Our process of deconstructive performance breaks down logocentric domination that justifies oppressive hierarchies.

Montgomery, ‘10 [Erwin B. Montgomery III, Prof of English at Bryant University; “SPECTERS OF MARKS: ELEMENTS OF DERRIDEAN HAUNTOLOGY AND

BENJAMINIAN POLITICO-HISTORICAL ESCHATOLOGY IN FRANKENSTEIN,

HEART OF DARKNESS, AND THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT’S WOMAN”, 2010]

A deconstructive performance implies an awareness that that to which the performance addresses itself proceeds from the alterity of pure difference. The ethics of deconstruction, in other words, encourages sensitivity to the singularity of entities and events, to their spatial, temporal and constitutional particularities, as the nearest, most faithful conceptual approximation of the event as a-conceptual and wholly other. Deconstruction reminds one that any predication violently imposes itself on the singularity of entities and events, trammeling them into sameness by subsuming them under metaphysical and linguistic categories. Rather than in a telos inherent to an event, any imposed predication finds impetus in ―a moment of economy,‖ Derrida writes, that puts in order the grand conceptual edifice of Western logocentric metaphysics by collapsing and hierarchizing the undifferentiated plenum of a-conceptual, significative potentialities into a sign system devoted to facilitating productive communication.41 Yet this system appears content as it were to burn the village to save the village; signs pressed into service to articulate the singularities of events can only do so by referring them according to the systemic rules governing their use, which precipitate the radical discontiguity between language and the world it purports to describe. Entities and events impress their spectral forms on language without conferring upon it any of their essence. As Ernesto Laclau‘s observes in his analysis of Derrida‘s deconstructive practice, ontology as discourse concerning the being of beings becomes transformed by deconstruction into ―hauntology.‖42

The logocentric privileging of the spoken over the written word is a drive to impose violent consistency on the world and is at the root of all forms of exclusion. Only the counterplan’s act of deconstruction can dismantle hierarchical ordering.

Lilla, ’98 [Mark, Social Thought Studies @ University of Chicago, “The Politics of Jacques Derrida,” <http://www.jya.com/lilla-derrida.htm>]

Deconstruction was conceived in the spirit of Heidegger's Destruktion, though Derrida had no intention of making man the shepherd of anything. In a remarkable lecture in 1968, "The Ends of Man," Derrida pointed out that by anointing man the "shepherd of Being," Heidegger had returned to humanism "as if by magnetic attraction." He then claimed that the metaphysical tradition could only really be overcome if the very language of philosophy was "deconstructed," a language in which even Heidegger was snared. At the root of the metaphysical tradition was a naive notion of language as a transparent medium, a "logocentrism," as Derrida dubbed it. The Greek term logos means word or language, but it can also mean reason or principle--an equation of speech with intentionality that Derrida considered highly questionable. What was needed was a radical "decentering" of the implicit hierarchies imbedded in this language that encourage us to place speech above writing, the author above the reader, or the signified above the signifier. Deconstruction thus was described as a prolegomenon to--or perhaps even a substitute for--philosophy as traditionally conceived. It would be an activity allowing the aporias, or paradoxes, imbedded in every philosophical text to emerge without forcing a "violent" consistency upon them. The end of logocentrism would then mean the end of every other wicked "centrism": androcentrism, phallocentrism, phallologocentrism, carnophallologocentrism, and the rest. (All these terms appear in the books under review.) As a specimen of normalien cleverness, Derrida's attack on his intellectual forefathers could hardly be bettered. He accused both structuralists and Heidegger of not having pushed their own fundamental insights far enough. Structuralists destabilized our picture of man by placing him in a web of social and linguistic relations, but then assumed that web of relations-- structures--to have a stable center. Heidegger's blindness to his own language led from the Destruktion of metaphysics to the promotion of man as the "shepherd of Being." Derrida's contribution, if that is the correct term, was to have seen that by pressing further the anti-humanism latent in both these intellectual traditions, he could make them seem compatible ways of addressing logocentrism. But having done that, Derrida then found himself bound to follow the linguistic principles he had discovered in his campaign against logocentrism, especially the hard doctrine that since all texts contain ambiguities and can be read in different ways (la difference), exhaustive interpretation must be forever deferred (la differance). That raised the obvious question: How then are we to understand deconstruction's own propositions? As more than one critic has pointed out, there is an unresolvable paradox in using language to claim that language cannot make unambiguous claims.2 For Derrida coping with such evident paradoxes is utterly beside the point. As he has repeatedly explained, he conceives of deconstruction less as a philosophical doctrine than as a "practice" aimed at casting suspicion on the entire philosophical tradition and robbing it of self-confidence. Anyone who has heard him lecture in French knows that he is more performance artist than logician. His flamboyant style--using free association, rhymes and near-rhymes, puns, and maddening digressions--is not just a vain pose (though it is surely that). It reflects what he calls a self-conscious "acommunicative strategy" for combating logocentrism. As he puts it in the interview published in Moscou aller-retour: What I try to do through the neutralization of communication, theses, and stability of content, through a microstructure of signification, is to provoke, not only in the reader but also in oneself, a new tremor or a new shock of the body that opens a new space of experience. That might explain the reaction of not a few readers when they say that, in the end, one doesn't understand anything, there's no conclusion drawn, it's too sophisticated, we don't know if you are for or against Nietzsche, where you stand on the woman question.... It also might explain the reaction of those readers who suspect that the neutralization of communication means the neutralization of all standards of judgment--logical, scientific, aesthetic, moral, political--and leaves these fields of thought open to the winds of force and caprice. Derrida always brushed aside such worries as childish, and in the atmosphere of the Sixties and Seventies few questions were asked. But the Eighties proved to be trying times for deconstruction. In 1987 a Chilean writer named Victor Farias published a superficial book on Martin Heidegger's involvement with the Nazis and its alleged roots in his philosophy. While the book contained no revelations, it was taken in France and Germany to confirm the suspicion that, to the extent that philosophy in the Sixties and Seventies was Heideggerian, it was politically irresponsible. Jacques Derrida rejected these associations out of hand, as readers of this paper will recall.3 But that same year it was also revealed that the late Yale professor Paul de Man, a leading champion of deconstruction and close friend of Derrida's, had published collaborationist and anti-Semitic articles in two Belgian newspapers in the early Forties. These might have been dismissed as youthful errors had Derrida and some of his American followers not then interpreted away the offending passages, denying their evident meaning, leaving the impression that deconstruction means you never have to say you're sorry.4 It now appeared that deconstruction had, at the very least, a public relations problem, and that the questions of politics it so playfully left in suspension would now have to be answered. Yet how would that be possible? Derrida's radical interpretations of structuralism and Heideggerianism had rendered the traditional vocabulary of politics unusable and nothing could be put in its place. The subjects considered in traditional political philosophy--individual human beings and nations--were declared to be artifices of language, and dangerous ones at that. The object of political philosophy--a distinct realm of political action--was seen as part of a general system of relations that itself had no center. And as for the method of political philosophy--rational inquiry toward a practical end--Derrida had succeeded in casting suspicion on its logocentrism. An intellectually consistent deconstruction would therefore seem to entail silence on political matters. Or, if silence proved unbearable, it would at least require a serious reconsideration of the anti-humanist dogmas of the structuralist and Heideggerian traditions. To his credit, Michel Foucault began such a reconsideration in the decade before his death. Jacques Derrida never has. 3. The most we are ever likely to learn about Derrida's understanding of strictly political relations is contained in his most recently translated work, Politics of Friendship--the only one of his books with the word "politics" in the title. It is based on a seminar given in Paris in 1988-1989, just as Europe was being shaken to its foundation by the rapid collapse of the Eastern Bloc. As it happens, I attended this seminar and, like most of the participants I met, had difficulty understanding what Derrida was driving at. Each session would begin with the same citation from Montaigne--"O mes amis, il n'y a nul ami" ("O my friends, there is no friend")--and then veer off into a rambling discussion of its possible sources and meanings. The published text is much reworked and gives a clearer picture of what Derrida has in mind. His aim is to show that the entire Western tradition of thinking about politics has been distorted by our philosophy's peccatum originarium, the concept of identity. Because our metaphysical tradition teaches that man is identical to himself, a coherent personality free from internal difference, we have been encouraged to seek our identities through membership in undifferentiated, homogenizing groups such as families, friendships, classes, and nations. From Aristotle to the French Revolution, the good republic has therefore been thought to require fraternite, which is idealized as a natural blood tie making separate individuals somehow one.5 But there is no such thing as natural fraternity, Derrida asserts, just as there is no natural maternity (sic). All such natural categories, as well as the derivative concepts of community, culture, nation, and borders, are dependent on language and therefore are conventions. The problem with these conventions is not simply that they cover up differences within the presumably identical entities. It is that they also establish hierarchies among them: between brothers and sisters, citizens and foreigners, and eventually friends and enemies. In the book's most reasoned chapters, Derrida examines Carl Schmitt's conception of politics, which portrays the political relation as an essentially hostile one between friends and enemies.6 Derrida sees Schmitt not as a mere Nazi apologist with a thirst for conflict, but as a deep thinker who made explicit the implicit assumptions of all Western political philosophy. From this point of view it would seem that all Western political ideologies--fascism, conservatism, liberalism, socialism, communism--would be equally unacceptable. That is the logical implication of Derrida's attack on logocentrism, and sometimes he appears to accept it. In Specters of Marx and The Other Heading he denounces the new liberal consensus he sees as having ruled the West since 1989, lashing out hysterically, and unoriginally, at the "New International" of global capitalism and media conglomerates that have established world hegemony by means of an "unprecedented form of war." He is less critical of Marxism (for reasons we will examine), though he does believe that communism became totalitarian when it tried to realize the eschatological program laid out by Marx himself. Marx's problem was that he did not carry out fully his own critique of ideology and remained within the logocentrist tradition. That is what explains the Gulag, the genocides, and the terror carried out in his name by the Soviet Union. "If I had the time," Derrida tells his undoubtedly stupefied eRussian interviewers in Moscou aller-retour, "I could show that Stalin was 'logocentrist,"' though he admits that "that would demand a long development." It probably would. For it would mean showing that the real source of tyranny is not tyrants, or guns, or wicked institutions. Tyranny begins in the language of tyranny, which derives ultimately from philosophy. If that were transformed, or "neutralized" as he says in Politics of Friendship, so eventually would our politics be. He proves to be extremely open-minded about what this might entail. He asks rhetorically whether "it would still make sense to speak of democracy when there would be no more speaking of country, nation, even state and citizen." He also considers whether the abandonment of Western humanism would mean that concepts of human rights, humanitarianism, even crimes against humanity would have to be forsworn.

#### Representations of North Korea are rooted in ideological hegemony not objective data

Shim 08, David Shim, Phd Candidate GIGA Institute of Asian Studies, 2008 Paper prepared for presentation at the 2008 ISA, Production, Hegemonization and Contestation of Discursive Hegemony: The Case of the Six-Party Talks in Northeast Asia, [www.allacademic.com/meta/p253290\_index.html](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p253290_index.html)

Laclau and Mouffe’s (2001: chapter 2) concept of hegemony, which is used here, rely on a notion developed by Antonio Gramsci (1971). Gramsci broadened the traditional notion of hegemony beyond the view of mapping hegemony in terms of leadership and dominance, which are based on material capabilities, by introducing inter-subjective and ideological aspects into this concept. Accordingly, hegemony contains the ability of a class (bourgeois) to project the world view over another (workers, peasantry) in terms of the former, so that it is accepted as common sense or reality. His merit was to conceptualize hegemony in terms of power without the use of force to reach consent by the dominated class through education and, what he calls, the role of intellectuals (“men of letters”) such as philosophers, journalists and artists (Gramsci 1971: 5-43). The process of fixing meaning, that is, in terms of Laclau and Mouffe (2001: 105), when an element (sign with unfixed meaning) is transformed through articulation into a moment (sign with fixed meaning), is hegemonic, since it reduces the range of possibilities and excludes alternative meanings by determining the ways in which the signs are related to each other. That is to say, when meaning is fixed, i.e. hegemonized, it determines, what can be thought, said or done in a meaningful way. 13 Applied to this case, the exclusive character of a hegemonic discourse makes it unintelligible to make sense of North Korea’s nuclear program in terms of, for instance, energy needs, because – as it is argued – practices of problematization hegemonized the ways of thinking, acting and speaking about North Korea. Discursive hegemony can be regarded as the result of certain practices, in which a particular understanding or interpretation appears to be the natural order of things (Laclau/Mouffe 2001). This naturalization consolidates a specific idea, which is taken for granted by involved actors and makes sense of the(ir) world. As Hall (1998: 1055-7) argues, common sense resembles a hegemonic discourse, which is a dominant interpretation and representation of reality and therefore accepted to be the valid truth and knowledge. Referring to the productive character of discursive hegemony, the Six-Party Talks can be regarded as an outcome of the dominating interpretation of reality (cf. also Jackson 2005: 20; Cox 1983; Hajer 2005). The hegemonic discourse regarding North Korea provides the framework for a specific interpretation in which the words, actions or policies of it are attached with meaning, that is, are problematized. As Jacob Torfing argues “a discursive truth regime […] specifies the criteria for judging something to be true of false”, and further states, that within such a discursive framework the criteria for acknowledging something as true, right or good are negotiated and defined (Torfing 2005a: 14; 19; cf. also Mills 2004: 14-20). However, important to note is, if one is able to define this yardstick, not only one is able to define what is right, good or true, but also what kinds of action are possible. In other words, if you can mark someone or something with a specific label, then certain kinds of acts become feasible.14 Basically, it can be stated that discursive hegemony depends on the interpretation and representation by actors of real events since the interpretation of non-existent facts would not make sense. But the existence of real events does not necessarily have to be a prerequisite for hegemonizing interpretational and representational practices because actions do not need to be carried out, thus, to become a material fact, in order to be interpreted and represented in a certain way (Campbell 1998: 3). Suh Jae-Jung (2004: 155) gives an example of this practice. In 1999 US intelligence agencies indicated to preparing measures taken by North Korea to test fire a missile. Although the action was not yet executed, it was treated as a fact, which involved and enabled certain implications and material consequences such as the public criticism of North Korea, the issuance of statements, diplomatic activity and efforts to hegemonize and secure this certain kind of reality, i.e. to build a broad majority to confirm this view on North Korea. In other words, the practices of problematizing North Korea took place even before an action was done.

Embrace instability of argumentation – a turn to openness is the most meaningful decision – star this card.

Corder, ‘85 [Jim W. Corder is Professor of English at Texas Christian University. In 1975 he received the NCTE's Braddock Prize. He has published articles on rhetoric in various journals and has written several textbooks on writing.; “Argument as Emergence, Rhetoric as Love”; Rhetoric Review, Vol. 4, No. 1 (Sep., 1985); Taylor & Francis]

d. We arguers can learn the lessons that rhetoric itself wants to teach us. By its nature, invention asks us to open ourselves to the richness of creation, to plumb its depths, search its expanses, and track its chronologies. But the moment we speak (or write), we are no longer open; we have chosen, whether deliberately or not, and so have closed ourselves off from some possibilities. Invention wants openness; structure and style demand closure. We are asked to be perpetually open and always closing. If we stay open, we cannot speak or act; if we are [sic] closed, we have succumbed to dogma and rigidity. Each utterance may deplete the inventive possibilities if a speaker falls into arro- gance, ignorance, or dogma. But each utterance, if the speaker having spoken opens again, may also nurture and replenish the speaker's inventive world and enable him or her to reach out around the other. Beyond any speaker's bound inventive world lies another: there lie the riches of creation, the great, un- bounded possible universe of invention. All time is there, past, present, and future. The natural and the supernatural are there. All creation is there, ground and source for invention. The knowledge we have is formed out of the plenti- tude of creation, which is all before us, but must be sought again and again through the cycling process of rhetoric, closing to speak, opening again to invent again. In an unlimited universe of meaning, we can never foreclose on interpretation and argument. Invention is a name for a great miracle-the attempt to unbind time, to loosen the capacities of time and space into our speaking. This copiousness is eternally there, a plentitude for all. Piaget remarked that the more an infant senses [sic], the more he or she wants to sense the world [sic]. Just this is what the cycling of rhetoric offers us: opening to invention, closing to speak, opening again to a richer invention. Utterances may thus be elevated, may grow to hold both arguer and other.

**War policies are not accidents – they are deliberate attempts to expand the state dominance – the government doesn’t care what we think it “should” do – reformist focus prevents true change.**

Herod, ‘1 (James, “A Stake, Not a Mistake: On Not Seeing the Enemy,” October. <http://www.jamesherod.info/index.php?sec=paper&id=9>)

I spent several years in the early sixties studying Underdevelopment. It was frustrating, in that none of the theories I examined really seemed to explain the phenomenon. That is, the Theories of Development that were prevalent then (only in mainstream discourse, I later learned) didn't really answer the question: Why are some countries poor? I would look at US Aid programs, only to conclude that they didn't work, that they didn't help countries develop, and often got in the way. My response at that time was to argue, and to try to call to the attention of US Aid administrators, that the programs weren't working, and were not achieving the results they were supposed to. The programs were not facilitating development and economic growth in the countries they were supposed to be benefiting. Fortunately for me, with the explosion and re-emergence of radical consciousness in late sixties, I was able to overcome this naiveté. Unfortunately though, for much of the American Left (especially for its so-called progressive wing), this naiveté, this bad habit of not seeing the enemy, this tendency to think that the US government's policies and actions are just mistakes, this seemingly ineradicable belief that the US government means well, is the most common outlook. It was certainly the majoritarian belief among those who opposed the Vietnam War. I helped write a broad sheet once, which we distributed at a big anti-war demonstration in Washington DC in November 1969, and which was titled "Vietnam is a Stake not a Mistake". In this document we spelled out the imperial reasons which explained why the government was waging war, quite deliberately and rationally, against Vietnam. In subsequent decades there has been no end to the commentators who take the 'this is a mistake' line. Throughout the low intensity (i.e., terrorist) wars against Nicaragua and El Salvadorin the 1980s we heard this complaint again and again. It is currently seen in the constant stream of commentaries onthe US assault on Colombia. It has been heard repeatedly during the past two years in the demonstrations against the World Bank and theWorldTrade Organization. Protesters complain that the WTO's policies of structural adjustment are having the opposite effect of what they're suppose to. That is, they are hindering, not facilitating, development, and causing poverty, not alleviating it.¶ Two years ago, in 1999,throughout the 78 day bombing attack on Yugoslavia, much of the outpouring of progressive commentary on the event (that which didn't actually endorse the bombing that is) argued that "this is a mistake".[1] My favorite quote from that episode, was from Robert Hayden, Director of the Center for Russian and East European Studies at the University of Pittsburgh, being interviewed by Amy Goodman on Democracy Now, April 19, 1999. He said: "But we have the Clinton administration that developed a diplomacy that seems to have been intended to have produced this war, and now the Clinton administration's actions seem determined to produce a wider war." Amy Goodman: "Why would the Clinton Administration want to produce a war?" Hayden: "Boy, you know what? You've got me there. And as I say, you have to go back to the simple principles of incompetence. Never assume competence on the part of these guys." This was surely the bottom of the pit for the 'this is a mistake' crowd. I could cite quotes like this by the dozen, but instead let me turn to our current "war".¶ So what has been the response of the 'progressive community' to the bombing of Afghanistan? As usual, they just don't get it. They just can't seem to grasp the simple fact that the government does this stuff on purpose. Endlessly, progressives talk as if the government is just making a mistake, does not see the real consequences of its actions, or is acting irrationally, and they hope to correct the government's course by pointing out the errors of its ways. Progressives assume that their goals -- peace, justice, well-being -- are also the government's goals. So when they look at what the government is doing, they get alarmed and puzzled, because it is obvious that the government's actions are not achieving these goals. So they cry out: "Hey, this policy doesn't lead to peace!" or "Hey, this policy doesn't achieve justice (or democracy, or development)!" By pointing this out, they hope to educate the government, to help it to see its mistakes, to convince it that its policies are not having the desired results.[2]¶ How can they not see that the US government acts deliberately, and that it knows what it is doing? How can they not see that the government's goals are not peace and justice, but empire and profit. It wants these wars, this repression. These policies are not mistakes; they are not irrational; they are not based on a failure of moral insight (sincemorality is not even a factor in their considerations); they are not aberrations; they are not based on a failure to analyze the situation correctly; they are not based on ignorance. This repression, these bombings, wars, massacres, assassinations, and covert actions are the coldly calculated, rational, consistent, intelligent, and informed actions of a ruling class determined at all costs to keep its power and wealth and preserve its way of life (capitalism). It has demonstrated great historical presence, persistence, and continuity in pursuing this objective. This ruling class knows that it is committing atrocities, knows that it is destroying democracy, hope, welfare, peace, and justice, knows that it is murdering, massacring, slaughtering, poisoning, torturing, lying, stealing, and it doesn't care. Yet most progressives seem to believe that if only they point out often enough and loud enough that the ruling class is murdering people, that it will wake up, take notice, apologize, and stop doing it.¶ Here is a typical expression of this naiveté (written by an author, Brian Willson, who was in the process of introducing a list of US interventions abroad!):¶ "Many of us are continually disturbed and grief stricken because it seems that our U.S. government does not yet understand: (a) the historical social, cultural, and economic issues that underlay most of the political and ecological problems of the world; (b) the need to comply with, as legally agreed to, rather than continually defy, international law and international institutions established for addressing conflict; and (c) that military solutions, including production, sale, and use of the latest in technological weapons, are simply ill-equipped and wrong-headed for solving fundamental social and economic problems." [3]¶ He is wrong on all three counts. (a)The US government has an intimate, detailed knowledge of the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of every country it intervenes in. It is especially familiar with the ethnic, linguistic, political, and religious divisions within the country. It is not interested in how these issues "underlay most of the political and ecological problems of the world", since it is not interested in those problems, certainly not in solving them, since it is the main creator of those problems. Rather, it uses its expert knowledge to manipulate events within the country in order to advance its own goals, profit and empire. (b) The US government understands perfectly that it expressly needs not to comply with international law in order to maintain its ability to act unilaterally, unfettered by any constraints, to advance its imperial aims. The claim that the US defies international law because of a misunderstanding is absurd. (c) Who says that the US government is trying to solve "fundamental social and economic problems"? These are not its aims at all. The objectives that it does pursue, consciously and relentlessly, namely profit and empire, are in fact the causes of these very "social and economic problems".Furthermore, for its true aims, military solutions, far from being "ill-equipped and wrong-headed", work exceptionally well. Military might sustains the empire. Arming every little client regime of the international ruling class with 'the latest in technological weapons" is necessary, and quite effective, in maintaining the repressive apparatus needed to defend empire, in addition to raking in lots of profit for the arms manufacturers. But evidently Mr. Willson "does not yet understand" any of these things.¶ Let's take another example. Russell Mokhiber and Robert Weissman, otherwise very sensible writers, complain that "bombing a desperately poor country under the yoke of a repressive regime is a wrongheaded response [to the "unspeakable acts of violence" committed on Sept. 11]. "The U.S. bombing of Afghanistan should cease immediately," they say. They discuss three reasons: "1. The policy of bombing increases the risk of further terrorism against the United States. 2. The bombing is intensifying a humanitarian nightmare in Afghanistan. 3. There are better ways to seek justice." All three statements are true of course, but irrelevant, because seeking justice, avoiding humanitarian nightmares, and reducing the risk of terrorism do not enter into the calculations of US policy makers. Quite the contrary, US policy makers create injustice, humanitarian nightmares, and terrorism, throughout the world, in pursuit of the imperial objective of making profit, and this has been thoroughly documented in thousands of scholarly studies. So for Mokhiber and Weissman to talk in this way, and phrase the problem in this way, exposes their failure to really comprehend the enemy we face, which in turn prevents them from finding [sic] effective strategies to defeat that enemy, like so many other opponents of the "war". Hence all the moralizing, the bulk of which is definitely directed at the rulers, not at the ruled. That is, it is not an attempt to win over the ruled, but an attempt to win over the rulers.[4]¶ It's what I call the "we should" crowd -- all those people who hope to have a voice in the formation of policy, people whose stances are basically that of consultants to the ruling class. "We" should do this, "we" shouldn't do that, as if they had anything at all to say about what our rulers do. This is the normal stance among the bootlicking intelligentsia of course. But what is it doing among progressives and radicals? Even if their stance is seen to be not exactly that of consultants, but that of citizens making demands upon their government, what makes them think that the government ever care [sic] ? I think this attitude --the "we should" attitude -- is rooted in part at least in the fact that most progressives still believe in nations and governments. They believe that this is "our" country, and that this is "our" government, or at least should be. So Kevin Danaher says that "we should get control of the government." They identify themselves as Americans, or Germans, or Mexicans, or Swedes. So they are constantly advising and making demands that 'their' government should do this and that. If they would reject nationalism altogether, and states and governments, they could begin to see another way.¶ A variation of the 'this is a mistake' theme has appeared in commentaries on the present "war", on Afghanistan. Progressives argue that the US is "falling into a trap". They argue that Osama bin Laden had hoped to provoke the US into doing just what it is doing, attacking Afghanistan. In their view, the US government is being stupid, acting ignorantly [sic], responding irrationally, and showing incompetence. That is, it is "making a mistake".It never seems to occur to these analysts that the government may actually be awake, even alert, or that it jumped at the opportunity offered it by the attacks of September Eleven to do what it had wanted to do anyway -- seize Afghanistan, build a big new base in Uzbekistan, declare unending war on the enemies of Empire everywhere, and initiate draconian repression against internal dissent in order to achieve "domestic tranquility".

Aff reenchants policymaking and is prerequisite to framework by opening space for alternatives to falsely universal solutions.

Parsons, ‘10 [Wayne Parson is Professor of Public Policy at Queen Mary, University of London. He is currently Visiting Professor in policy sciences at FLACSO, Mexico and the Catholic University of Lille; “Modernism redux: po-mo problems and hi-mo public policy” from “Public Management in the Postmodern Era: Challenges and Prospects”; 2010]

The shift towards the discourse of policy capacity involved therefore using the (best) bits of earlier (technocratic and managerialist) discourse (1960s hits), and re- packing them as ‘modernization’ and building policy/ governance capacities. Dror’s report to the Club of Rome, The Capacity to Govern, is redolent of a musty old technocratic ethos which was itself a remix of the kind of arguments he had put forward (in Public Policymaking Reexamined, 1968) before Neil Armstrong took that one small step: if government was going to solve problems, it had to get a lot smarter! Fast forward to the 1990s and the obsession with the challenge of ‘governance’ and ‘hollowed out states’ and the need for policy makers to improve their network steering capacities, and the solution for Dror was the same, except more so: plus ça change. The more complex problems became, the more government had to reassert its capacity to steer and navigate. In a similar vein, the World Bank, which had, from the beginning, a dominant role in the production of policy analysis, launched its remix: ‘we are the Knowledge Bank’ (‘things can only get better’) in 1996. No longer was the Bank just in the business of lending money and telling countries what to do: it mutated into a Bank that liked to share knowledge and build in- country analytical capacity. It was the Bank that was in the business of ‘technical guidance’. The plan was for the Bank to (apparently) vacate the driving seat but still provide the maps. It was still doing the navigating. And, at a time when academic students of public policy were warning about the dangers of thinking of policy making as a set of rational stages (Sabatier, 1999), HM government was using the rational model as the basis of creating a more ‘professional’ approach to policy making by remixing the policy stages model with a good dose of ye olde strategic management (Parsons, 2001). One could argue that the high- modernism remix of the Bank, in Dror and in HM government, was symptomatic of the remixing going on elsewhere from the mid- 1990s onwards. As politics was becoming more ‘non- ideological’ and ‘what matters is what works’ became the mantra of the modernizing faith, the policy process and policy analysis could be portrayed as essentially technical and managerial in orientation. In the absence of political or ideological grand narratives, the high- modernism of policy analysis became a kind of default setting: a ‘we don’t have an ideological agenda, we are just interested in what works, sharing knowledge and policy skills training’ grand narrative. In this case, we might read the high- modernism manifested in the 1990s as the product of the ‘end of ideology’ and a world without grand narratives. The big idea was that there was no big idea: ‘evidence’ should drive policy, and techniques and tools and models would improve the problem solving capacity of both the developed and developing world. Indeed, the 1990s remix was in many ways far more technocratic than discussed in Trevor Smith’s account of the 1960s and early 1970s. To govern was to design targets and specify outcomes and results and to manage, monitor and evaluate (even risk) so as to realize these targets. Thus it came to pass that a postmodern world was to give rise to high- modern modes of policy making and analysis. Highmodernism in public policy was just another postmodern remix of a sort: an exercise in self- referencing and technocratic bricolage. Perhaps the whole concept of ‘postmodern’, however, is not helpful when we come to think about alternatives to the kind of modernism we have experienced since the 1990s. It is possible to say that postmodernist describes the present human condition, but it does not take us far when we have to think in terms of what to do about health, housing, education, the economy, and so on. It may provide us with an account of the policy process, but it hardly seems relevant for thinking about how can we design policies. A postmodern policy – as a theory of a problem and, heaven forbid, a grand narrative – seems a contradiction in terms. Postmodernism can do a good job of deconstructing the world but appears to rule out constructing an alternative. The postmodern rejection of theory logically also rules out the idea of a ‘policy’ and ‘analysis’. If there is no privileged reading of a text and voice, and uncertainty is all in all, what then? It is a grand narrative that prohibits any other grand narrative. Do postmodern tools, therefore, have any place in the professional policy maker’s toolbox? On the face of it, no: but that may be the professional policy maker’s loss. What is lacking in the existing box of delights provided by the BWIs and others is a critical disposition: a way of looking at problems as constructed discourses, which serve to lock today’s problems in yesterday’s language. Deconstruction can challenge the assumptions and the mindset embedded in a policy language (Schram, 1993). As such it can be used, so it is argued, to help practitioners better understand the arguments they use and the alternatives to existing policy designs (Gillroy, 1997; Miller, 2002). Postmodern approaches have much to offer modern policy designers: above all they bring to the fore the importance of playfulness in the design process. Policy analysis as art and craft has been seen as the sole preserve of the species homo sapiens, but perhaps critical approaches also need to give homo ludens a try. Policy analysis in a wicked world has to deal (above all) with paradox, a world in which solutions do not exist, and in which meaning is not so obvious or so available or so desirable; a world in which we do not possess the luxury of a single perspective but have to deal with problems as existing within a multiplicity of ways of understanding [sic]. Playfulness requires an analysis of problems which recognizes the role of diff erent forms and kinds of knowledge. Like the fool, homo ludens should be licensed to poke fun and prick the bubbles of the powerful as they float around the corridors of power. The postmodern deconstructive tools in the box are the pig’s bladder and the motley: the tools of the fool. In this sense, policy analysis requires the same kind of playfulness that is a vital aspect of all human problem solving and design. Postmodern foolishness, above all, can serve to create space in which innovation (and a more critical modernity) can emerge. The postmodern fool plays the part that all the very best fools have played at the courts of the mighty: opening up space by challenging the supposed wisdom of the powerful, replacing clarity and dogma with ambiguity and doubt through verbal dexterity and ‘wit’. This opening up of policy space to ambiguity is especially important in the light of Wildavsky’s argument that, over time, the policy space becomes ever more dense and crowded: policies overlap and bump into one another and policies end up their own cause. Postmodernism can create space by questioning the fundamental (modernist) assumptions which support the architecture of policies and institutions: it does not presume to ‘speak truth to power’ but it interrogates and pricks that which is regarded as truth. The jester does this by being an outsider on the inside. The fool possesses the skill of being the outsider, the one whose cunning wit questions meaning and opens up the spaces between the words. As Hugh Miller shows, it can lampoon the contradictions and stupidities of supposedly neutral and objective forms of instrumental rationality that are embodied in bureaucracy and managerialism, and thereby expose solutions as little more than ‘bumper sticker’ slogans (Miller, 2002). So, ‘Vesti la giubba’ since postmodern motley is appropriate attire for the high- modern court: a court that is always at risk of believing in the power of rationality and its capacity for intellectual cogitation and is consequently invariably prey to taking itself seriously, self- deception, closedmindedness and groupthink. Postmodern analysis is the joker in the pack, the wild card that does not belong: the post modern analyst is neither a Jack, Queen or King, or a member of any suit in the pack. As such, postmodern policy analysis requires a very diff erent ‘skill set’ for professional policy makers than those which are generally deemed necessary. The postmodern fool may serve to create a more playful context for policy making: and in doing so it does not ‘postmodernise’ public policy per se, but may well contribute to its reenchantment. A reenchanted public policy would be less ‘post’ modern than a more critical, knowing and playful form of modernism.3 It was Max Weber who argued that the fate of our modern times was characterized by ‘rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the disenchantment of the world’ (Weber, 1991a: 155). This ‘entzauberung der Welt’ would, as a result of the spread of ‘rational, empirical knowledge’, transform the world into little more than a ‘causal mechanism’ (Weber, 1991b: 350–51). The modern world was, he gloomily forecast, doomed to be driven by the engine of disenchanted rationalization ‘until the last ton of fossilised coal was burnt’ (Weber, 1976: 181). Until then, ‘not summer’s bloom lies ahead of us, but rather a night of icy darkness and hardness’ (Weber, 1991c: 128). The new high priests of this dark, hard age would be the scientists, economists, bureaucrats, and all those whose claim to power was grounded in their claims to knowledge and technical expertise. A brief read through some of the recent outputs of the BWIs graphically illustrates that, if we ever doubted it, we still live in the realms of entzauberung, where the only knowledge or wisdom that counts is that possessed by those who do the counting and write the ‘guides’ and compile the toolboxes: a world in which rational analytical knowledge and bureaucratic hierarchy always triumph over local and more tacit forms of practical wisdom and where the loud and strident ‘grand narratives’ of the powerful all too often crowd out and shout down the stories told around the camp fires that warm the hard icy darkness. Well, the day when the last ton of fossil fuel is used up is not so far off : in which case, it is valid to ask what kinds of roads might lead to the warmer, sunlit and soft lands of neuverzauberung4 or ‘reenchantment’? The reenchantment of public policy begins when we recognize that the problems we face are of a wicked nature: they do not have ‘solutions’ which can be arrived at purely through the exercise of reason and analysis. We face problems for which causal relationships are so complex that we cannot know when one problem ends and another begins, or whether the problems themselves have been caused by previous or existing policies. We confront a world in which ‘what works?’ is a simplistic and non sensical question. ‘What works?’, like probability, is a poor guide to action in a world in which ‘problems’ are not continuous over time and space. The fact that a policy had worked in one context does not mean that it will work in another. In the land of neuverzauberung causes and eff ects, and means and ends, are complex and confusing. We realize that we have to design solutions even though we can know so very little. It is a world in which students and practitioners have to become more modest about their capacities to (as Lindblom put it) ‘understand and shape society’. A reenchanted policy space is therefore a domain lacking the most powerful of modernist myths: there are, alas, no ‘zauberkugel’ – magic bullets – in the land of neuverzauberung. It is policy making that lays no claim to have magic bullets, silver or otherwise, which can be used in policy wars to hit targets.5 Just as there are no magic bullets for cancer or obesity or any other bodily ailment, in a reenchanted policy space we have to come to terms with the fact that there are no magic bullets for our ‘public’ ailments. One size does not fit all. The ‘policy’ as universal solution is recognized for what it is: the ubiquitous snake oil of modern political discourse. On reflection, the landscape of neuverzauberung in many ways off ers a very postmodern prospect: it is confusing and complex, and full of competing ideas of what counts as progress in theory and practice. Policy studies itself has always been a field with no defined boundaries or borders. It consequently has a topography which has been formed by the transgression of intellectual boundaries. Indeed, the mission of the policy sciences movement was (in Lasswell’s terms) to integrate knowledge. So, although the policy approach challenges disciplinary boundaries (like postmodernism) it does so in the belief that human knowledge could and should be integrated so as to solve human problems (so very non- postmodern). Hence, as Wildavsky (1987) observed, policy analysis has ‘expropriated lands’ from many disciplines, and for this reason any attempt to plot where the approach is (or is going) in a cartographic sense will ‘not take us very far’. In fact, in many respects, the policy approach is rather like Schumpeter’s defi nition of economics as being an ‘agglomeration of ill- coordinated and overlapping fi elds of research’, in which the frontiers of the field are ‘incessantly shifting’ (Schumpeter, 1954: 10). Policy analysis as an art and craft requires a variety of tools: most of which are ‘borrowed’. Given this, we should expect a reenchanted public policy to be far more diverse, if not downright eclectic and positively kleptic. If we understand public policy as an ‘agglomeration of ill- coordinated and overlapping fi elds’ which focuses on how human beings design problems and solutions to those conditions they consider to be public, then the toolbox must perforce contain a diverse range of approaches to be of any use to either students or practitioners. Progress in the past was very much about the search for a grand theory, the big idea. But the integration of knowledge relevant to analysis of the policy process, and for and in the process, cannot and should not be understood as an attempt at unification – or positivistic consilience (Wilson, 1998). In which case, progress in public policy may best be viewed as about increasing diversity and competition between different approaches, frameworks, tools and models.