfully, yes, reminding each generation of black Americans of the historic obligations and duties and dangers they inherited and faced, but the problem with any story or idea or interpretation is that it can soon fail to fit the facts and becomes an ideology, even kitsch.

This point is expressed eloquently by Susan Griffin in her 1982 essay "The Way of all Ideology," where she says, "When a theory is transformed into an ideology, it begins to destroy the self and self-knowledge.… No one can tell it anything new. It is annoyed by any detail which does not fit its worldview.… Begun as a way to restore one's sense of really, now it attempts to discipline real people, to remake natural beings after its own image."

In his superb book In My Father's House, philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah writes, "There is nothing in the world that can do all we ask race to do for us." We can easily amend or revise this insight and apply it to the pre-21st-century black American narrative, which can do very little of the things we need for it to do today.

But this is an enduring human problem, isn't it? As phenomenologist Edmund Husserl revealed a hundred years ago, we almost always perceive and understand the new in terms of the old--on more precisely, we experience events through our ideas, and frequently those are ideas that bring us comfort, ideas received from our parents, teachers, the schools we attend, and the enveloping culture, rather than original ones of our own. While a story or model may disclose a particular meaning for an experience, it also forces into the background or conceals other possible meanings. Think of this in light of novelist Ralph Ellison's brilliant notion of "invisibility," where--in his classic Invisible Man--the characters encountered by his nameless protagonist all impose their ideologies (explanations and ideas) on the chaos of experience, on the mysterious, untamed life that forever chums beneath widely accepted interpretations and explanations of "history" and "culture," which in our social world, for Ellison, are the seen. I know, personally, there is value in this Ellisonian idea because in the historical fictions I've been privileged to publish, like "Martha's Dilemma" in my second collection, Soulcatcher and Other Stories, I discovered that the most intriguing, ambiguous, and revealing material for stories can often be found in the margins of the codified and often repeated narrative about slavery. In this case, I dramatized a delicious anecdote about what happened to Martha and her slaves right after the death of George.

What I am saying is that "official" stories and explanations and endlessly repeated interpretations of black American life over decades can short-circuit direct perception of the specific phenomenon before us. The idea of something--an intellectual construct--is often more appealing and perfect (in a Platonic sense) than the thing itself, which always remains mysterious and ambiguous and mess)', by which I mean that its sense is open-ended, never fixed, it is always wise, I believe, to see all our propositions (and stories) as provisional, partial, incomplete, and subject to revision on the basis of new evidence, which we can be sure is just around the corner.

Nevertheless, we have heavily and often uncritically invested for most of our lives in the pre-21st-century black American narrative. In fact, some of us depend upon it for our livelihood, so it is not easy to let go, or to revise this story. Last October, Nation of Islam minister Louis Farrakhan spoke for two and a half hours at the Atlanta Civic Center. He and his mentor, black separatist Elijah Muhammad, provided black Americans with what is probably the most extreme, Manichean, and mythological version of the black American narrative, one that was anti-integrationist. In this incomplete and misleading rendition of the black American story, the races are locked in eternal struggle. As a story, this narrative falls because it is conceived as melodrama, a form of storytelling in which the characters are flat, lack complexity,, are either all good or all bad, and the plot involves malicious villains and violent actions. Back in the 1930s when Elijah Muhammad shaped his myth of Yacub, which explained the origins of the white race as "devils," he sacrificed the credibility of both character and plot for the most simplistic kind of dramatic narrative. Farrakhan covered many subjects that day last October, but what I found most interesting is that he said successful black people like Oprah Winfrey, Senator Obama, Colin Powell, and Condoleeza Rice give black Americans a false impression of progress. In other words, their highly visible successes do not change the old narrative of group victimization. Minister Farrakhan seems unwilling to accept their success as evidence that the lives of black Americans have improved. He seems unwilling to accept the inevitability of change. He was quoted in the press as saying, "A life of ease sometimes makes you forget the struggle." And despite the battles for "affirmative action that created a new middle class, he added, "It's becoming a plantation again, but you can't fight that because you want to keep your little job."

I beg to differ with Farrakhan, with his misuse of language, his loose, imprecise diction, because we obviously do not live on plantations, And wasn't job opportunity, one of the explicit goals of" the black American narrative? Farrakhan's entire life has been an investment in a story that changed as he was chasing it. So we can understand his fierce, personal, and even tragic attachment to dusty, antebellum concepts when looking at the uncharted phenomena in the early 21st century that outstrip his concepts and language.

However, it is precisely because Farrakhan cannot progress beyond an oversimplified caricature of a story line for racial phenomena that the suddenly notorious Rev. Jeremiah Wright praises him, saying "His depth of analysis… when it comes to the racial ills of this nation is astounding and eye-opening," and, "He brings a perspective that is helpful and honest." Recently Wright called the Nation of Islam leader, "one of the most important voices in the 20th and 21st centur[ies]." I do not doubt that Wright and Farrakhan are men who have experienced the evil of racism and want to see the conditions of our people improve, or that both have records of community service. But it is the emotional attachment to a dated narrative, one leavened with the 1960s-era liberation theology of James Cone, that predictably leads Wright to proclaim that the U.S. government created the AIDS virus to destroy blacks (he invokes the old and proven, the ghastly Tuskegee syphilis experiment, in an effort to understand a new affliction devastating black people, and thus commits the logical fallacy, known as misuse of analogy); that Jesus was "a black man"; and that the brains of blacks and whites operate differently. The former pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago has made these paranoid and irresponsible statements publicly again and again without offering the slightest shred of evidence for these claims. "A bunch of rants that aren't grounded in truth" was how Barack Obama described his former minister's incendiary oratory, which is clearly antithetical not only to the postracial spirit of the Illinois senator's own speeches but also to his very racially and geographically mixed background. For in the realm of ideological thinking, especially from the pulpit, feeling and faith trump fact, and passion (as well as beliefs based on scripture) replaces fidelity to the empirical and painstaking logical demonstration.

Furthermore, such obsolete stories can also lead to serious mistakes in scholarship. I'm thinking now of Henry Louis Gates Jr., who in 1988 directed the publication of Oxford University Press's 40-volume Schomburg Library of Nineteenth-Century Black Women Writers. In his foreword, Gates praised the lost works of these black women writers as being the literary ancestors of Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, and Alice Walker. Furthermore, he said it was the discovery of a particular lost black novel, called Four Girls at Cottage City, published in 1895 by Emma Dunham Kelley-Hawkins, that inspired him to direct this Schomburg series in the first place so, he said, "I can read them myself."

Okay, so far so good.

But in 2005, Holly Jackson, then a doctoral student of English at Brandeis University, was given the academically' pedestrian, grunt-work assignment of writing an entry about Kelley-Hawkins for the African American National Biography. At the time very little was known about Kelley-Hawkins. After checking birth records in the Massachusetts Vital Records, and other documents, Jackson realized that Kelley-Hawkins was not black--as five decades of scholars had assumed but white. Yet all the evidence to suggest her whiteness was clearly present in the books she wrote. Something that had always puzzled scholars, Jackson said, was "the apparent whiteness of her characters, who are repeatedly described with blue eyes and skin as white as 'pure' or 'driven' snow." Even more fantastic are the theories that literary scholars came up with to explain why Kelley-Hawkins, supposedly a black woman, made no references to race or blackness in her two novels written in the 1890s. Jackson says, "Scholars have explained this away by arguing that the abundance of white signifiers is actually politically radical, with some even going so far as to argue that this extremely white world depicts a kind of post-racial utopia," a modem world where, according to critic Carla L. Peterson, "racial difference no longer existed."

Obviously, all these explanations are hogwash. Fifty years of scholarship based on these mistakes--articles, dissertations, courses in African American women's writing that include the work of Kelley-Hawkins--turns out to be an illusion created by the blinding intentionality of those who wrote about this white author based on a tangled knot of beliefs and prejudices, their concept of her completely distorting the facts.

Once Gates learned of this research by Jackson and also investigations by Katherine Flynn, a genealogist, he immediately went into the mode of damage control. He told a reporter that the work of Kelley-Hawkins would at least be removed from future editions of the Schomburg series, and he downplayed the significance of these discoveries by Jackson and Flynn. But Jackson, being a true scholar, would not allow this intellectual scandal to be swept under the rug. Of this "enormous historical misconception," she said, "there is so much at stake here, because of all the writing that has been done based on a false assumption about race." She asks us to wonder, "How have her [Kelley-Hawkins's] overwhelmingly 'white' texts successfully passed as black for so long in the absence of any corroborating historical data? How does this discovery change our understanding of African American literary history?" Finally, she said, "We have stretched our understanding of how black women have written in America to incorporate texts that do not fit."

I've gone into great detail about the Kelley-Hawkins story because it is a cautionary tale for scholars and an example of how our theories, our explanatory models, and the stories we tell ourselves can blind us to the obvious, leading us to see in matters of race only what we want to see based on our desires and political agendas. When we confront phenomena of any kind, we are wise if we assume the position phenomenologist Herbert Spiegelberg called epistemological humility, which is a healthy skepticism about what we think we already know. When constructing our narratives, it would also help if we remember a famous and often-quoted statement by C. S. Lewis on the characteristics of the human mind: "Five senses; an incurably abstract intellect; a haphazardly selective memory; a set of preconceptions and assumptions so numerous that I can never examine more than a minority of them--never become conscious of them all. How much of total reality can such an apparatus let through?"

How much, indeed.

But if the old black American narrative has outlived its usefulness as a tool of interpretation, then what should we do? The answer, I think, is obvious. In the 21st century, we need new and better stories, new concepts, and new vocabularies and grammar based not on the past but on the dangerous, exciting, and unexplored present, with the understanding that each is, at best, a provisional reading of reality, a single phenomenological profile that one day is likely to be revised, if not completely overturned. These will be narratives that do not claim to be absolute truth, but instead more humbly present themselves as a very tentative thesis that must be tested every day in the depths of our own experience and by all the reliable evidence we have available, as limited as that might be. For as Bertrand Russell told us, what we know is always "vanishingly small." These will be narratives of individuals, not groups. And is this not exactly what Martin Luther King Jr. dreamed of when he hoped a day would come when men and women were judged not by the color of their skin, but instead by their individual deeds and actions, and the content of their character?

### Agon excludes

#### Saying that certain practices inhibit argumentation does not mean we endorse a single model of debate---multiple forms and strategies can be used to justify a normative action in debate

Amanda Anderson 6, Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Humanities and English at Brown University, Spring 2006, “Reply to My Critic(s),” Criticism, Vol. 48, No. 2, p. 281-290

There is a way to make Robbins’s point more narrowly which would run something like this: Anderson has a very restricted notion of how argument should play out, or appear, within academic culture, given the heavy emphasis on logical consistency and normative coherence and explicitness. This conception of argument is too narrow (and hence authoritarian). To this I would reply simply that logical consistency and normative coherence and explicitness do not exhaust the possible forms, modes, and strategies of argumentation. There is a distinction to be made between the identification of moves that stultify or disarm argument, and an insistence on some sort of single manner of reasoned argument. The former I am entirely committed to; the latter not at all, despite the fact that I obviously favor a certain style of argument, and even despite the fact that I am philosophically committed to the claims of the theory of communicative reason. I do address the issue of diverse forms and modes of argument in the first and last chapters of the book (as I discuss above), but it seems that a more direct reflection on the books own mode of argumentation might have provided the occasion for a fuller treatment of the issues that trouble Robbins.

Different genres within academe have different conventions, of course, and we can and do make decisions all the time about what rises to the level of cogency within specific academic venues, and what doesn't. Some of those judgments have to do with protocols of argument. The book review, for example, is judged according to whether the reviewer responsibly represents the scholarship under discussion, seems to have a good grasp of the body of scholarship it belongs to, and convincingly and fairly points out strengths and weaknesses. The book forum is a bit looser-one expects responsible representation of the scholarship under discussion, but it can be more selectively focused on a key set of issues. And one expects a bit of provocation, in order to make the exchange readable and dramatic. But of course in a forum exchange there is an implicit norm of argument, a tendency to judge whether a particular participant is making a strong or a weak case in light of the competing claims at play. Much of our time in the profession is taken with judging the quality of all manner of academic performance, and much of it has to do with norms of argument, however much Robbins may worry about their potentially coercive nature.

### Rev fails

#### Radical demands are ineffective without a specific blueprint for change

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A question that must be asked is also just what a black revolution would even be about today. Certainly black America has serious problems. However, a revolution does not consist solely of howling grievances. For a revolutionary effort to be worth anyone's time, the demands have to be ones that those being revolted against have some way of fulfilling. In one episode of the animated version of Aaron McGruder's *The Boondocks,* there is an articulate depiction of the idea that black people need to Rise Up as a group and Make Demands. Huey, whose bitter frown is as in­grained in his design as a vapid smile is on Mickey Mouse, imagines that Martin Luther King comes back to life and inspires a revolution in black America, graphically indi­cated as hordes of blacks swarming the gates at the White House. "It's fun to dream," Huey concludes, the idea being that black people know what to rise up against, but that they would run up against the heartless moral cesspool that is AmeriKKKa, where, say, "George Bush doesn't care about black people." But the question is: what would the people at the gates, if attended to, demand? Fifty years ago, the demands were obvious: dismantle Jim Crow. And since then, a lot more has been given: affirmative action, the transformation of welfare from a stingy program for widows to an open- ended dole for any unmarried woman with children (done largely as riot insurance in the late 1960s, called for by left­ist activists including black ones) ... I could go on. So—yes, black America still has problems. Yes, there is still racism. But what is it that the White House should do now, in 2008, that is staring everyone in the face but hasn't happened because white people just "don't care" and the black community has failed to "demand" it? What? Precisely? I am not implying that what needs to happen is black people getting acquainted with those "bootstraps" we hear so much about. But the problems are not the kind that could be solved by simply buckshotting whitey with the usual cries of "racism." Would the people at the gates be calling for inner city schools to get as much money as schools in leafy white suburbs? If they did, they would see the same thing that has happened when exactly that was done in places like New Jersey and Kansas City: nothing changes. Obviously something needs to be done about the schools. But what, of the sort that should be shouted through the White House fence? How many of the shouters would know about poor black kids kicking academic butt in KIPP schools? Or in other charter schools filled with kids there because of—oh dear—vouchers, in Ohio and Florida? Let's face it—most of the people at that fence would draw a blank on what KIPP schools even were, much less the good that vouchers are doing. Some revolution. Would the people at the gates be calling for police forces to stop beating up on young black men and some­times killing them? Well, that's a legitimate concern. But the revolution on that is already happening, in every American city making concerted efforts to foster dialogue between the police and the street. We're not there yet, but things are better. Anyone who says that the shooting death of Sean Bell in 2006 in New York was evidence that noth­ing had changed since the death of Amadou Diallo in 1998 knows little of what the relationship between the police and black people was like in New York and so many other places before the nineties. In 1960, the death of Amadou Diallo would have made the local papers only, for one day, and, even in those papers, on some back page. It wouldn't have been considered important news. Going through newspapers of that era, one constantly comes across stories about things that happened to "Negroes," on page A31, that today would be front-page breaking news. We are blissfully past that America. And back to the main point: what could the White House do to prevent things like the Diallo and Bell inci­dents? What simple, wave-the-wand policy point would make it so that never again would a young black man be killed by the police in dicey circumstances where every­body lost his head for a minute or so? The relationship between police forces and black people is not as simple as something that could be changed by storming through a gate, which is obvious from how persistent that prob­lem has been despite profound changes on so many other fronts.

#### Without that blueprint, radical change will inevitably become violent and totalitarian

Horowitz 89—David, author and civil rights activist, founder of the New Left in the 1960s and editor of its largest magazine, Rampart, and Peter Colier, journalist, "Destructive Generation", pp 265-270

The manufacture of innocence out of guilt: it is the eternal work of the Left. The true genius of radicalism is constant **self-recreation and reappearance in new guise**s. Never mind that the sloughcd-off skins it leaves behind are fossilized remains of the death and destruction caused by its past commitments. For Leftists, there are **only tomorrows**. They never talk about the evil they have done, except superficially, to imply (as Hayden does) that it has increased their moral sensitivity. But they are always anxious to discuss the Utopia to come. The future perfect is the only tense in their political grammar. Thus they are willing to **criticize every revolution but the one currently unfolding**—the one in which there is still a choice. Their opponents' misdeeds must never be forgotten, but their own can never really be recalled. While Central America is alleged by Leftists to be "another Vietnam," Nicaragua is never another Cuba.

How does the Left maintain its belief against the crushing weight of its failures in the past? By recycling its innocence, which allows it to be born again in its Utopian faith. The utopianism of the Left is a secular religion (as the vogue of "liberation theology" attests), its promise an earthly kingdom of heaven. However sordid Leftist practice may be, defending Leftist ideals is, for the true believer, tantamount to defending the ideals of humanity itself. To protect the faith is the highest calling of the radical creed. The more the evidence weighs against the belief, the more noble the act of believing becomes. In this sense, Ter-tullian is the true father of the radical church. "Credo quia impossi-bile": "I believe because it is impossible."

In the Stalin era, an English Quaker, returning from a visit to Bolshevik Russia, reported to his flock:

The Communist view of human nature seems to me far more inspired by Faith, Hope and Charity than our own— The simple unostentatious life of Russia's rulers represents a notable advance in real civilization—real because based on a more enlightened interpretation of human nature, both of its needs and capacities; an interpretation which incidentally is also a more Christian one.

Almost forty years later, in the mid-Sixties, the Reverend William Sloane Coffin declared that "Communism is a page torn out of the Bible" and that "the social justice that's been achieved in ... North Vietnam [is] an achievement no Christian society on that scale has ever achieved ." Today, softheaded Witness for Peaceniks come home from Managua saying much the same thing. It is understandable that they should have found a heaven on earth there, for the Sandinistas have consecrated the marriage of the religious and the revolutionary by combining the offices of comandante and priest. "For me, the four Gospels are all equally Communist" declared the Marxist padre Ernesto Cardenal. So committed is he to the infallibility of his spiritual and temporal leader that after returning from a trip to Havana to kiss Castro's ring, Cardenal reported that Cuba's homosexuals "were actually happier in the concentration camps [that Castro had built for themj, a place like that where they were all together must have been almost like paradise for them."

It is often observed that a symmetry exists between the extreme ends of the political spectrum, that the fanatics of the Right are mirror images of the zealots on the Left. But once we leave the extremes, there is this tangible difference: the Right seeks to conserve (and the Left to undermine) workaday democracy; the Left seeks to defend (and the Right to defeat) the destructive fantasy of a heaven on earth. This is why American Leftists in their "innocence" embrace political evil in a way that American conservatives in their realism do not. A Bill Buckley might defend a Pinochet in Chile on pragmatic grounds as "our sonofabitch," but he would never call him "the Abraham Lincoln of his people," as Jesse Jackson has praised Communist dictators like Fidel Castro and Daniel Ortega. Nor would the Right defend Chile as a brave new society pioneering the path to humanity's future, the way the Left has defended Soviet Russia, the People's Republic of China, Communist Cuba, Nicaragua, and all the other socialist despotisms. It is this religious confusion and moral corruption that defines the utopianism of the Left. It insists on imposing the idea of salvation on a temporal reality that is by its nature flawed; in so doing, it exploits mankind's faith, as well as its hope and charity.

If self-righteousness is the moral oxygen of the radical creed, self-deception is the marrow of its immune system. Credo quia impossi-bile: because what he believes is impossible, the radical believes because it is necessary to believe.

Malcolm Muggeridge observed the prototypes of the radical faithful on a tour of Russia in the 1930s:

Their delight in all they saw and were told, and the expression they gave to this delight, constitute unquestionably one of the wonders of our age. There were earnest advocates of the humane killing of cattle who looked up at the massive headquarters of the OGPU with tears of gratitude in their eyes, earnest advocates of proportional representation who eagerly assented when the necessity for a Dictatorship of the Proletariat was explained to them, earnest clergymen who walked reverently through anti-God museums and reverently turned the pages of atheistic literature, earnest pacifists who watched delightedly tanks rattle across the Red Square and bombing planes darken the sky, earnest town-planning specialists who stood outside overcrowded ramshackle tenements and muttered: "If only we had something like this in England!" The almost unbelievable credulity of these mostly university-educated tourists astonished even Soviet officials used to handling foreign visitors.

After Stalin's death, when the Soviet rulers were forced to admit a considerable part of the terrible truth, many of their progressive supporters also had confessions to make: In fact, they had not really been so credulous as they appeared. Their seeming innocence, as Nobel novelist Halldor Laxness explained, actually had an element of guile: "We feared that the final victory of Socialism would be hampered and hindered if the truth about Stalin's paradise were revealed to the public"

It is easy for today's Leftists to dismiss such revelations, saying that "that was then and this is now"—that Stalin is long dead, his memory having been exhumed and then desecrated by Gorbachev as well as Khrushchev. But as new Marxist paradises have sprouted in China, Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua, and elsewhere, new generations of revolutionary tourists have made their visits and come away reporting that they had seen a future that really worked. Back home they have spread the new gospel, their voices filled with what Milan Kundera has called the "totalitarian poetry" of the socialist cause: the lyrical promises that lead directly to the gulag—waiting room of the socialist paradise.

But while Utopian fantasies provide socialism with a shield against external criticism, within its own borders a brutal pragmatism rules the state. The millions who have been "liberated" by revolutionaries know the dirty little secret of their liberation: that they are more oppressed by the revolution itself than they ever had been by the regime it replaced.

It is the need to bridge the chasm between the socialist dream and the socialist reality that produces the totalitarian state. The essence of that state and its difference from the democracies with which it will always be at war was foreseen with crystal clarity by Machiavelli. Because people are susceptible, he wrote, "it is easy to persuade them, |but | difficult to fix them in that persuasion. Thus it is necessary to take such measures that, when they believe no longer, it may be possible to make them believe by force." In the year zero of the revolution, Lenin showed himself to be Machiavelli's disciple: "If the workers and peasants do not wish to accept socialism, our reply will be: Why waste words when we can apply force?... If we do not apply terror and immediate executions, we will get nowhere. It is better that a hundred innocent are killed than that one guilty person escapes." It is this bleak landscape that the totalitarian poetry is meant to beautify.