### 1NC Neoliberalism

#### Their politics of difference prevent a neoliberal response and cedes politics to the corporate

Joseph M. Schwartz, 8-9-13 (Professor of Political Science at Temple University. Schwartz's teaching and published work focuses on the complex interaction among morality, ideology, and political and institutional development., “A Peculiar Blind Spot: Why did Radical Political Theory Ignore the Rampant Rise in Inequality Over the Past Thirty Years?”, Volume 35, Issue 3, 2013, Special Issue: Studying Politics Today: Critical Approaches to Political Science)

This article explores why self-defined radical and “subversive” political theory has, by and large, failed to examine the rampant increase in inequality under thirty years of neoliberal capitalism as a major threat to democracy.1 During this period, the most highly cited work in radical political thought focused on predominantly ontological and epistemological issues of “difference” and “the fiction of the coherent self.”2 But just as post-structuralist and difference theorists attacked the rational chooser of Rawlsian liberalism as a falsely universal subject and interrogated equality as a homogenizing category, political elites of both the right and the moderate left achieved an ideological consensus in favor of a new, neoliberal universal subject—the entrepreneurial, self-sufficient, competitive marketplace individual. Thus, it is rather ironic that during the “Great Compression” of the 1960s, when income and wealth inequality moderately decreased—in part due to the power of the labor and social democratic movements in advanced democracies—the revival of political theory focused on the challenge to democracy posed by economic inequality and the absence of voice for employees in the workplace; think of the early work of Carole Pateman, C.B. Macpherson, Michael Walzer, and Sheldon Wolin.3 Yet in the past several decades of rapidly growing inequality most radical theorists have focused on the challenge difference poses to democratic societies or how liberal democratic institutions of “governance” engage in the repressive norming of the self. This is not to deny the role that difference plays within a democratic pluralist society, or the intellectual validity of interrogating how dominant institutional norms can constrict individual identity. But the problem that vexed Rousseau, Mill, Marx, and the founders of contemporary democratic theory remains more relevant than ever: how do inequalities in wealth, income, power, and life-opportunity contradict the formal commitment of liberal democracy to the equal moral worth of persons?¶ Given the accentuated role that corporate power and wealth plays in American politics today, why also do few political theorists examine the tension between corporate power and democracy? Not since Charles Lindblom's and Robert Dahl's work in the late 1970s and early 1980s have students of politics focused on the anomalous role of corporations in a democratic society. As Dahl and Lindblom argued, in a democratic society binding decisions should only be granted legitimacy if they are made democratically. Yet corporate management regularly issues edicts that have binding, coercive effects on their employees and society at large.4 Nor have theorists focused on how the weakening of democratic institutions of countervailing power, such as unions and grass-roots social movements, has engendered a formal democracy that is de facto an oligarchy. 5 Recently, mainstream—even behavioral—American politics scholars have investigated the corrosive effects that the fungible nature of wealth into political power has upon democracy, as well as the resulting dominance in decision-making of the political preferences of elites. But recent political theory has been relatively silent on these issues.6¶ By the late 1980s theorists of difference, such as Iris Marion Young and Carol Gilligan, shifted the focus of radical theory from economic democracy to a critique of how one-size-fits-all social policies failed to meet the differential needs of members of particular groups.7 The turn to difference offered important insights for both theorists and activists, as democratic public policies must account for the differential needs of particular individuals and groups. But what the focus on difference sometimes obscured is that the argument that each individual should receive the resources necessary to satisfy their particular human needs still relies upon a universal democratic commitment to the equal standing of all members of society.¶ In contrast to theories of difference, the post-structuralist turn in political theory in part arose as a reaction to fears that identity and difference politics essentialized and homogenized the status of the self within groups.8 Post-structuralism rejected both Rawlsian liberalism's belief in a coherent, rational chooser and identity politics' granting of primacy to the group as the shaper of individual identity. Instead, post-structuralist analysis emphasized the labile, incoherent, shifting nature of a self constituted by, in Judith Butler's terms, the “performative discursive iteration” of social norms.9 Post-structuralist theorists emphasized the agonal nature of politics and the ever-present possibility that the discursive self could “performatively resist” hegemonic norms.10 That is, by refusing to perform according to the social norms that allegedly inscribe the self, individuals could engage in “transgressive” resistance. Ironically, just as allegedly radical theorists discerned the “radical Nietzschean” possibilities of individual resistance, the social and political options of working class individuals and many people of color in the United States were being further constrained by increased social, economic, and political inequality. This focus on individual resistance may have come about—as the literary theorist Terry Eagleton argues—because the forward progress of the left had been reversed by the triumph of Thatcher and Reagan and, thus, theorists lost faith in the possibility of democratic majoritarian political change.11

#### The aff replicates the ideology of Occupy Wall Street. Claiming “the debate space” as a site for organic, *horizontalist* politics can only sell out radical change to the private sphere of individual performance.

**Marcus 2012** – associate book editor at Dissent Magazine (Fall, David, “The Horizontalists”, http://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/the-horizontalists)

There is a much-recycled and certainly apocryphal tale told of an ethnographer traveling in India. Journeying up and down the Ganges Delta, he encounters a fisherman who claims to know the source of all truth. “The world,” the fisherman explains, “rests upon the back of an elephant.”

“But what does the elephant stand on?” the ethnographer asks.

“A turtle.”

“And the turtle?”

“Another turtle.”

“And it?”

“Ah, friend,” smiles the fisherman, “it is turtles all the way down.”

As with most well-circulated apocrypha, it is a parable that lacks a clear provenance, but has a clear moral: that despite our ever-dialectical minds, we will never get to the bottom of things; that, in fact, ***there is nothing*** at the bottom of things. What we define as society is nothing more than a set of locally constructed practices and norms, and what we define as history is nothing more than the passage of one set to the next. Although we might “find the picture of our universe as an infinite tower of tortoises rather ridiculous,” as one reteller admitted, it only raises the question, “Why do we think we know better?”

Since the early 1970s we have wondered—with increasing anxiety—why and if we know better. Social scientists, literary critics, philosophers, and jurists have all begun to turn from their particular disciplines to the more general question of interpretation. There has been an **increasing uneasiness with universal categories of thought**; a whispered suspicion and then a commonly held belief that the sum—societies, histories, identities—never amounts to more than its parts. New analytical frameworks have begun to emerge, sensitive to both the pluralities and localities of life. “What we need,” as Clifford Geertz argued, “are not enormous ideas” but “ways of thinking that are responsive to particularities, to individualities, oddities, discontinuities, contrasts, and singularities.”

This growing anxiety over the precision of our interpretive powers has translated into a variety of political as well as epistemological concerns. Many have become uneasy with universal concepts of justice and equality. Simultaneous to—and in part because of—the ascendance of human rights, freedom has increasingly become understood as an individual entitlement instead of a collective possibility. The once prevalent conviction that a handful of centripetal values could bind society together has transformed into a deeply skeptical attitude toward general statements of value. If it is, indeed, turtles all the way down, then decisions can take place only on a local scale and on a horizontal plane. There is no overarching platform from which to legislate; only a “local knowledge.” As Michael Walzer argued in a 1985 lecture on social criticism, “We have to start from where we are,” we can only ask, “what is the right thing ***for us*** to do?”

This shift in scale has had a significant impact on the Left over the past twenty to thirty years. Socialism, once the “name of our desire,” has all but disappeared; new desires have emerged in its place: situationism, autonomism, localism, communitarianism, environmentalism, anti-globalism. Often spatial in metaphor, they have been more concerned with where and how politics happen rather than at what pace and to what end. Often local in theory and in practice, they have come to represent a shift in scale: from the large to the small, from the vertical to the horizontal, and from—what Geertz has called—the “thin” to the “thick.”

Class, race, and gender—those classic left themes—are, to be sure, still potent categories. But they have often been imagined as spectrums rather than binaries, varying shades rather than static lines of solidarity. Instead of society, there is now talk of communities and actor networks; instead of radical schemes to rework economic and political institutions, there is an emphasis on localized campaigns and everyday practices. The critique of capitalism—once heavily informed by intricate historical and social theories—has narrowed. The “ruthless criticism of all,” as Karl Marx once put it, has turned away from exploitative world systems to the pathologies of an over-regulated life. As post-Marxists Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe declared in 1985,

Left-wing thought today stands at a crossroads. The “evident truths” of the past—the classical forms of analysis and political calculation, the nature of the forces in conflict, the very meaning of the Left’s struggles and objectives—have been seriously challenged….From Budapest to Prague and the Polish coup d’état, from Kabul to the sequels of Communist victory in Vietnam and Cambodia, a question-mark has fallen more and more heavily over the whole way of conceiving both socialism and the roads that should lead to it.

In many ways, the Left has just been keeping up with the times. Over the last quarter-century, there has been a general fracturing of our social and economic relations, a “multiplication of,” what one sociologist has called, “partial societies—grouped by age, sex, ethnicity, and proximity.” This has not necessarily been a bad thing. Even as the old Left—the ***vertical*** Left—frequently bemoaned the growing differentiation and individuation, these new categories did, in fact, open the door for marginalized voices and communities. They created a space for more diversity, tolerance, and inclusion. They signaled a turn toward the language of recognition: a politics more sensitive to difference. But this turn was also not without its disadvantages. Gone was the Left’s hope for an emerging class consciousness, a movement of the “people” seeking greater realms of freedom. Instead of challenging the top-down structures of late capitalism, radicals now aspired to create—what post-Marxists were frequently calling—“spaces of freedom.” If one of the explicit targets of the global justice movement of the late 1990s was the exploitative trade policies of the World Trade Organization, then its underlying critique was the alienating patterns of its bureaucracy: the erosion of spaces for self-determination and expression. The crisis of globalization was that it stripped individuals of their rights to participate, to act as free agents in a society that was increasingly becoming shaped by a set of global institutions. What most troubled leftists over the past three or four decades was not the increasingly unequal distribution of goods and services in capitalist societies but the increasingly unequal distribution of power. As one frequently sighted placard from the 1999 Seattle protests read, “No globalization without participation!”

Occupy Wall Street has come to represent the latest turn in this movement toward local and more horizontal spaces of freedom. Occupation was, itself, a matter of recovering local space: a way to repoliticize the square. And in a moment characterized by foreclosure, it was also symbolically, and sometimes literally, an attempt to reclaim lost homes and abandoned properties. But there was also a deeper notion of space at work. Occupy Wall Street sought out not only new political spaces but also new ways to relate to them. By resisting the top-down management of representative democracy as well as the bottom-up ideals of labor movements, Occupiers hoped to create a new politics in which decisions moved neither up nor down but horizontally. While embracing the new reach of globalization—linking arms and webcams with their encamped comrades in Madrid, Tel Aviv, Cairo, and Santiago—they were also rejecting its patterns of consolidation, its limits on personal freedom, its vertical and bureaucratic structures of decision-making.

Time was also to be transformed. The general assemblies and general strikes were efforts to reconstruct, and make more autonomous, our experience of time as well as space. Seeking to escape from the Taylorist demands of productivity, the assemblies insisted that decision-making was an endless process. Who we are, what we do, what we want to be are categories of flexibility, and consensus is as much about repairing this sense of open-endedness as it is about agreeing on a particular set of demands. Life is a mystery, as one pop star fashionista has insisted, and Occupiers wanted to keep it that way. Likewise, general strikes were imagined as ways in which workers could take back time—regain those parts of life that had become routinized by work. Rather than attempts to achieve large-scale reforms, general strikes were improvisations, escapes from the daily calculations of production that demonstrated that we can still be happy, creative, even productive individuals without jobs. As one unfurled banner along New York’s Broadway read during this spring’s May Day protests, “Why work? Be happy.”

In many ways, the Occupy movement was a rebellion against the institutionalized nature of twenty-first century capitalism and democracy. Equally skeptical of corporate monopolies as it was of the technocratic tendencies of the state, it was ultimately an insurgency against control, against the ways in which organized power and capital deprived the individual of the time and space needed to control his or her life. Just as the vertically inclined leftists of the twentieth century leveraged the public corporation—the welfare state—against the increasingly powerful number of private ones, so too were Occupy and, more generally, the horizontalist Left to embrace the age of the market: at the center of their politics was the anthropological “man” in both his forms—*homo faber* and *homo ludens*—who was capable of negotiating his interests outside the state. For this reason, the movement did not fit neatly into right or left, conservative or liberal, revolutionary or reformist categories. On the one hand, it was sympathetic to the most classic of left aspirations: to dismantle governing hierarchies. On the other, its language was imbued with a strident individualism: a politics of anti-institutionalism and personal freedom that has most often been affiliated with the Right.

Seeking an alternative to the bureaucratic tendencies of capitalism and socialism, Occupiers were to frequently invoke the image of autonomy: of a world in which social and economic relations exist outside the institutions of the state. **Their aspiration was a society based on organic, decentralized circuits of exchange and deliberation—on voluntary associations, on local debate**, on loose networks of affinity groups.

If political and economic life had become abstracted in the age of globalization and financialization, then Occupy activists wanted to re-politicize our everyday choices. As David Graeber, one of Occupy’s chief theoretical architects, explained two days after Zuccotti Park was occupied, “The idea is essentially that “the system is not going to save us,” so “we’re going to have to save ourselves.”

Borrowing from the anarchist tradition, Graeber has called this work “direct action”: the practice of circumventing, even on occasion subverting, hierarchies through practical projects. Instead of attempting “to pressure the government to institute reforms” or “seize state power,” direct actions seek to “build a new society in the shell of the old.” By creating spaces in which individuals take control over their lives, it is a strategy of acting and thinking “as if one is already free.” Marina Sitrin, another prominent Occupier, has offered another name for this politics—“horizontalism”: “the use of direct democracy, the striving for consensus” and “processes in which everyone is heard and new relationships are created.” It is a politics that not only refuses institutionalization but also imagines a new subjectivity from which one can project the future into the present.

Direct action and horizontal democracy are new names, of course, for old ideas. They descend—most directly—from the ideas and tactics of the global justice movement of the 1990s and 2000s. Direct Action Network was founded in 1999 to help coordinate the anti-WTO protests in Seattle; *horizontalidad*, as it was called in Argentina, emerged as a way for often unemployed workers to organize during the financial crisis of 2001. Both emerged out of the theories and practices of a movement that was learning as it went along. The ad hoc working groups, the all-night bull sessions, the daylong actions, the decentralized planning were all as much by necessity as they were by design. They were not necessarily intended at first. But what emerged out of anti-globalization was a new vision of globalization. Local and horizontal in practice, direct action and democracy were to become catchphrases for a movement that was attempting to resist the often autocratic tendencies of a fast-globalizing capitalism.

But direct action and horizontal democracy also tap into a longer, if often neglected, tradition on the left: the anarchism, syndicalism, and autonomist Marxism that stretch from Peter Kropotkin, Emma Goldman, and Rosa Luxemburg to C.L.R. James, Cornelius Castoriadis, and Antonio Negri. If revolutionary socialism was a theory about ideal possibilities, then anarchism and autonomism often focused on the revolutionary practices themselves. The way in which the revolution was organized was the primary act of revolution. Autonomy, as the Greco-French Castoriadis told *Le Monde* in 1977, demands not only “the elimination of dominant groups and of the institutions embodying and orchestrating that domination” but also new modes of what he calls “self-management and organization.”

With direct action and horizontal democracy, the Occupy movement not only developed a set of new tactics but also a governing ideology, a theory of time and space that runs counter to many of the practices of earlier leftist movements. Unlike revolutionary socialism or evolutionary social democracy—Marx’s Esau and Jacob—Occupiers conceived of time as more cyclical than developmental, its understanding of space more local and horizontal than structural and vertical. The revolution was to come but only through everyday acts. It was to occur only through—what Castoriadis obliquely referred to as—“the self-institution of society.”

The seemingly spontaneous movement that emerged after the first general assemblies in Zuccotti Park was not, then, sui generis but an elaboration of a much larger turn by the Left. As occupations spread across the country and as activists begin to exchange organizational tactics, it was easy to forget that what was happening was, in fact, a part of a much larger shift in the scale and plane of Western politics: a turn toward more local and horizontal patterns of life, a growing skepticism toward the institutions of the state, and an increasing desire to seek out greater realms of personal freedom. And although its hibernation over the summer has, perhaps, marked the end of the Occupy movement, OWS has also come to represent an important—and perhaps more lasting—break. In both its ideas and tactics, it has given us a new set of desires—autonomy, radical democracy, direct action—that look well beyond the ideological and tactical tropes of socialism. Its occupations and general assemblies, its flash mobs and street performances, its loose network of activists all suggest a bold new set of possibilities for the Left: a horizontalist ethos that believes that revolution will begin by transforming our everyday lives.

It can be argued that horizontalism is, in many ways, a product of the growing disaggregation and individuation of Western society; that **it is a kind of free-market leftism: a politics jury-rigged out of the very culture it hopes to resist.** For not only does it emphasize the agency of the individual, but it draws one of its central inspirations from a neoclassical image: that of the self-managing society—the polity that functions best when the state is absent from everyday decisions.

But one can also find in its anti-institutionalism an attempt to speak in today’s language for yesterday’s goals. If we must live in a society that neither trusts nor feels compelled by collectivist visions, then horizontalism offers us a leftism that attempts to be, at once, both individualist and egalitarian, anti-institutional and democratic, open to the possibilities of self-management and yet also concerned with the casualties born out of an age that has let capital manage itself for far too long. Horizontalism has absorbed the crisis of knowledge—what we often call “postmodernism”—and the crisis of collectivism—what we often call “neoliberalism.” But instead of seeking to return to some golden age before our current moment of fracture, it seeks—for better and worse—to find a way to make leftist politics conform to our current age of anti-foundationalism and institutionalism. As Graeber argued in the prescriptive last pages of his anthropological epic, *Debt: The First 5,000 Years*, “Capitalism has transformed the world in many ways that are clearly irreversible” and we therefore need to give up “the false choice between state and market that [has] so monopolized political ideology for the last centuries that it made it difficult to argue about anything else.” We need, in other words, to stop thinking like leftists.

But herein lies the problem. Not all possible forms of human existence and social interaction, no matter how removed they are from the institutions of power and capital, are good forms of social organization. Although it is easy to look enthusiastically to those societies—ancient or modern, Western or non-Western—that exist beyond the structures of the state, they, too, have their own patterns of hierarchy, their own embittered lines of inequality and injustice. More important, to select one form of social organization over the other is **always an act of exclusion**. Instituting and then protecting a particular way of life will always require a normative commitment in which not every value system is respected—in which, in other words, there is a moral hierarchy.

More problematically, by working outside structures of power one may circumvent coercive systems but one does not necessarily subvert them. Localizing politics—stripping it of its larger institutional ambitions—has, to be sure, its advantages. But without a larger structural vision, it does not go far enough. “Bubbles of freedom,” as Graeber calls them, may create a larger variety of non-institutional life. But they will always neglect other crucial avenues of freedom: in particular, those social and economic rights that can only be protected from the top down. In this way, the anti-institutionalism of horizontalism comes dangerously close to that of the libertarian Right. The turn to previous eras of social organization, the desire to locate and confine politics to a particular regional space, the deep skepticism toward all forms of institutional life not only mirror the aspirations of libertarianism but help cloak those hierarchies spawned from non-institutional forms of power and capital.

This is a particularly pointed irony for a political ideology that claims to be opposed to the many injustices of a non-institutional market—in particular, its unregulated financial schemes. Perhaps this is an irony deeply woven into the theoretical quilt of autonomy: a vision that, as a result of its anti-institutionalism, is drawn to all sites of individual liberation—even those that are to be found in the marketplace. As Graeber concludes in *Debt*, “Markets, when allowed to drift entirely free from their violent origins, invariably begin to grow into something different, into networks of honor, trust, and mutual connectedness,” whereas “the maintenance of systems of coercion constantly do the opposite: turn the products of human cooperation, creativity, devotion, love and trust back into numbers once again.”

In many ways, this is the result of a set of political ideas that have lost touch with their origins. The desire for autonomy was born out of the socialist—if not also often the Marxist—tradition and there was always a guarded sympathy for the structures needed to oppose organized systems of capital and power. Large-scale institutions were, for thinkers such as Castoriadis, Negri, and C.L.R. James, still essential if every cook was truly to govern. To only “try to create ‘spaces of freedom’ ‘alongside’ of the State” meant, as Castoriadis was to argue later in his life, to back “down from the problem of politics.” In fact, this was, he believed, the failure of 1968: “the inability to set up new, different institutions” and recognize that “there is no such thing as a society without institutions.”

This is—and will be—a problem for the horizontalist Left as it moves forward. As a leftism ready-made for an age in which all sides of the political spectrum are arrayed against the regulatory state, it is always in danger of becoming absorbed into the very ideological apparatus it seeks to dismantle. For it aspires to a decentralized and organic politics that, in both principle and practice, shares a lot in common with its central target. Both it and the “free market” are anti-institutional. And the latter will remain so without larger vertical measures. Structures, not only everyday practices, need to be reformed. The revolution cannot happen only on the ground; it must also happen from above. A direct democracy still needs its indirect structures, individual freedoms still need to be measured by their collective consequences, and notions of social and economic equality still need to stand next to the desire for greater political participation. Deregulation is another regulatory regime, and to replace it requires new regulations: institutions that will limit the excesses of the market. As Castoriadis insisted in the years after 1968, the Left’s task is not only to abolish old institutions but to discover “new kinds of relationship between society and its institutions.”

Horizontalism has come to serve as an important break from the static strategies and categories of analysis that have slowed an aging and vertically inclined Left. OWS was to represent its fullest expression yet, though it has a much longer back story and still—one hopes—a promising future. But horizontalists such as Graeber and Sitrin will struggle to establish spaces of freedom if they cannot formulate a larger vision for a society. Their vision is not—as several on the vertical left have suggested—too utopian but not utopian enough: in seeking out local spaces of freedom, they have confined their ambitions; they have, in fact, come, at times, to mirror the very ideology they hope to resist. In his famous retelling of the turtle parable, Clifford Geertz warned that in “the search of all-too-deep-lying turtles,” we have to be careful to not “lose touch with the hard surfaces of life—with the political, economic, stratificatory realities within which men are everywhere contained.” This is an ever-present temptation, and one that, in our age of ever more stratification, we must resist.

#### Social solidarity against neoliberalism is the only way to prevent social regression

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Just as the right's growing hegemony from the 1980s onward eroded majoritarian support for progressive taxation and universal public goods, radical theory, through its dominant concerns for difference and transgression, abandoned any intellectual defense of the core democratic value of social solidarity. In the United States today, social solidarity is the forgotten sibling among the troika of democratic values—“liberty, equality, and fraternity”—that suffused the democratic social revolutions from the French Revolution onwards. The concept of “fraternity,” or, in gender neutral terms, “solidarity,” implies that citizens develop a capacity for empathy toward others and for trust in their fellows. Democratic citizens act in solidarity with one another because they recognize that their common project is an interdependent one and thus each member of the community has both a moral and an instrumental interest in assuring a minimal level of well-being for all.¶ For much of the twentieth century the left in capitalist democracies fought to expand social rights out of the belief that radical social inequality eroded the value of equal political and civil rights. If democracy involves the making of binding laws by equal citizens, the left argued, there cannot exist a group of citizens who are so socially excluded that they cannot participate politically. Universal public education emerged with the rise of democracy precisely out of insurgent social movements' concern that all citizens gain a “civic education.” Over time, excluded social groups fought to be included as full citizens; and the expansion of citizen rights to “others”—the essence of social solidarity—continues today in the fight for immigrant rights across the globe. As the work of T.H. Marshall and Karl Polanyi demonstrates, the historic struggle between democratic left and right has revolved around the extent to which social rights—public provision, social insurance, and labor rights—should constrain the inegalitarian outcomes of a market-based economy.23¶ Thus, even the most classically liberal of democratic polities—the United States and the United Kingdom—provide minimal levels of universal insurance against disability, unemployment, and old age. But among developed democracies only the “liberal market” United States and United Kingdom do not provide universal forms of state-funded childcare or child support. This reality enabled the right, in both countries, to deploy racialized “anti-welfare” politics that mobilized a segment of the working class, whose formal market earnings rendered them ineligible for means-tested child support programs, against both strong public provision and the relatively high rates of taxation that regressive tax policies impose upon working families.¶ That is, in the dialectic of democracy and solidarity the bonds of fellowship are not naturally fixed. Democratic social movements frequently struggle to expand the popular conception of who is part of the “we.” Often, in times of national crisis and broad social vulnerability, bonds of solidarity expand and strengthen, as do social policies that insure a universal economic and social floor under which citizens cannot fall. Hence, we associate the expansion of social and labor rights during the New Deal and French Popular Front governments with the shared vulnerability of the Great Depression. The United States' GI Bill and the post-World War II radical expansion of the British welfare state came immediately after a “total war” in which victory depended upon the military and productive contributions of working-class men and women, recent immigrants, and oppressed minorities.¶ Thus far, strong bonds of social solidarity have only been constructed (and also eroded) at the level of the nation state, the community of “we” versus “them.” In addition, radical theory and practice has yet to tackle the difficulty of expanding social rights—and of defending existing ones—during periods of capitalist stagnation and global economic restructuring. This makes even more pressing, but also problematic, the project of expanding solidarity across national borders. Today, the struggle for greater solidarity between the working people of northern Europe and southern Europe will define whether the European project becomes more democratic or fragments on the shoals of anti-solidaristic austerity policies.¶ But the contraction of public provision under neoliberal capitalism is no more natural or inexorable than was its historical expansion. Today, the struggle of undocumented workers for an expeditious path to citizenship should lead normative theorists to revisit arguments as to why political, civil, and social rights should be extended to all those (and their dependents) who contribute productive labor to our society. And at a time when the minimum wage is less than one-half of the real value it had in the 1960s, low-wage service workers—both native-born and immigrants—are beginning to protest their inability to raise a family in dignity on their meager wages. Such protest will likely expand if undocumented immigrants gain secure legal rights. In addition, as the baby boomers come to retirement with inadequate savings and radically underfunded or non-existent pensions, there is likely to be resistance to neoliberal efforts to constrict, rather than expand, Social Security.

#### Impact- Neoliberalism recreates racist and sexist politics

Giroux 05 (Henry, Global TV Network Chair in English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University, “The Terror of Neoliberalism”, College Literature, 2005)PM

Neoliberal ideology, on the one hand, pushes for the privatization of all non-commodified public spheres and the upward distribution of wealth. On the other hand, it supports policies that increasingly militarize facets of public space in order to secure the privileges and benefits of the corporate elite and ultra-rich. Neoliberalism does not merely produce economic inequality, iniquitous power relations, and a corrupt political system; it also promotes rigid exclusions from national citizenship and civic participation. As Lisa Duggan points out, "Neoliberalism cannot be abstracted from race and gender relations, or other cultural aspects of the body politic. Its legitimating discourse, social relations, and ideology are saturated with race, with gender, with sex, with religion, with ethnicity, and nationality"(2003, xvi). Neoliberalism comfortably aligns itself with various strands of neoconservative and religious fundamentalisms waging imperial wars abroad as well as at home against those groups and movements that threaten its authoritarian misreading of the meaning of freedom, security, and productiveness.

#### Alternative-This is a debate about starting points, solidarity against neoliberalism first is necessary to secure difference while confronting racial, gender and economic domination

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Given how divided the United States is, not only politically, but also geographically and socially on lines of race, class, and citizenship status, democratic theorists perhaps should refocus their energies on defining the role solidarity and equality of standing must play in the construction of a just society. For example, the political conflict likely to define America's political future is how expeditiously undocumented workers and their dependents become full citizens. Unlike some who long for a return to a class-based politics of social solidarity, I am well aware that forms of racial, national, and gender exclusion helped construct past forms of political solidarity.12 Moreover, the working class has never been a truly homogeneous and “universal class”; its identity and consciousness are constructed in complex ways that reflect the intersectionality of race, class, gender, and sexuality and the role that ideology and culture play in social life.¶ Yet, absent a revival of a pluralist, majoritarian left it is hard to imagine how difference can be institutionalized in an egalitarian manner. Theorists of difference are, in some ways, blind to the reality that difference (or “diversity”) can be—and is being—institutionalized on a radically inegalitarian social terrain, in which some social groups have much more power and opportunity than others. This blind spot mimics the weaknesses of the liberal pluralist theory that dominated political science in the 1950s and 1960s. Then, radical theorists pointed out that liberal pluralist society failed to be fully democratic because some groups had inordinate economic and political power as compared to their small numbers within the demos.13 Today, the same critique of difference can be made.¶ Post-structuralist theorists' focus on the performative resistance of decentered, mutable selves also fails to recognize that the performative options of working-class individuals, persons of color, women, and gays and lesbians are constrained by the structural distribution of racial, economic, and gendered forms of power. Thus, if the performative options of the vast majority are to be enhanced, left theorists have to recover a politics and practice of solidarity and democratic equality; concepts which neither a pure politics of difference nor an agonal politics of post-structuralist radical democracy can adequately ground.

### 1NC Case

#### A priori focus on lived experience trades off with normative advocacy—they put the proverbial cart before the horse—they’re conflating an epistemic criticism with a political platform

Ireland, 2002 [Craig , American Culture—Bilkent “The Appeal to Experience and its Consequences,” Cultural Critique 52 Fall 2002 p.199-200 //liam]

Our purpose in this paper is to raise some issues about epistemological debates and approaches to knowledge in the sociology of education. Our starting point is the observation that since the phenomenologically inspired New Sociology of Education in the early 1970s to postmodernism today, approaches that question epistemological claims about the objectivity of knowledge (and the status of science, reason and rationality, more generally) have occupied an influential position in the field. In earlier times, this approach was often referred to as the 'sociology of knowledge' perspective. Yet then, as now, it is precisely the idea of knowledge that is being challenged. Such approaches adopt, or at least favour or imply, a form of perspectivism which sees knowledge and truth claims as being relative to a culture, form of life or standpoint and, therefore, ultimately representing a particular perspective and social interest rather than independent, univer- salistic criteria. **They complete this reduction by translating knowledge claims into statements about knowers.** Knowledge is dissolved into knowing and priority is given to experience as specialised by category membership and identity (Maton, 1998). For instance, a so-called 'dominant' or 'hegemonic' form of knowledge, represented in the school curriculum, is identified as 'bourgeois', 'male', or 'white'-as reflecting the perspectives, standpoints and interests of dominant social groups. Today, the most common form of this approach is that which, drawing upon postmodernist and poststructuralist perspectives, adopts a discursive concern with the explication of 'voice'. Its major distinction is that between the dominant voice and those ('Others') silenced or marginalised by its hegemony. As Philip Wexler (1997, p.9) has recently observed: 'The postmodern emphasis on discourse and identity remain over- whelmingly the dominant paradigm in school research, and with few exceptions, gives few signs of abating' (see also Delamont, 1997). The main move is to attach knowledge to categories of knowers and to their experience and subjectivities. This privileges and specialises the subject in terms of its membership category as a subordinated voice. Knowledge forms and knowledge relations are translated as social standpoints and power relationships between groups. This is more a sociology of knowers and their relationships than of knowledge. What we will term 'voice discourse' is our principle concern, here. Historically, this approach has also been associated with concerns to reform pedagogy in a progressive direction. At the time of the New Sociology of Education in the early 1970s, this move was expressed in the debate between 'new' sociologists such as Michael Young (1971, 1976) and the philosophical position associated with R.S. Peters and Paul Hirst. More recently, it has been associated with developments such as anti-sexist, multicultural and postcolonial education, and with postmodernist critiques of the 'En- lightenment Project' and 'grand narratives'. The crucial issue, for such approaches, is that where social differentiation in education and the reproduction of social inequalities are associated with principles of exclusion structured in and through educational knowledge. Hence, the critique of knowledge and promotion of progressive pedagogy is understood as facilitating a move from social and educational exclusion to inclusion and the promotion of social justice. This history can be summarised as follows: in the early 1970s, the New Sociology of Education produced a critique of insulated knowledge codes by adopting a 'sociology of knowledge' perspective that claimed to demystify their epistemological pretensions to cognitive superiority by revealing their class base and form. Knowledge relations were transcribed as class relations [1]. In the late 1970s, feminism challenged the masculinist bias of class analysis and turned attention to the gendered character of educational relations, rewriting knowledge relations in terms of patriarchy. This was in turn followed by a focus upon race. In the 1980s, the primary categories employed by gender and race approaches fragmented as various groups contested the vanguardist claims of the earlier proponents of those perspectives to be representing the interests of women or blacks in general. The category 'woman', for instance, fragmented into groups such as women of colour, non-heterosexual women, working-class women, third-world women and African women (Wolpe, 1998). These fractions of gender and race were further extended by a range of sexualities and, to some degree (although never so successfully), by disabilities. Under this pressure of fragmentation, there was a rapid shift away from political universalism to a thoroughgoing celebration of difference and diversity; of decentred, hyphenated or iterative models of the self and, consequently, of identity politics. This poststructuralist celebration of diversity is associated with **proclamations of inclusiveness that oppose the alleged exclusiveness of the dominant knowledge** form that is revealed when its traditional claims to universalism and objectivity are shown for what they really are-the disguised standpoints and interests of dominant groups. On this basis, epistemology and the sociology of knowledge are presented as antithet- ical. The sociology of knowledge undertakes to demystify epistemological knowledge claims by revealing their social base and standpoint. At root, this sociology of knowledge debunks epistemology. The **advocacy** of progressive moral and political arguments **becomes conflated** with a particular set of (anti-) epistemological arguments (Siegel, 1995; Maton, 1999). At this descriptive level, these developments are usually presented as marking a progressive advance whereby the assault upon the epistemological claims of the domi- nant or 'hegemonic' knowledge code (rewritten in its social form as 'power') enables a succession of previously marginalised, excluded and oppressed groups to enter the central stage, their histories to be recovered and their 'voices' joined freely and equally with those already there [2]. Within this advance, the voice of reason (revealed as that of the ruling class white heterosexual male) is reduced simply to one among many, of no special distinction. This is advance through the multiplication of categories and their differences. Disparities of access and representation in education were (and are) rightly seen as issues that need addressing and remedying, and in this respect constitute a genuine politics. It is important to stress, here, that the issues are real issues and the work done on their behalf is real work. But the question is: is this politics best pursued in this way? The tendency we are intending to critique, then, assumes an internal relation between: (a) theories of knowledge (epistemological or sociological); (b) forms of education (traditional or progressive); and (c) social relations (between dominant and subordinated groups). This establishes the political default settings whereby epistemologically grounded, knowl- edge-based forms of education are politically conservative, while 'integrated' (Bernstein, 1977) or 'hybrid' (Muller & Taylor, 1995) knowledge codes are progressive. On this basis, socially progressive causes are systematically detached from epistemologically powerful knowledge structures and from their procedures for generating and promoting truths of fact and value. For us, the crucial problem, here, is that these default settings have the effect of undermining the very argumentative force that progressive causesin factrequire in order to press their claims. The position of voice discourse and its cognate forms within the sociology of education has, also, profoundly affected theory and research within the field, with little attention being paid to structural level concerns with social stratification and a penchant for small-scale, qualitative ethnographic methods and 'culturalist' concerns with discursive positioning and identity (Moore, 1996a; Hatcher, 1998). We will argue that **this perspective is not only politically self-defeating, but also intellectually incoherent**-that, in fact, progressive claims implicitly presuppose precisely the kind of 'conservative' epistemology that they tend to reject and that, to be of value, the sociology of education should produce knowledge in the strong sense. This is important because the effects of the (anti-) epistemological thesis undermine the possibilities of producing precisely that kind of knowledge required to support the moral/political objectives. Indeed, the dubious epistemological assumptions may lead not only to an 'analytical nihilism that is contrary to (their) political project' (Ladwig, 1995, p.222), but also to pedagogic conclusions that are actively counterproductive and ultimately work against the educational interests of precisely those groups they are meant to help (Stone, 1981; Dowling, 1994). We agree, thus, with Siegel that, '... **it is imperative that defenders of radical pedagogy distinguish their embrace of** **particular moral/political theses from untenable, allegedly related, epistemological ones'** (ibid., p.34).

#### No Framework QUESTION can veer this round from the NEXUS QUESTION OF CONCRETE ALTS. Without those, we’re awful activists.

Bryant 12

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I must be in a mood today– half irritated, half amused –because I find myself ranting. Of course, that’s not entirely unusual. So this afternoon I came across a post by a friend quoting something discussing the environmental movement that pushed all the right button. As the post read,¶ For mainstream environmentalism– conservationism, green consumerism, and resource management –humans are conceptually separated out of nature and mythically placed in privileged positions of authority and control over ecological communities and their nonhuman constituents. What emerges is the fiction of a marketplace of ‘raw materials’ and ‘resources’ through which human-centered wants, constructed as needs, might be satisfied. The mainstream narratives are replete with such metaphors [carbon trading!]. Natural complexity,, mutuality, and diversity are rendered virtually meaningless given discursive parameters that reduce nature to discrete units of exchange measuring extractive capacities. Jeff Shantz, “Green Syndicalism”¶ While finding elements this description perplexing– I can’t say that I see many environmentalists treating nature and culture as distinct or suggesting that we’re sovereigns of nature –I do agree that we conceive much of our relationship to the natural world in economic terms (not a surprise that capitalism is today a universal). This, however, is not what bothers me about this passage.¶ What I wonder is just what we’re supposed to do *even if* all of this is true? What, given existing conditions, are we to do if all of this is right? At least green consumerism, conservation, resource management, and things like carbon trading are engaging in activities that are making real differences. From this passage– and maybe the entire text would disabuse me of this conclusion –it sounds like we are to reject all of these interventions because they remain tied to a capitalist model of production that the author (and myself) find abhorrent. The idea seems to be that if we endorse these things we are tainting our hands and would therefore do well to reject them altogether.¶ The problem as I see it is that this is the worst sort of abstraction (in the Marxist sense) and wishful thinking. Within a Marxo-Hegelian context, a thought is abstract when it ignores all of the mediations in which a thing is embedded. For example, I understand a robust tree abstractly when I attribute its robustness, say, to its genetics alone, ignoring the complex relations to its soil, the air, sunshine, rainfall, etc., that also allowed it to grow robustly in this way. This is the sort of critique we’re always leveling against the neoliberals. They are abstract thinkers. In their doxa that individuals are entirely responsible for themselves and that they completely make themselves by pulling themselves up by their bootstraps, neoliberals ignore all the mediations belonging to the social and material context in which human beings develop that play a role in determining the vectors of their life. They ignore, for example, that George W. Bush grew up in a family that was highly connected to the world of business and government and that this gave him opportunities that someone living in a remote region of Alaska in a very different material infrastructure and set of family relations does not have. To think concretely is to engage in a cartography of these mediations, a mapping of these networks, from circumstance to circumstance (what I call an “onto-cartography”). It is to map assemblages, networks, or ecologies in the constitution of entities.¶ Unfortunately, the academic left falls prey to its own form of abstraction. It’s good at carrying out critiques that denounce various social formations, yet very poor at proposing any sort of realistic constructions of alternatives. This because it thinks abstractly in its own way, ignoring how networks, assemblages, structures, or regimes of attraction would have to be remade to create a workable alternative. Here I’m reminded by the “underpants gnomes” depicted in South Park:¶ The underpants gnomes have a plan for achieving profit that goes like this:¶ Phase 1: Collect Underpants¶ Phase 2: ?¶ Phase 3: Profit!¶ They even have a catchy song to go with their work:¶ Well this is sadly how it often is with the academic left. Our plan seems to be as follows:¶ Phase 1: Ultra-Radical Critique¶ Phase 2: ?¶ Phase 3: Revolution and complete social transformation!¶ Our problem is that we seem perpetually stuck at phase 1 without ever explaining what is to be done at phase 2. Often the critiques articulated at phase 1 are right, but there are nonetheless all sorts of problems with those critiques nonetheless. In order to reach phase 3, we have to produce new collectives. In order for new collectives to be produced, people need to be able to hear and understand the critiques developed at phase 1. Yet this is where everything begins to fall apart. Even though these critiques are often right, we express them in ways that only an academic with a PhD in critical theory and post-structural theory can understand. How exactly is Adorno to produce an effect in the world if only PhD’s in the humanities can understand him? Who are these things for? We seem to always ignore these things and then look down our noses with disdain at the Naomi Kleins and David Graebers of the world. To make matters worse, we publish our work in expensive academic journals that only universities can afford, with presses that don’t have a wide distribution, and give our talks at expensive hotels at academic conferences attended only by other academics. Again, who are these things for? Is it an accident that so many activists look away from these things with contempt, thinking their more about an academic industry and tenure, than producing change in the world? If a tree falls in a forest and no one is there to hear it, it doesn’t make a sound! Seriously dudes and dudettes, what are you doing?¶ But finally, and worst of all, us Marxists and anarchists all too often act like assholes. We denounce others, we condemn them, we berate them for not engaging with the questions we want to engage with, and we vilify them when they don’t embrace every bit of the doxa that we endorse. We are every bit as off-putting and unpleasant as the fundamentalist minister or the priest of the inquisition (have people yet understood that Deleuze and Guattari’s Anti-Oedipus was a critique of the French communist party system and the Stalinist party system, and the horrific passions that arise out of parties and identifications in general?). This type of “revolutionary” is the greatest friend of the reactionary and capitalist because they do more to drive people into the embrace of reigning ideology than to undermine reigning ideology. These are the people that keep Rush Limbaugh in business. Well done!¶ But this isn’t where our most serious shortcomings lie. Our most serious shortcomings are to be found at phase 2. We almost never make concrete proposals for how things ought to be restructured, for what new material infrastructures and semiotic fields need to be produced, *and when we do*, our critique-intoxicated cynics and skeptics immediately jump in with an analysis of all the ways in which these things contain dirty secrets, ugly motives, and are doomed to fail. How, I wonder, are we to do anything at all when we have no concrete proposals? We live on a planet of 6 billion people. These 6 billion people are dependent on a certain network of production and distribution to meet the needs of their consumption. That network of production and distribution does involve the extraction of resources, the production of food, the maintenance of paths of transit and communication, the disposal of waste, the building of shelters, the distribution of medicines, etc., etc., etc.¶ What are your proposals? How will you meet these problems? How will you navigate the existing mediations or semiotic and material features of infrastructure? Marx and Lenin had proposals. Do you? Have you even explored the cartography of the problem? Today we are so intellectually bankrupt on these points that we even have theorists speaking of events and acts and talking about a return to the old socialist party systems, ignoring the horror they generated, their failures, and not even proposing ways of avoiding the repetition of these horrors in a new system of organization. Who among our critical theorists is thinking seriously about how to build a distribution and production system that is responsive to the needs of global consumption, avoiding the problems of planned economy, ie., who is doing this in a way that gets notice in our circles? Who is addressing the problems of micro-fascism that arise with party systems (there’s a reason that it was the Negri & Hardt contingent, not the Badiou contingent that has been the heart of the occupy movement). At least the ecologists are thinking about these things in these terms because, well, they think ecologically. Sadly we need something more, a melding of the ecologists, the Marxists, and the anarchists. We’re not getting it yet though, as far as I can tell. Indeed, folks seem attracted to yet another critical paradigm, Laruelle.¶ I would love, just for a moment, to hear a radical environmentalist talk about his ideal high school that would be academically sound. How would he provide for the energy needs of that school? How would he meet building codes in an environmentally sound way? How would she provide food for the students? What would be her plan for waste disposal? And most importantly, how would she navigate the school board, the state legislature, the federal government, and all the families of these students? What is your plan? What is your alternative? I think there are alternatives. I saw one that approached an alternative in Rotterdam. If you want to make a truly revolutionary contribution, this is where you should start. Why should anyone even bother listening to you if you aren’t proposing real plans? But we haven’t even gotten to that point. Instead we’re like underpants gnomes, saying “revolution is the answer!” without addressing any of the infrastructural questions of just how revolution is to be produced, what alternatives it would offer, and how we would concretely go about building those alternatives. Masturbation.¶ “Underpants gnome” deserves to be a category in critical theory; a sort of synonym for self-congratulatory masturbation. We need less critique not because critique isn’t important or necessary– it is –but because we know the critiques, we know the problems. We’re intoxicated with critique because it’s easy and safe. We best every opponent with critique. We occupy a position of moral superiority with critique. But do we really do anything with critique? What we need today, more than ever, is composition or carpentry. Everyone knows something is wrong. Everyone knows this system is destructive and stacked against them. Even the Tea Party knows something is wrong with the economic system, despite having the wrong economic theory. None of us, however, are proposing alternatives. Instead we prefer to shout and denounce. Good luck with that.

#### Policy focus key to combat racism---anti-blackness is not ontological

Jamelle Bouie 13, staff writer at The American Prospect, Making and Dismantling Racism, http://prospect.org/article/making-and-dismantling-racism

Over at The Atlantic, Ta-Nehisi Coates has been exploring the intersection of race and public policy, with a focus on white supremacy as a driving force in political decisions at all levels of government. This has led him to two conclusions: First, that anti-black racism as we understand it is a **creation of explicit policy choices—**the decision to exclude, marginalize, and stigmatize Africans and their descendants has as much to do with racial prejudice as does any intrinsic tribalism. And second, that it's possible to **dismantle this prejudice using public policy**. Here is Coates in his own words: Last night I had the luxury of sitting and talking with the brilliant historian Barbara Fields. One point she makes that very few Americans understand is that racism is a creation. You read Edmund Morgan’s work and actually see racism being inscribed in the law and the country changing as a result. If we accept that racism is a creation, then we must then accept that it can be destroyed. And if we accept that it can be destroyed, we must then accept that it can be destroyed by us and that it likely must be destroyed by methods kin to creation. Racism was created by policy. It will likely only be ultimately destroyed by policy. Over at his blog, Andrew Sullivan offers a reply: I don’t believe the law created racism any more than it can create lust or greed or envy or hatred. It can encourage or mitigate these profound aspects of human psychology – it can create racist structures as in the Jim Crow South or Greater Israel. But it can no more end these things that it can create them. A complementary strategy is finding ways for the targets of such hatred to become inured to them, to let the slurs sting less until they sting not at all. Not easy. But a more manageable goal than TNC’s utopianism. I can appreciate the point Sullivan is making, but I'm not sure it's relevant to Coates' argument. It is absolutely true that "Group loyalty is deep in our DNA," as Sullivan writes. And if you define racism as an overly aggressive form of group loyalty—basically just prejudice—then Sullivan is right to throw water on the idea that the law can "create racism any more than it can create lust or greed or envy or hatred." But Coates is making a more precise claim: That **there's nothing natural about the black/white divide that has defined American history**. White Europeans had contact with black Africans well before the trans-Atlantic slave trade **without the emergence of an anti-black racism**. It took particular choices made by particular people—in this case, plantation owners in colonial Virginia—to make black skin a stigma, to make the "one drop rule" a defining feature of American life for more than a hundred years. By enslaving African indentured servants and allowing their white counterparts a chance for upward mobility, colonial landowners began the process that would **make white supremacy the ideology of America**. The position of slavery generated a stigma that then justified continued enslavement—blacks are lowly, therefore we must keep them as slaves. Slavery (and later, Jim Crow) **wasn't built to reflect racism as much as it was built in tandem with it**. And later policy, in the late 19th and 20th centuries, further entrenched white supremacist attitudes. Block black people from owning homes, and they're forced to reside in crowded slums. Onlookers then use the reality of slums to deny homeownership to blacks, under the view that they're unfit for suburbs. In other words, create a prohibition preventing a marginalized group from engaging in socially sanctioned behavior—owning a home, getting married—and then blame them for the adverse consequences. Indeed, in arguing for gay marriage and responding to conservative critics, Sullivan has taken note of this exact dynamic. Here he is twelve years ago, in a column for The New Republic that builds on earlier ideas: Gay men--not because they're gay but because they are men in an all-male subculture--are almost certainly more sexually active with more partners than most straight men. (Straight men would be far more promiscuous, I think, if they could get away with it the way gay guys can.) Many gay men value this sexual freedom more than the stresses and strains of monogamous marriage (and I don't blame them). But this is not true of all gay men. Many actually yearn for social stability, for anchors for their relationships, for the family support and financial security that come with marriage. To deny this is surely to engage in the "soft bigotry of low expectations." They may be a minority at the moment. But with legal marriage, their numbers would surely grow. And they would function as emblems in gay culture of a sexual life linked to stability and love. [Emphasis added] What else is this but a variation on Coates' core argument, that society can create stigmas by using law to force particular kinds of behavior? Insofar as gay men were viewed as unusually promiscuous, it almost certainly had something to do with the fact that society refused to recognize their humanity and sanction their relationships. The absence of any institution to mediate love and desire encouraged behavior that led this same culture to say "these people are too degenerate to participate in this institution." If the prohibition against gay marriage helped create an anti-gay stigma, then lifting it—as we've seen over the last decade—has helped destroy it. There's no reason racism can't work the same way.

#### Institutional focus key---personal expression as politics calcifies the SQ and cedes the political

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The drumming crisis was barely contained, but not fully averted, and became moot after the forceful eviction of the encampment from Zuccotti. That said, this tale illuminates a key difference between two movements and, perhaps, a deeper cultural style of contemporary social movements. On one level is the contrast in the leadership style and organization of the civil rights movement and Occupy, and the legitimacy of the concept of leadership to those in the movement. The civil right movement, while an immensely complicated phenomenon that was both professionally channeled (Jenkins & Eckert, 1986) and decentralized through networks of progressive churches, civil society organizations, and grassroots activists, developed a tactical repertoire that was distinct from the political valuation of the organizational form and decision-making structure of the movement. By contrast, in this brief article we argue that Occupy participants cast the values and form of the movement itself—how it operates and makes decisions—in terms that are synonymous with its very identity and survival. Occupy is the change that its members seek. There is both promise and peril in this approach. Occupy is finding it difficult to engage in institutional politics—which we argue is key to broad and durable societal transformations. We suggest that as Occupy goes home, and as it prepares to come back, it should renegotiate the tension between self-expression and strategic institutional action, and between movement itself as a goal and movement goals. In short, we argue that mistaking an anti-institutional style of participatory democracy and self-expression for both real democracy and radical capitalist critique undermines political power—and ultimately results in less progress toward participatory democracy as the movement becomes politically less relevant and less able to bring about societal change. Self-Expression as a Mode of Collectivity The drum circle clash was symptomatic of a larger crisis within the movement over who, if anyone, can impose or even suggest modalities of protest. This is not because collective identity or goals are unimportant to Occupy; rather, it is because collective movement identity itself is premised upon creating a space for individual expression. As a consequence, Occupy has found it difficult to develop the decision-making procedures or legitimate leadership structures that enable individuals to align themselves with the strategic choices of the movement without undermining a key tenet of the very collective identity that secures its existence as a movement. While this is an outcome of the rise of constructed personal identity as a key expression of the political self since the 1960s, it is also a broader phenomenon. One of the defining features of modernity is that identity is less a feature of organized social relations (Calhoun, 1994, p. 11) as a reflexive effort by the individual that involves strategic and performative choices. The assertion of the self as an identity is a political project (Castells, 1997). This emergence of identity as a source of political power has had a major impact on trajectories of social movements. Activism and political activity itself is increasingly also a way to construct a desirable self (Polletta & Jasper, 2001) rather than achieve an external goal. The desirable self is the political project as the arbiter of moral value (Lichterman, 1996). As a consequence, the personal is not only political, the legitimacy of movement organizational forms and tactics is entwined with their realization of personal expression. Certainly, movement participants have long adopted organizational forms based on moral values rather than political efficacy (Jasper, 1997, p. 228). However, the case of Occupy highlights the dilemma faced by a movement where the fullest expression of individual identity and a denial of engagement with the structured demands of institutional politics are its very form of politics. The situation has evolved from one in which there was (naturally) a tension between process and goals to one in which individual expression and the mechanics of internal processes have drowned out most other considerations. Therefore, we are witnessing the transition away from movements that had the capacity to handpick their representatives so as to generate maximum sympathy among the broader public, even at the cost of bowing to and reinforcing the very prejudices it was fighting―to ones which seemingly cannot deal with a mundane problem like loud and continuous drumming by its participants in a residential area. Interestingly, one of the key mechanisms through which the Occupy movement has negotiated this tension between individual self-expression and collective identity is through its signature tactic: The “human microphone.” This tactic, which started as a response to a lack of amplified sound in Zuccotti Park, begins with someone yelling “mic check” and the crowd repeating this in unison. After that, speakers address the crowd in short phrases which are again repeated by the whole gathering, phrase by phrase, so that everyone can hear. The “mic check” has evolved from a meeting tactic to Occupy’s signature form of protest, one that activists have used to challenge public figures. In interviews, Occupy organizers argue that this “unison repetition” alters political dynamics by making everyone, even those who disagree with a point, repeat it, almost as if it were their own point, and also by creating a powerful sense of the collective through shared speech (personal interviews, second author). Further, it cuts the power of individual charisma—and hence sets bounds upon the power of self-expression—as it is difficult to be a great orator and monopolize public attention when one has to stop every few words to be repeated by a large crowd. In other words, the psychodynamics of the human microphone reflect a “collective effervescence” (Durkheim, 1912) and cut against the very individualized and performative processes which dominate the movement. This phenomenon is interesting both theoretically and politically, as it reveals a movement creatively grappling with its constitution through self-expression while maintaining a collective space for action. This tension between self-expression and collectivity remains a significant challenge for Occupy as it limits the depth and breadth of the movement’s impact. In particular, we believe that the movement has failed to engage with institutional politics, limiting the durability of the cultural change it has already effected. Symbolic and Institutional Power The Occupy movement has, to-date, focused on claiming, producing, and wielding the symbolic power of the street. Modeled after the movements of the Arab Spring, Occupy self-consciously appropriated the innovative tactic of materially claiming public space. The contested idea of the street provided the performative context, and the pavement and mass media the platforms, for activists to occupy the public sphere. Through this collective, embodied presence of activists, Occupy has claimed symbolic street power and effected cultural change (Gamson, 1992). For example, while more research is needed, survey data suggests that Occupy has succeeded in changing the media and public discourse around its central mobilizing frame: inequality (Gamson, 2012). Although the public is split on its attitudes toward Occupy and its tactics and overall critique of American capitalism, public salience of inequality has increased (Pew, 2011). As importantly, in helping to create this issue salience Occupy has seemingly created the discursive space that enabled institutional, Democratic Party elites to rhetorically embrace its frame of inequality. Occupy has created a “radical flank effect” (Haines, 1984), staking out a radical position that provided ideological cover for Party elites to turn from the rhetoric of deficits and advance more modest proposals that entail a more active state. While it being an election year certainly helped, Obama’s efforts around the extension of the payroll tax and creation of the “millionaire tax,” as well as embrace of tough rhetoric that echoed the movement’s critique of inequality reveals the discursive space opened by the Occupy movement. While elites have embraced the movement’s themes, it appears that the institutional connections to the Democratic Party stop at this cultural influence. While it is young, the Occupy movement can be read through the lens of populism (Goodwin, 2012). Populism is not a coherent and stable ideology but a reaction to institutional power that has historically assumed both conservative and progressive guises (Kazin, 1998). Its coherence lies in its expression as a political style that rejects calcified institutional and bureaucratic politics and grounds its legitimacy in direct appeals to “the people” (Canovan, 1999, p. 4). Populist politics is expressive and direct. It is personal, unmediated by institutions, organizations, elites, and professionals. For Canovan (1999, p. 13), populism is the “redemptive” face of democracy, ritualistically cleansing pragmatic, institutional forms of governance that are “very far removed from spontaneous expression” (p. 13). For many participants in and supporters of Occupy, pragmatic politics is seemingly an anathema (Dean, 2012). Disillusionment with political institutions, from parties and electoral politics to civil society organizations, appears widespread across the populist left, which has long turned from institutional politics in the attempt to create alternative social (Turner, 2006) and political forms (Gitlin, 1993) that are projects of transformative politics. The Occupy movement, the most significant and sustained class-based mobilization in a generation, echoes these earlier projects of transformative world making. From the beginning Occupy was dually oriented toward experimenting with forms of unmediated self-expression and participatory democratic practice as paths to liberating collectivity. And yet, even as the redemptive is the necessary animating spirit of democracy, Canovan (1999) argues that it is through pragmatic politics that the functions of governance are carried out and institutional power wielded. Actual transformative politics has rarely been without an institutional component, even if it does not involve the institutionalization of movements. Civil rights and the women’s, queer, and disability rights movements have all fought successfully to implement institutional and political change ranging from federal laws to workplace polices. This is not to suggest that cultural change is unimportant. It is to suggest that social transformation can only exist through some engagement with institutional politics that makes change durable. It is the turn from pragmatic politics and institutional engagement that distinguished Occupy from the Tea Party, the most recent manifestation of a five decade old populist conservative movement. Similar to other manifestations of conservative mobilization (McGirr, 2001; Teles, 2008) the Tea Party adopted a dual orientation toward both symbolic and institutional power. The most recent example is the Tea Party’s populist mobilization around the 2010 midterm elections, which reshaped the internal workings of the Republican Party and redoubled its institutional ability to block much of the president’s agenda—including what now passes as progressive reform. In conjunction with party elites and conservative media outlets, in 2010 the Tea Party movement drove turnout in the Republican primaries and the midterm elections (Williamson, Skocpol, & Coggin, 2011). After the elections, the Tea Party and its legislative allies created a 62-member caucus in the House and enlisted four members of the Senate to create a voting block that repeatedly eschewed legislative compromise. Even more, Tea Party activists not only drove turnout in the midterm elections, the presence of activists in districts helped hold members to account for the movement’s policy goals (Bailey, Mummolo, & Noel, 2011). In the process, the Tea Party caucus wielded all of the institutional tools at its disposal for the purposes of thwarting the president’s, and often the Republican House leadership’s, agenda. In this, the Tea Party resembles other movements that have taken advantage of political opportunities to open the space for new configurations

 of institutional politics (Amenta, 2008; McAdam & Tarrow, 2010). The contemporary conservative movement is, in large part, a story of the successful navigation of the twin faces of redemptive and pragmatic politics. Activists who participated in the redemptive mobilization around Barry Goldwater’s candidacy worked to reshape the Republican Party in the years after his defeat (Perlstein, 2001). All of which enabled movement conservatives to seize the political opportunity that Reagan’s candidacy offered. If Goldwater began to unravel the American consensus ideologically, it was Reagan who drew on the movement to wield the levers of institutional power that had effects that ran much deeper than cultural stylings. Reagan dismantled unions, cut taxes on the wealthy, and gutted social service programs. It was Reagan’s electoral victory that forged a radical reimagining of the American state and its obligations to its citizens, and created the institutional forms to hold it in place, from regulatory changes to the reshaping of the judiciary. Conclusion The Occupy movement may now be melting into a sedimentary network (Chadwick, 2007) of activists that will hang together through new media technologies and reconstitute itself around symbolic events in the coming years ― as it did in protest events at the Democratic and Republican National Conventions. This symbolic power will likely prove fleeting given the deinstitutionalized nature of redemptive politics. Deinstitutionalization can certainly be a strength in some contexts, such as the overthrowing of a dictator or the rapid creation and publicizing of a national political movement. But, in the routine workings of pragmatic politics, these organizational qualities are a distinct disadvantage, as secular liberals discovered in their recent defeat in the Egyptian elections. After the initial flare of the movement’s mediated publicity, the political context in the United States has changed to one that requires political organization able to engage and challenge institutional politics to advance an agenda forward. If Occupy is deeply divided about its engagement with pragmatic, institutional politics and fails to build meaningful ties to unions and civil society and advocacy organizations during the president’s second term it will be a wasted opportunity. Occupy’s redemptive energy, for instance, would be well directed towards the organization of a progressive, “Occupy Congress” voting block inside Congress that can hold Democrats to account for its aims. In effect, this strategy would call for using the master’s pragmatic tools to occupy the master’s institutional house. This strategy does not exclude the potential for transforming these institutional tools through a focus on process—neither does it disallow the regenerative politics which broader room for self expression can facilitate. It does, however, call for rethinking the balance between process and durable goals, and between personal and institutional transformation—which in turn can transform the conditions through which individuals ultimately flourish. Nor is this a call for abandoning redemptive politics which can again be mobilized when the institutional levers of power become, as they will inevitably, calcified.