# 1NC

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#### The central question of this debate is whose politics best creates a radical break with capitalism—the 1AC’s narration of their particular social location and Filipino identity reduces capitalism to just one of a set of antagonisms and causes endless subdivision of political demands which dangerously distracts from revolutionary politics proper—this round is a question of starting points—the perm can never be truly radical because the 1AC’s particular focus has always already ceded the universal

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If we focus on Western societies for a moment again, which super - structure fits late modern capitalism best? The answer must be post - modern identity politics. The politics of identity has as a central fea-ture exactly the repression of the class perspective, which in turn implies that the endless amounts of particular identity struggles remain busy solving problems. They fight to reduce suffering, but the background of it cannot be addressed adequately within the political frame of identity politics. We can therefore place identity politics and multiculturalism in a broader, political context: So we are fighting our PC battles for the right of ethnic minor - ities, of gays and lesbians, of different lifestyles, and so forth, while capitalism pursues its triumphant march – and today’s critical theory, in the guise of ‘cultural studies’, is perform - ing the ultimate service for the unrestrained development of capitalism by actively participating in the ideological effort to render its massive presence invisible: in the predominant form of postmodern ‘cultural criticism’, the very mention of capitalism as a world system tends to give rise to accusations of ‘essentialism’, ‘fundamentalism’, and so on. The price of this depoliticization of the economy is that the domain of pol - itics itself is in a way depoliticized: political struggle proper is transformed into the cultural struggle for the recognition of marginal identities and the tolerance of differences. (Žižek 1999: 218) The class and commodity structure of capitalism is overdetermining society as a whole, and it is this overdetermination which identity politics is repressing. ‘Class antagonism certainly appears as one in the series of social antagonisms, but it is simultaneously the specific antagonism which predominates over the rest, whose relations thus assign rank and influence to the others. It is a general illumination which bathes all the other colours and modifies their particularity.’ (Žižek 2000c: 320). Identity politics reduces the question concerning economy to one among several questions on an equal level. Two fatal consequences follow from this. Firstly, the narratives about a trans - formation from an essentialist Marxism to a postmodern Marxism hide the fact that this break with essentialism relates to an actual his - torical process. The multitude and non-essentialist manifold which is celebrated by the new left is something which has fundamentally only become possible through capital’s constant transgression of its own limits. Secondly, and related to the former point, the focus on particular struggles means that one gives up any serious attempt at transgress - ing capitalism. When Laclau and others with him give the reader a choice between class struggle (Marxism) or postmodernity (iden - tity politics), then the problem is not only that they make the wrong choice (i.e. deny Marxism), but also, and more fundamentally, that they do not see that capital itself has become postmodern. And fur - ther, that there is a speculative connection between capitalism and postmodern identity politics. The latter serves postmodern capitalism as its perfect superstructure. The passage from ‘essentialist’ Marxism to postmodern con - tingent politics (in Laclau), or the passage from sexual essen - tialism to contingent gender-formation (in Butler), or – a fur - ther example – the passage from metaphysician to ironist in Richard Rorty, is not a simple epistemological progress but part of the global change in the very nature of capitalist soci - ety. (Žižek 2000a: 106) The central question after this conclusion becomes one over the kind of politics that makes possible a break with capitalism, and this is where Žižek turns to Marxism for a way to think revolutionary change. We earlier defined the political as the process in which par - ticular demands are elevated from being an expression of particular interests to being demands of a universal restructuring of the societal order. Postmodern identity politics on this background appears to be fundamentally apolitical. It is exactly characterised by the caretaking of particular interests, and this is not fundamentally changed by form - ing rainbow coalitions or the like. What these ‘policies’ basically do, and this is what makes them reactionary, is to reinforce already exist - ing social positions (Žižek 1999: 208). The lack of a focus on econ - omy in postmodern identity politics means that it is simply not politi - cal enough. The critique against economic essentialism turns into a prohibition on making the function of economy a theme at all, which in turn means that the new left, exemplified by Laclau, Butler, and Rorty, are not capable of distinguishing between the contingency that is made possible within a given order and the exclusions on which this order rests (Žižek 2000a: 108). The right to narrate, which is the point of departure of identity politics, is blocking the universalisation of specific demands. We have already discussed that. But there are other problems as well. Identity politics is morally blind. Yes, all ‘progressives’ support the rights of gays and lesbians. But what about the right of bikers to their lifestyle – driving Harleys really fast, being tattooed and controlling drug sales. Should young guests in night clubs have a right to take drugs – this is a kind of lifestyle as well, isn’t it? Do parents have a right to circumcise their daughters if it is part of their tradition to do so? Or should the Nazis have a right to march through town, spread propaganda and recruit young supporters? Identity politics seems to be able to legitimise anything, which is why Žižek opts for Lenin and the right to truth rather than the right to narrate (Žižek 2002b: 177). Capital treats life forms as a colonial master treats the natives: they are studied carefully and respected. Moral involvement is never at stake – one could rather speak of indifference. Another problem is that there is no limit to the particularisation of demands and thereby the division of groups that need special treat - ment: lesbians, Afro-American lesbians, Afro-American lesbian mothers, Afro-American lesbian single mothers… Where does this sub-division end? ‘Postmodernists’ do not seem to have an answer for that. Žižek does. It stops precisely where the particular demands can no longer be universalised. The issue is not how specific a group and its demands are, but whether these may serve as a radical criti - cism of a given formation or not (Žižek 1999: 203– 204). What also seems to be forgotten is that anti-essentialism and relativism make for a position of strength, i.e. a position that can only be taken from a privileged, distanced position of supervision. It is the position from which all substantial positioning can be dismissed as essentialism, fundamentalism, primitivism, dogmatism or similar ‘isms’. The antiessentialist position is imagined to be an unprejudiced, neutral posi - tion. But this ‘neutrality’ is fake. It is a kind of ‘universalism’ which in reality supports only one given and particular societal order – cap - italism (Žižek 2001d: 103). The reference to objectively given eco - nomic limitations or ‘Development’ as it is called today seems to be the card that trumps everything. If it is played, there seems to be no way around adjusting and renouncing. Žižek’s strategy is to change the rules of the game so that such trumps lose their significance.

#### The aff is wasted energy – fighting particular battles without changing the way the economy works means nothing really changes – the aff just obscures the logic of capitalism

**Zizek, ’99** (Slavoj, Senior Researcher and professor at the Institute for Social Studies, Ljubljana, The Ticklish Subject, page 352-355)

The big news of today’s post-political age of the ‘end of ideology’ is thus the radical depoliticization of the sphere of the economy: the way the economy functions (the need to cut social welfare, etc.) is accepted as a simple insight into the objective state of things. However, as long as this fundamental depoliticization of the economic sphere is accepted, all the talk about active citizenship, about public discussion leading to responsible collective decisions, and so on, will remain limited to the ‘cultural’ issues of religious, sexual, ethnic and other way-of-life differences, without actually encroaching upon the level at which long-term decisions that affect us all are made. In short, the only way effectively to bring about a society in which risky long-term decisions would ensue from public debate involving all concerned is some kind of radical limitation of Capital’s freedom, the subordinated of the process of production to social control – the radical repoliticization of the economy. That is to say: if the problem with today’s post-politics (‘administration of social affairs’) is that it increasingly undermines the possibility of a proper political act, this undermining is directly due to the depoliticization of economics, to the common acceptance of Capital and market mechanisms as neutral tools/ procedures to be exploited. We can now see why today’s post-politics cannot attain the properly political dimension of universality; because it silently precludes the sphere of economy from politicization. The domain of global capitalist market relations in the Other Scene of the so-called repoliticization of civil society advocated by the partisans of ‘identity politics’ and other postmodern forms of politicization: all the talk about new forms of politics bursting out all over, focused on particular issues (gay rights, ecology, ethnic minorities…), all this incessant activity of fluid, shifting identities, of building multiple ad hoc coalitions, and so on, has something inauthentic about it, and ultimately resembles the obsessional neurotic who talks all the time and is otherwise frantically active precisely in order to ensure that something – what really matters – will *not* be disturbed, that it will remain immobilized. 35 So, instead of celebrating the new freedoms and responsibilities brought about by the ‘second modernity’, it is much more crucial to focus on what remains the same in this global fluidity and reflexivity, on what serves as the very motor of this fluidity: the inexorable logic of Capital. The spectral presence of Capital is the figure of the big Other which not only remains operative when all the traditional embodiments of the symbolic big Other disintegrate, but even directly causes this disintegration: far from being confronted with the abyss of their freedom – that is, laden with the burden of responsibility that cannot be alleviated by the helping hand of Tradition or Nature – today’s subject is perhaps more than ever caught in an inexorable compulsion that effectively runs his life.

#### This implicates their role of the ballot argument. Inclusion of their performance and narrative in the debate space is an empty act of tolerance that ensures that nothing really changes

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ellipses in orig

Let us take two predominant topics of to day's American radical academia: postcolonial and queer (gay) studies. The problem of postcolonialism is undoubtedly crucial; however, "postcolonial studies" tend to translate it into the multiculturalist problematic of the colonized minorities' "right to narrate" their victimizing experience, of the power mechanisms which repress "otherness," so that, at the end of the day, we learn that the root of postcolonial exploitation is our intolerance toward the Other, and, furthermore, that this intolerance itself is rooted in our intolerance toward the "Stranger in Ourselves," in our inability to confront what we repressed in and of ourselves. The politico-economic struggle is thus imperceptibly transformed into a pseudo-psychoanalytic drama of the subject unable to confront its inner traumas ... The true corruption of American academia is not primarily financial, it is not only that they are able to buy many European critical intellectuals (myself included – up to a point), but conceptual: notions of "European" critical theory are imperceptibly translated into the benign universe of Cultural Studies chic.

My personal experience is that practically all of the "radical" academics silently count on the long-term stability of the American capitalist model, with the secure tenured position as their ultimate professional goal (a surprising number of them even play on the stock market). If there is a thing they are gen­uinely horrified of, it is a radical shattering of the (relatively) safe life environ­ment of the "symbolic classes" in the developed Western societies. Their excessive Politically Correct zeal when dealing with sexism, racism, Third World sweatshops, etc., is thus ultimately a defense against their own innermost identi­fication, a kind of compulsive ritual whose hidden logic is: "Let's talk as much as possible about the necessity of a radical change to make sure that nothing will really change!" Symptomatic here is the journal October: when you ask one of the editors to what the title refers, they will half-confidentially signal that it is, of course, that October – in this way, one can indulge in the jargonistic analyses of modern art, with the hidden assurance that one is somehow retaining the link with the radical revolutionary past ... With regard to this radical chic, the first gesture toward Third Way ideologists and practitioners should be that of praise: they at least play their game straight and are honest in their acceptance of global capitalist coordinates, in contrast to the pseudo-radical academic Leftists who adopt toward the Third Way the attitude of utter disdain, while their own radi­cality ultimately amounts to an empty gesture which obligates no one to any­thing determinate.

II. From Human to Animal Rights

We live in the "postmodern" era in which truth­ claims as such are dismissed as an expression of hidden power mechanisms – as the reborn pseudo-Nietzscheans like to emphasize, truth is a lie which is most efficient in asserting our will to power. The very question "Is it true?" apropos of some statement is supplanted by another question: "Under what power con­ditions can this statement be uttered?" What we get instead of the universal truth is a multitude of perspectives, or, as it is fashionable to put it today, of "narratives" – not only of literature, but also of politics, religion, science, they are all different narratives, stories we tell ourselves about ourselves, and the ultimate goal of ethics is to guarantee the neutral space in which this multitude of narratives can peacefully coexist, in which everyone, from ethnic to sexual minorities, will have the right and possibility to tell his/her story. The two philosophers of today's global capitalism are the two great Left-liberal "progres­sives," Richard Rorty and Peter Singer – honest in their respective stances. Rorty defines the basic coordinates: the fundamental dimension of a human being is the ability to suffer, to experience pain and humiliation – consequently, since humans are symbolic animals, the fundamental right is the right to nar­rate one's experience of suffering and humiliation.2 Singer then provides the Darwinian background.3

#### The aff reflects the ideology of Occupy. Claiming “debate space” as a site for organic, horizontalist politics sells 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.

#### Grounding politics in social location prevents comprehensive analysis of SOCIAL RELATIONS as a totality—causes a “snapshot” approach to understanding oppression that blocks class struggle

* snapshot

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Early attempts to develop a materialist, anti-racist feminism from a Marxian perspective foundered on the rocky shores of structuralism and economic reductionism—their end signaled in Heidi Hartmann’s 1979 critique, “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism.” Many years later, and only after a detour through a postmodern, Foucauldian landscape, progressive feminists have embraced a new comprehensive materialist approach, intersectionality. Insisting that any given social moment embodies a historically specific nexus of institutionalized relations of class, race, gender, etc., intersectionality overcomes many of the weaknesses associated with early Marxist feminism. Most importantly, it shifts the goal of analysis away from isolating and 2 ranking particular forms of oppression, and toward interrogating the manner in which they reinforce and/or contradict one another in and through people’s lived experiences. This has the decided merit of exploring subjectivities, of focusing analysis on people’s lives, not just abstract categories of race, gender and class. Yet, as Johanna Brenner argues, scholars who have adopted an intersectional perspective tend to limit their field of inquiry. They usually set out to describe and explain how specified social locations shape experience and identity, rather than to understand how such locations interact as part of a dynamic set of social relations. Such a snapshot approach doesn’t adequately probe the question of capitalism as a social power—the question, that is, of how processes, ideas and institutions associated with race, gender and class act upon each other to both reproduce and challenge the exclusions, inequality and exploitation characteristic of capitalist class societies. As a result, they often leave capitalist relations of social power, and resistance to that power under-theorized (Brenner, 2000:293).

#### Focus on standpoint epistemology negates analysis of material conditions—it’s neoliberal identity politics par excellance—undermines solidarity of the proletariat

Varn & Curcio ’13, C. DERICK VARN, Jasmine Curcio is a scholar and feminist activist in Melbourne, Australia., 4-16-’13, The North Star, Materialism and Patriarchy: An Interview with Jasmine Curcio, <http://www.thenorthstar.info/?p=8502>, jj

Standpoint epistemology in its idealist, identity-politic formation is often used to negate any materialist analysis and sound standpoint epistemology based in materialist analysis of systems which in part intersect, but that latter meaning of intersection is not the essence of “intersectionality.” Intersectionality is concerned with the intersection of varied identities, atomized and particular, from supposedly immediate experience, with no real or primary understanding of consciousness and thus identity being formed by systems, as it has eschewed such an understanding. It becomes, in intersection with liberal privilege discourse, part of the ideological repertoire of neoliberal identity politics. And the understanding, if not the assumption, that oppression lives in individual behaviors, hence the isolate concepts of “privilege” divorced from any real understanding of what a system of oppression entails (it is not the mere sum of “privileges”), but described with respect to individual actions and perceptions in the first person. Such things are useful as an educational guide pointing beyond itself to something larger, but that is often not the case.

C.D.V.: I have heard standpoint epistemology linked to a Marxian analysis of social awareness. Why do you think standpoint epistemology tends towards idealism?

J.C.: I do not think it is all standpoint epistemology which is idealist; rather for any standpoint epistemology to truly make sense it must be anchored in the material. Let’s take a classic example, Georg Lukács in History and Class Consciousness. He defines class consciousness as “consist[ing] in fact of the appropriate and rational reactions ‘imputed’ to a particular typical position in the process of production.” So already we have a material situation from which class consciousness, whether false or true, can be examined, with respect to any economic class and its activity in history. So, the proletariat, due to its unique position, has the potential to view the social totality of capitalism and have the power to demolish capitalism.

Let’s take this to feminism. Women, due to their position in the patriarchal system and undergoing objectification and appropriation, have the unique potential to view patriarchal society, and can often see the operations of the masculine gender construct better than most men can in their state of false consciousness, and the same with people of color in a racist system. But I do want to address the idealist tendency here.

There appears to be a sort of liberal appropriation of this materialist standpoint epistemology and divesting it of its concretion. Without an understanding of a materialist system, of course, what one is left with is pure subjective consciousness, but no notion of a system of oppression, of social forces shaping individuals. It is just a pure abstract standpoint that can be taken by almost any subject, whose legitimacy is granted by its mere subjectivity and the appearance of the phenomena they describe. This has been taken in recent years by liberal activists, such as pro-sex-work, self-defined “sex workers.” And their perspective has some presumed sovereignty, and is entirely unrelated to a comprehensive systemic understanding of patriarchy, because to admit of such a thing and its effect would nullify the preciously constructed identity of the “empowered sex worker,” as the knowledge of one’s construction and mediation by patriarchal social forces would certainly ruin the high sustained on male attention and praise. To inform them of De Beauvoir’s distinction between prostitutes and hetairas (usually high-class, women who consider their entire selves capital to be exploited, and experience a curious narcissism in their false consciousness of their state of dependency), produces a great deal of anger in the undermining of their identity.

So basically, standpoint epistemology can only be made to make sense within the understanding of a material system of oppression. When divorced from that, it is as abstractly idealist as one can imagine. Indeed, it is an integral part of liberal identity politics which eschews any systemic understanding, substituting it with one-dimensional perceptions that cannot integrate into a comprehensive social totality but clash with other identities, which can at best intersect with each other. Truth becomes something enclosed within individuals who view themselves as a socially-impermeable identity category, which undermines real solidarity and connection with others, as the logic of identity politics is atomizing.

#### Vote neg on ethics - resisting this reliance on economic evaluation is the ultimate ethical responsibility

**Zizek and Daly** 20**04**

(Slavoj, professor of philosophy at the Institute for Sociology, Ljubljana, and Glyn, Senior Lecturer in Politics in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at University College, Northampton, Conversations with Zizek, page 14-16)

For Zizek it is imperative that we cut through this Gordian knot of postmodern protocol and recognize that our ethico-political responsibility is to confront the constitutive violence of today’s global capitalism and its obscene naturalization / anonymization of the millions who are subjugated by it throughout the world. Against the standardized positions of postmodern culture – with all its pieties concerning ‘multiculturalist’ etiquette – Zizek is arguing for a politics that might be called ‘radically incorrect’ in the sense that it break with these types of positions 7 and focuses instead on the very organizing principles of today’s social reality: the principles of global liberal capitalism. This requires some care and subtlety. For far too long, Marxism has been bedeviled by an almost fetishistic economism that has tended towards political morbidity. With the likes of Hilferding and Gramsci, and more recently Laclau and Mouffee, crucial theoretical advances have been made that enable the transcendence of all forms of economism. In this new context, however, Zizek argues that the problem that now presents itself is almost that of the opposite fetish. That is to say, the prohibitive anxieties surrounding the taboo of economism can function as a way of not engaging with economic reality and as a way of implicitly accepting the latter as a basic horizon of existence. In an ironic Freudian-Lacanian twist, the fear of economism can end up reinforcing a de facto economic necessity in respect of contemporary capitalism (i.e. the initial prohibition conjures up the very thing it fears). This is not to endorse any kind of retrograde return to economism. Zizek’s point is rather that in rejecting economism we should not lose sight of the systemic power of capital in shaping the lives and destinies of humanity and our very sense of the possible. In particular we should not overlook Marx’s central insight that in order to create a universal global system the forces of capitalism seek to conceal the politico-discursive violence of its construction through a kind of gentrification of that system. What is persistently denied by neo-liberals such as Rorty (1989) and Fukuyama (1992) is that the gentrification of global liberal capitalism is one whose ‘universalism’ fundamentally reproduces and depends upon a disavowed violence that excludes vast sectors of the world’s populations. In this way, neo-liberal ideology attempts to naturalize capitalism by presenting its outcomes of winning and losing as if they were simply a matter of chance and sound judgment in a neutral market place. Capitalism does indeed create a space for a certain diversity, at least for the central capitalist regions, but it is neither neutral nor ideal and its price in terms of social exclusion is exorbitant. That is to say, the human cost in terms of inherent global poverty and degraded ‘life-chances’ cannot be calculated within the existing economic rationale and, in consequence, social exclusion remains mystified and nameless (viz. the patronizing reference to the ‘developing world’). And Zizek’s point is that this mystification is magnified through capitalism’s profound capacity to ingest its own excesses and negativity: to redirect (or misdirect) social antagonisms and to absorb them within a culture of differential affirmation. Instead of Bolshevism, the tendency today is towards a kind of political boutiquism that is readily sustained by postmodern forms of consumerism and lifestyle. Against this Zizek argues for a new universalism whose primary ethical directive is to confront the fact that our forms of social existence are founded on exclusion on a global scale. While it is perfectly true that universalism can never become Universal (it will always require a hegemonic-particular embodiment in order to have any meaning), what is novel about Zizek’s universalism is that it would not attempt to conceal this fact or reduce the status of the abject Other to that of a ‘glitch’ in an otherwise sound matrix.

#### This is not a meaningless question – the structures of capitalism are driving multiple large-scale processes that are increasingly out of the control of individuals living their lives. Global warming, multiple wars of accumulation, loss of land and income stratification: all of these are making life unlivable.

Parr ’13 (Adrian, Assoc. Prof. of Philosophy and Environmental Studies @ U. of Cincinnati, *THE WRATH OF CAPITAL: Neoliberalism and Climate Change Politics*, pp. 145-147)

A quick snapshot of the twenty-first century so far: an economic meltdown; a frantic sell-off of public land to the energy business as President George W Bush exited the White House; a prolonged, costly, and unjustified war in Iraq; the Greek economy in ruins; an escalation of global food prices; bee colonies in global extinction; 925 million hungry reported in 2010; as of 2005, the world's five hundred richest individuals with a combined income greater than that of the poorest 416 million people, the richest 10 percent accounting for 54 percent of global income; a planet on the verge of boiling point; melting ice caps; increases in extreme weather conditions; and the list goes on and on and on.2 Sounds like a ticking time bomb, doesn't it? Well it is.

It is shameful to think that massive die-outs of future generations will put to pale comparison the 6 million murdered during the Holocaust; the millions killed in two world wars; the genocides in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Darfur; the 1 million left homeless and the 316,000 killed by the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. The time has come to wake up to the warning signs.3

The real issue climate change poses is that we do not enjoy the luxury of incremental change anymore. We are in the last decade where we can do something about the situation. Paul Gilding, the former head of Greenpeace International and a core faculty member of Cambridge University's Programme for Sustainability, explains that "two degrees of warming is an inadequate goal and a plan for failure;' adding that "returning to below one degree of warming . . . is the solution to the problem:'4 Once we move higher than 2°C of warming, which is what is projected to occur by 2050, positive feedback mechanisms will begin to kick in, and then we will be at the point of no return. We therefore need to start thinking very differently right now.

We do not see the crisis for what it is; we only see it as an isolated symptom that we need to make a few minor changes to deal with. This was the message that Venezuela's president Hugo Chavez delivered at the COP15 United Nations Climate Summit in Copenhagen on December 16, 2009, when he declared: "Let's talk about the cause. We should not avoid responsibilities, we should not avoid the depth of this problem. And I'll bring it up again, the cause of this disastrous panorama is the metabolic, destructive system of the capital and its model: capitalism.”5

The structural conditions in which we operate are advanced capitalism. Given this fact, a few adjustments here and there to that system are not enough to solve the problems that climate change and environmental degradation pose.6 Adaptability, modifications, and displacement, as I have consistently shown throughout this book, constitute the very essence of capitalism. Capitalism adapts without doing away with the threat. Under capitalism, one deals with threat not by challenging it, but by buying favors from it, as in voluntary carbon-offset schemes. In the process, one gives up on one's autonomy and reverts to being a child. Voluntarily offsetting a bit of carbon here and there, eating vegan, or recycling our waste, although well intended, are not solutions to the problem, but a symptom of the free market's ineffectiveness. By casting a scathing look at the neoliberal options on display, I have tried to show how all these options are ineffective. We are not buying indulgences because we have a choice; choices abound, and yet they all lead us down one path and through the golden gates of capitalist heaven.

For these reasons, I have underscored everyone's implication in this structure – myself included. If anything, the book has been an act of outrage – outrage at the deceit and the double bind that the "choices" under capitalism present, for there is no choice when everything is expendable. There is nothing substantial about the future when all you can do is survive by facing the absence of your own future and by sharing strength, stamina, and courage with the people around you. All the rest is false hope.

In many respects, writing this book has been an anxious exercise because I am fully aware that reducing the issues of environmental degradation and climate change to the domain of analysis can stave off the institution of useful solutions. But in my defense I would also like to propose that each and every one of us has certain skills that can contribute to making the solutions that we introduce in response to climate change and environmental degradation more effective and more realistic. In light of that view, I close with the following proposition, which I mean in the most optimistic sense possible: our politics must start from the point that after 2050 it may all be over.

#### Modern Racism is no longer based on ideologies of cultural or natural superiority - economic egotism is the root of modern racism

Zizek 2008 Slavoj Violence p 101-104

But we are not dealing here only with good old racism. Something more is at stake: a fundamental feature of our emerging “global” society. On ii September 2001 the Twin Towers were hit. Twelve years earlier, on 9 November 1989, the Berlin Wall fell. That date heralded the “happy ‘9os,” the Francis Fukuyama dream of the “end of history” —the belief that liberal democracy had, in principle, won; that the search was over; that the advent of a global, liberal world community lurked just around the corner; that the obstacles to this ultra-Hollywood happy ending were merely empirical and contingent (local pockets of resistance where the leaders did not yet grasp that their time was up). In contrast, 9/11 is the main symbol of the end of the Clintonite happy ‘9os. This is the era in which new walls emerge everywhere, between Israel and the West Bank, around the European Union, on the U.S.—Mexico border. The rise of the populist New Right is just the most prominent example of the urge to raise new walls. A couple of years ago, an ominous decision of the European Union passed almost unnoticed: the plan to establish an all-European border police force to secure the isolation of Union territory and thus to prevent the influx of immigrants. *This* is the truth of globalisation: the construction of new walls safeguarding prosperous Europe from the immigrant flood. One is tempted to resuscitate here the old Marxist “humanist” opposition of “relations between things” and “relations between persons”: in the much-celebrated free circulation opened up by global capitalism, it is “things” (commodities) which freely circulate, while the circulation of “persons” is more and more controlled. We are not dealing now with “globalisation” as an unfinished project but with a true “dialectics of globalisation”: the segregation of the people *is* the reality of economic globalisation. This new racism of the developed is in a way much more brutal than the previous ones: its implicit legitimisation is neither naturalist (the “natural” superiority of the developed West) nor any longer culturalist (we in the West also want to preserve our cultural identity), but unabashed economic egotism. The fundamental divide is one between those included in the sphere of (relative) economic prosperity and those excluded from it.

#### Our alternative is to organize politics around unconditional resistance to capitalism & refuse the 1AC’s evacuation of universalism. This is a question of non-permutable starting points; only prior critical interrogation of economic relations lays the groundwork for radical politics

* Individualism warrant

**McLaren ‘06** (Peter, University of California, “Slavoj Žižek's Naked Politics: Opting for the Impossible, A Secondary Elaboration”, JAC, <http://www.jacweb.org/Archived_volumes/Text_articles/V21_I3_McLaren.htm>, jj)

Žižek challenges the relativism of the gender-race-class grid of reflexive positionality when he claims that class antagonism or struggle is not simply one in a series of social antagonisms—race, class, gender, and so on—but rather constitutes the part of this series that sustains the horizon of the series itself. In other words, class struggle is the specific antagonism that assigns rank to and modifies the particularities of the other antagonisms in the series. He notes that "the economy is at one and the same time the genus and one of its own species" (*Totalitarianism* 193). In what I consider to be his most important work to date, *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality* (coauthored with Judith Butler and Ernesto Laclau), Žižek militantly refuses to evacuate reference to historical structures of totality and universality and argues that class struggle itself enables the proliferation of new political subjectivities (albeit subjectivities that ironically relegate class struggle to a secondary role). As Marx argued, class struggle structures "in advance" the very terrain of political antagonisms. Thus, according to Žižek, class struggle is not "the last horizon of meaning, the last signified of all social phenomena, but the formal generative matrix of the different ideological horizons of understanding" ("Repeating" 16-17). In his terms, class struggle sets the ground for the empty place of universality, enabling it to be filled variously with contents of different sorts (ecology, feminism, anti-racism). He further argues that the split between the classes is even more radical today than during the times of industrial class divisions. He takes the position that post-Marxists have done an excellent job in uncovering the fantasy of capital (vis-à-vis the endless deferral of pleasure) but have done little to uncover its reality. Those post-Marxists who are advocates of new social movements (such as Laclau and Mouffe) want revolution without revolution; in contrast, Žižek calls for movements that relate to the larger totality of capitalist social relations and that challenge the very matter and antimatter of capital's social universe. His strategic focus on capitalist exploitation (while often confusing and inconsistent) rather than on racial, ethnic, gender, or sexual identity is a salutary one: "The problem is not how our precious particular identity should be kept safe from global capitalism. The problem is how to oppose global capitalism at an even more radical level; the problem is to oppose it universally, not on a particular level. This whole problematic is a false one" (Olson and Worsham 281). What Žižek sets himself against is the particular experience or political argument. An experience or argument that cannot be universalized is "always and by definition a conservative political gesture: ultimately everyone can evoke his unique experience in order to justify his reprehensible acts" ("Repeating" 4-5). Here he echoes Wood, who argues that capitalism is "not just another specific oppression alongside many others but an all-embracing compulsion that imposes itself on all our social relations" ("Identity" 29). He also echoes critical educators such as Paulo Freire, who argues against the position that experiences of the oppressed speak for themselves. All experiences need to be interrogated for their ideological assumptions and effects, regardless of who articulates them or from where they are lived or spoken. They are to be read with, against, and upon the scientific concepts produced by the revolutionary Marxist tradition. The critical pedagogical act of interro-gating experiences is not to pander to the autonomous subject or to individualistic practices but to see those experiences in relationship to the structure of social antagonisms and class struggle. History has not discharged the educator from the mission of grasping the "truth of the present" by interrogating all the existing structures of exploitation present within the capitalist system where, at the point of production, material relations characterize relations between people and social relations characterize relations between things. The critical educator asks: How are individuals historically located in systematic structures of economic relations? How can these structures—these lawless laws of capital—be overcome and transformed through revolutionary praxis into acts of freely associated labor where the free development of each is the condi-tion for the free development of all?

**1NC---case**

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

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

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

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

IV. The Autobiographical Self

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

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

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

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

***Performance is not a mode of resistance - it gives too much power to the audience because the performer is structurally blocked from controlling the (re)presentation of their representations. Appealing to the ballot is a way of turning over one’s identity to the same reproductive economy that underwrites liberalism***

**Phelan 96**—chair of New York University's Department of Performance Studies (Peggy, Unmarked: the politics of performance, ed published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005, 146

**Performance’s only life is in the present. Performance cannot** be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise **participate in the circulation *of representations of representations***: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance. **To the degree that performance attempts to enter the economy of reproduction it *betrays and lessens the promise of its own*** ontology. Performance’s being, like the ontology of subjectivity proposed here, becomes itself through disappearance.

**The pressures brought to bear on performance to succumb to the laws of the reproductive economy are enormous**. **For *only rarely* in this culture is the “now” to which performance addresses its deepest questions valued**. (This is why the now is supplemented and buttressed by the documenting camera, the video archive.) Performance occurs over a time which will not be repeated. It can be performed again, but this repetition itself marks it as “different.” **The document of a performance then is only a spur to memory, an encouragement of memory to become present**.

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

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

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

***Every time they say “WHAT WE SAY HERE IS MORE IMPORTANT” -- they are denigrating the world beyond the debate space which means they can never mobilize a larger public to oppose government killing. Focusing on yourself makes reinventing democracy impossible***

**Brown 12** Wendy Brown is a Professor of Political Science at the University of California

in Berkeley. *Krisis*, RECLAIMING DEMOCRACY. AN INTERVIEW WITH WENDY BROWN ON OCCUPY, SOVEREIGNTY, AND SECULARISM, Issue 3, www.krisis.eu

**I don’t think it is possible to think democracy from a Foucauldian perspective** for several reasons, and I think it’s telling that **Foucault himself seemed utterly uninterested in the question of democracy.** I don’t mean he was an anti-democrat. **He became interested in the question of counter-conducts, individual efforts at crafting the self, to subvert, interrupt or vivisect forces governing or constructing us, but that’s very different from attending to the question of democracy**. I want to say one other thing here before I then directly answer your question. I’ve lately been rereading his lectures on neoliberalism and one thing I’m very struck by is that there is an absent figure in Foucault’s own formulation of modernity, when he offers us the picture of homo economicus and homo juridicus as the two sides of governance and the human being in modernity. Foucault just says you’ve got on the one hand the subject of interest, homo economicus and on the other hand homo juridicus, the derivative from sovereignty, the creature who’s limiting sovereignty. **But for Foucault there’s no homo politicus, there’s no subject of the demos, there’s no democrat, there’s only a creature of rights and a creature of interest. *It’s an extremely individually oriented formulation of what the modern order is*. There’s the state, there’s the economy and then there’s the subject oriented to the economy by interests and toward the state by rights.** But isn't it striking for a French thinker that there’s no democratic subject, no subject oriented, as part of the demos, toward the question of sovereignty by or for the people? Here Foucault may have forgotten to cut off the king’s head in political theory! **There are just no democratic energies in Foucault. So one of the reasons one can’t think democracy with Foucault has to do with his own inability to think it**. **The other reason has to do with the extent to which he has given us such a thick theoretical and empirical account of the powers constructing and conducting us – *there’s no way we can democratize all of those powers.*** So I think there **one has to accept that if democracy has a meaning for the left today, *it’s going to have to do with modest control of the powers that govern us overtly***, rather than that of power tout court. So it’s going to be a combination of the liberal promise and the old Marxist claim about the necessary conditions of democracy. It’s going to be at some level a realization of the Marxist critique of the liberal promise. We have to have some control over what and how things are produced, **we have to have some control over the question of who we are as a people, what we stand for, what we think should be done, what should not be done,** what levels of equality should we have, **what liberties matter, and so forth. *It will not be able to reach to those Foucauldian depths of the conduct of conduct at every level.*** The dream of democracy probably has to come to terms with that limitation. If we can, we will be able to stop generating formulations of resistance that have to do with individual conduct and ethics. In other words, I think that **the way Foucauldian,** Derridean, Levinasian and Deleuzian **thinking has derailed democratic thinking is that it has *pushed it off onto a path of thinking about how I conduct myself*, what is my relation to the other, what is my ethos or orientation toward those who are different from me – and all that’s fine, but it’s not democracy in the sense of power sharing**. **It’s an ethics**, and maybe even a democratic ethics. ***But an ethics is not going to get us to political and economic orders that are more democratic than those we have now***. **The danger of** theory **that has too much emphasized the question of the self’s relationship to itself, or to micropowers, as useful as it has been for much of our work, is that it has *derailed left democratic thinking into a preoccupation with ethics.***

***The politics of the 1AC is grounded in injuries of the past with no guide for the future---this reinscribes exclusion and foreclosures social justice***

**Bhambra 10**—U Warwick—AND—Victoria Margree—School of Humanities, U Brighton (Identity Politics and the Need for a ‘Tomorrow’, http://www.academia.edu/471824/Identity\_Politics\_and\_the\_Need\_for\_a\_Tomorrow\_)

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

***Resistance via the ballot can only instill an adaptive politics of being and effaces the institutional constraints that reproduce structural violence***

**Brown 95**—prof at UC Berkely (Wendy, States of Injury, 21-3)

**For some**, fueled by opprobrium toward regulatory norms or other mo- dalities of domination, **the language of "resistance" has taken up** the **ground** vacated by a more expansive practice of freedom. **For others, it is the discourse of “empowerment”** that carries the ghost of freedom's valence ¶ 22¶. **Yet** as many have noted, **insofar as resistance is an effect of the regime it opposes** on the one hand, **and insofar as its practitioners often seek to *void it of normativity* to differentiate it from the (regulatory) nature of what it opposes** on the other, **it is at best** politically **rebellious; at worst, politically amorphous**. ***Resistance stands against***, ***not for;* it is re- action** to domination, rarely willing to admit to a desire for it, **and** it is ***neutral with regard to possible political direction***. Resistance is in no way constrained to a radical or emancipatory aim. a fact that emerges clearly as soon as one analogizes Foucault's notion of resistance to its companion terms in Freud or Nietzsche. Yet in some ways this point is less a critique of Foucault, who especially in his later years made clear that his political commitments were not identical with his theoretical ones (and un- apologetically revised the latter), than a sign of his misappropriation. For Foucault, resistance marks the presence of power and expands our under- standing of its mechanics, but it is in this regard an analytical strategy rather than an expressly political one. "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet. or rather consequently, this **resistance is never in a position of exteriority to power**. . . . (**T]he strictly relational character of power relationships** . . . **depends upon a multiplicity of points of resis- tance: these play the role of adversary, target, support, or handle in power relations**.\*39 This appreciation of the extent to which ***resistance is by no means inherently subversive of power*** also reminds us that it is only by recourse to a very non-Foucaultian moral evaluation of power as bad or that which is to be overcome that it is possible to equate resistance with that which is good, progressive, or seeking an end to domination. ¶ If popular and academic notions of resistance attach, however weakly at times, to a tradition of protest, the other contemporary substitute for a discourse of freedom—“empowerment”—would seem to correspond more closely to a tradition of idealist reconciliation. **The language of resistance implicitly acknowledges the extent to which *protest always transpires inside the regime***; “**empowerment**,” **in contrast, registers the possibility of generating one’s capacities**, one’s “self-esteem,” one’s life course, without capitulating to constraints by particular regimes of power. **But in so doing**, contemporary **discourses of empowerment too often signal an oddly *adaptive and harmonious relationship with domination* insofar as they locate an individual’s sense of worth** and capacity **in the register of individual feelings**, **a register** implicitly **located on** some- thing of **an otherworldly plane vis-a-vis social and political power**. In this regard, **despite its apparent *locution of resistance* to subjection**, contem- porary **discourses of empowerment partake strongly of *liberal solipsism***—the radical decontextualization of the subject characteristic of¶ 23¶ liberal discourse that is key to the fictional sovereign individualism of liberalism. Moreover, **in its almost exclusive focus on subjects’ emotionalbearing** and self-regard, **empowerment is a formulation that converges with a regime’s own legitimacy needs in masking the power of the regime**.¶ This is not to suggest that talk of empowerment is always only illusion or delusion. It is to argue, rather, that while the notion of empowerment articulates that feature of freedom concerned with action, with being more than the consumer subject figured in discourses of rights and eco- nomic democracy, **contemporary deployments** of that notion also **draw so heavily on an undeconstructed subjectivity that they *risk establishing a wide chasm between the (experience of) empowerment and an actual capacity to shape the terms of political, social, or economic life. Indeed, the possibility that one can “feel empowered” without being so forms an important element of legitimacy for the antidemocratic dimensions of liberalism***.

***The affirmative’s belief in exposure of stories of private violence to the public sphere in order to politicize and negate the injury rest on the belief that truth will set us free, but this is part of a mystification where the breaking of silence is a political act. The process of exposure makes this previously private action an act of a regulatory discipline with the state normalizing its intervention into our lives depoliticizing the structural, economic, social, and political conditions that allow violence to exist.***

Wendy **Brown**, Professor of Political Theory @ UC Berkeley, 19**96** (“Constitutions and 'Survivor Stories': In the 'folds of our own discourse' The Pleasures and Freedoms of Silence.” 3 U Chi L Sch Roundtable 185)

But **if the silences in discourses of domination are a site for insurrectionary noise, if they are the corridors we must fill with explosive counter-tales, it is also possible to make a fetish of breaking silence**. **Even more than a fetish, it is possible that this ostensible tool of emancipation carries its own techniques of subjugation**--that **it converges with non-emancipatory tendencies in contem- porary culture (for example, the ubiquity of confessional discourse and rampant personalization of political life**), **that it establishes regulatory norms, coincides with the disciplinary power of confession, in short, feeds the powers we meant to starve**. While attempting to avoid a simple reversal of feminist valorizations of breaking silence, it is this dimension of silence and its putative opposite with which this Article is concerned.

In the course of this work, **I want to make the case for silence** not simply **as** an aesthetic but **a political value**, **a means of preserving certain practices and dimensions of existence from regulatory power, from normative violence, as well as from the scorching rays of public exposure**. **I** also **want to suggest a link between**, on the one hand, **a certain contemporary tendency** concerning the lives of public figures**--the confession or extraction of every detail of private and personal life** (sexual, familial, therapeutic, financial) **and, on the other, a certain practice in feminist culture: the compulsive putting into public discourse of heretofore hidden or private experiences**--from catalogues of sexual pleasures to litanies of sexual abuses, from chronicles of eating disorders to diaries of homebirths, lesbian mothering, and Gloria Steinam's inner revolution. **In linking these two phenomena--the privatization of public life via the mechanism of public exposure of private life on the one hand, and the compulsive/compulsory cataloguing of the details of women's lives on the other--I want to highlight a modality of regulation and depoliticization specific to our age that is not simply confessional but empties private life into the public domain, and thereby also usurps public space with the relatively trivial, rendering the political personal in a fashion that leaves injurious social, political and economic powers unremarked and untouched**. In short, **while intended as a practice of freedom (premised on the modernist conceit that the truth shall make us free), these productions of truth not only bear the capacity to chain us to our injurious histories as well as the stations of our small lives but also to instigate the further regulation of those lives, all the while depoliti- cizing their conditions.**

# 2NC

### 2NC Top Level Overview

#### The role of the ballot is to unconditionally resist economic systems of exclusion—your primary directive as an ethical actor must be to insist on universal resistance to capitalism. This is a prior question to the 1AC—traditional impact calculus is impossible because capitalism anonymizes and mystifies its violent contradictions. That outweighs the aff EVEN IF they win full weight of their impact and the root cause debate—capitalism subsumes the oppression they outline and externally results in invisible violence against billions globally. That’s Zizek and Daly. This question of self-orientation comes first

**Johnston ’04** (Adrian, interdisciplinary research fellow in psychoanalysis at Emory, The Cynic’s Fetish: Slavoj Zizek and the Dynamics of Belief, Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society)

The height of Zizek's philosophical traditionalism, his fidelity to certain lasting truths too precious to cast away in a postmodern frenzy, is his conviction that no worthwhile praxis can emerge prior to the careful and deliberate formulation of a correct conceptual framework. His references to the Lacanian notion of the Act (qua agent-less occurrence not brought about by a subject) are especially strange in light of the fact that he seemingly endorses the view that theory must precede practice, namely, that deliberative reflection is, in a way, primary. For Zizek, the foremost "practical" task to be accomplished today isn't some kind of rebellious acting out, which would, in the end, amount to nothing more than a series of impotent, incoherent outbursts. Instead, **given the contemporary exhaustion of the socio-political imagination under the hegemony of liberal-democratic capitalism,** he sees **the liberation of thinking itself from its present constraints as the** first crucial step **that must be taken if anything is to be changed for the better.** In a lecture given in Vienna in 2001, Zizek suggests that **Marx's call to break out of the sterile closure of abstract intellectual ruminations through direct, concrete action** (thesis eleven on Feuerbach--"The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it") **must be inverted given the new prevailing conditions of late-capitalism. Nowadays, one must resist succumbing to the temptation to short-circuit thinking in favor of acting, since all such rushes to action are doomed; they either fail to disrupt capitalism or are ideologically co-opted by it.**

### \*\*2NC – EXT – Turns Modern Racism Distinction

#### Modern racism is detached from white supremacy proper—it’s predetermined by economic privilege

Jodi Melamed, Social Text 89, Vol. 24, No. 4, Winter 2006, The Spirit of Neoliberalism, DOI 10.1215/01642472-2006-009 © 2006 Duke University Press, online, jj

While liberal race procedures are unevenly detached from a wholesale white supremacist logic of race as phenotype, they remain deeply embedded in a logic of race as a set of what Nikhil Pal Singh describes as “historic repertoires and cultural, spatial and signifying systems that stigmatize and depreciate one form of humanity for the purposes of another’s health, development, safety, profit or pleasure.”3 Privileged and stigmatized racial formations no longer mesh perfectly with a color line. Instead, new categories of privilege and stigma determined by ideological, economic, and cultural criteria overlay older, conventional racial categories, so that traditionally recognized racial identities — black, Asian, white, or Arab/Muslim — can now occupy both sides of the privilege/stigma opposition. (For example, I will examine how an idea of “black pathology” distinguished stigmatized from privileged African American racial formations in the early Cold War and how the multicultural “Americanness” of Alberto Gonzalez or Condoleezza Rice currently stigmatizes undocumented Mexican immigrants and African American dissenters such as Julian Bond.) The new flexibility in racial procedures after World War II means that racism constantly appears as disappearing according to conventional race categories, even as it takes on new forms that can signify as nonracial or even antiracist.

### 2NC Link Overview (Probably read with perm)

#### Grounding politics in social location prevents comprehensive analysis of SOCIAL RELATIONS as a totality—causes a “snapshot” approach to understanding oppression that blocks class struggle

* snapshot

Susan Ferguson ’08, is Assistant Professor in the Journalism Program at the Wilfrid Laurier University, Brantford Campus. Her previous work on feminist theory and politics explores the development of the social reproduction framework in the Canadian context. Current research interests include applying that framework to media and children's culture. Race, Gender & Class: Volume 15, Number 1-2, 2008 (42-57), CANADIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIAL REPRODUCTION FEMINISM, RACE AND EMBODIED LABOR, <http://davidmcnally.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/Race-Gender-Class.pdf>, jj

Early attempts to develop a materialist, anti-racist feminism from a Marxian perspective foundered on the rocky shores of structuralism and economic reductionism—their end signaled in Heidi Hartmann’s 1979 critique, “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism.” Many years later, and only after a detour through a postmodern, Foucauldian landscape, progressive feminists have embraced a new comprehensive materialist approach, intersectionality. Insisting that any given social moment embodies a historically specific nexus of institutionalized relations of class, race, gender, etc., intersectionality overcomes many of the weaknesses associated with early Marxist feminism. Most importantly, it shifts the goal of analysis away from isolating and 2 ranking particular forms of oppression, and toward interrogating the manner in which they reinforce and/or contradict one another in and through people’s lived experiences. This has the decided merit of exploring subjectivities, of focusing analysis on people’s lives, not just abstract categories of race, gender and class. Yet, as Johanna Brenner argues, scholars who have adopted an intersectional perspective tend to limit their field of inquiry. They usually set out to describe and explain how specified social locations shape experience and identity, rather than to understand how such locations interact as part of a dynamic set of social relations. Such a snapshot approach doesn’t adequately probe the question of capitalism as a social power—the question, that is, of how processes, ideas and institutions associated with race, gender and class act upon each other to both reproduce and challenge the exclusions, inequality and exploitation characteristic of capitalist class societies. As a result, they often leave capitalist relations of social power, and resistance to that power under-theorized (Brenner, 2000:293).

#### Intersec DA---Focus on standpoint epistemology negates analysis of material conditions—it’s neoliberal identity politics par excellance—undermines solidarity of the proletariat

Varn & Curcio ’13, C. DERICK VARN, Jasmine Curcio is a scholar and feminist activist in Melbourne, Australia., 4-16-’13, The North Star, Materialism and Patriarchy: An Interview with Jasmine Curcio, <http://www.thenorthstar.info/?p=8502>, jj

Standpoint epistemology in its idealist, identity-politic formation is often used to negate any materialist analysis and sound standpoint epistemology based in materialist analysis of systems which in part intersect, but that latter meaning of intersection is not the essence of “intersectionality.” Intersectionality is concerned with the intersection of varied identities, atomized and particular, from supposedly immediate experience, with no real or primary understanding of consciousness and thus identity being formed by systems, as it has eschewed such an understanding. It becomes, in intersection with liberal privilege discourse, part of the ideological repertoire of neoliberal identity politics. And the understanding, if not the assumption, that oppression lives in individual behaviors, hence the isolate concepts of “privilege” divorced from any real understanding of what a system of oppression entails (it is not the mere sum of “privileges”), but described with respect to individual actions and perceptions in the first person. Such things are useful as an educational guide pointing beyond itself to something larger, but that is often not the case.

C.D.V.: I have heard standpoint epistemology linked to a Marxian analysis of social awareness. Why do you think standpoint epistemology tends towards idealism?

J.C.: I do not think it is all standpoint epistemology which is idealist; rather for any standpoint epistemology to truly make sense it must be anchored in the material. Let’s take a classic example, Georg Lukács in History and Class Consciousness. He defines class consciousness as “consist[ing] in fact of the appropriate and rational reactions ‘imputed’ to a particular typical position in the process of production.” So already we have a material situation from which class consciousness, whether false or true, can be examined, with respect to any economic class and its activity in history. So, the proletariat, due to its unique position, has the potential to view the social totality of capitalism and have the power to demolish capitalism.

Let’s take this to feminism. Women, due to their position in the patriarchal system and undergoing objectification and appropriation, have the unique potential to view patriarchal society, and can often see the operations of the masculine gender construct better than most men can in their state of false consciousness, and the same with people of color in a racist system. But I do want to address the idealist tendency here.

There appears to be a sort of liberal appropriation of this materialist standpoint epistemology and divesting it of its concretion. Without an understanding of a materialist system, of course, what one is left with is pure subjective consciousness, but no notion of a system of oppression, of social forces shaping individuals. It is just a pure abstract standpoint that can be taken by almost any subject, whose legitimacy is granted by its mere subjectivity and the appearance of the phenomena they describe. This has been taken in recent years by liberal activists, such as pro-sex-work, self-defined “sex workers.” And their perspective has some presumed sovereignty, and is entirely unrelated to a comprehensive systemic understanding of patriarchy, because to admit of such a thing and its effect would nullify the preciously constructed identity of the “empowered sex worker,” as the knowledge of one’s construction and mediation by patriarchal social forces would certainly ruin the high sustained on male attention and praise. To inform them of De Beauvoir’s distinction between prostitutes and hetairas (usually high-class, women who consider their entire selves capital to be exploited, and experience a curious narcissism in their false consciousness of their state of dependency), produces a great deal of anger in the undermining of their identity.

So basically, standpoint epistemology can only be made to make sense within the understanding of a material system of oppression. When divorced from that, it is as abstractly idealist as one can imagine. Indeed, it is an integral part of liberal identity politics which eschews any systemic understanding, substituting it with one-dimensional perceptions that cannot integrate into a comprehensive social totality but clash with other identities, which can at best intersect with each other. Truth becomes something enclosed within individuals who view themselves as a socially-impermeable identity category, which undermines real solidarity and connection with others, as the logic of identity politics is atomizing.

### Chandler

#### Refuse their ethical criteria—it insulates protest from accountability and trades off with collective struggle—especially true for war powers

Chandler 7 – Researcher @ Centre for the Study of Democracy, Chandler. 2007. Centre for the Study of Democracy, Westminster, Area, Vol. 39, No. 1, p. 118-119

This disjunction between the human/ethical/global causes of post-territorial political activism and the capacity to 'make a difference' is what makes these individuated claims immediately abstract and metaphysical – there is no specific demand or programme or attempt to build a collective project. This is the politics of symbolism. The rise of symbolic activism is highlighted in the increasingly popular framework of 'raising awareness'– here there is no longer even a formal connection between ethical activity and intended outcomes (Pupavac 2006). Raising awareness about issues has replaced even the pretense of taking responsibility for engaging with the world – the act is ethical in-itself. Probably the most high profile example of awareness raising is the shift from Live Aid, which at least attempted to measure its consequences in fund-raising terms, to Live 8 whose goal was solely that of raising an 'awareness of poverty'. The struggle for 'awareness' makes it clear that the focus of symbolic politics is the individual and their desire to elaborate upon their identity – to make us aware of their 'awareness', rather than to engage us in an instrumental project of changing or engaging with the outside world. It would appear that in freeing politics from the constraints of territorial political community there is a danger that political activity is freed from any constraints of social mediation(see further, Chandler 2004a). Without being forced to test and hone our arguments, or even to clearly articulate them, we can rest on the radical 'incommunicability' of our personal identities and claims – you are 'either with us or against us'; engaging with those who disagree is no longer possible or even desirable. It is this lack of desire to engage which most distinguishes the unmediated activism of post-territorial political actors from the old politics of territorial communities, founded on struggles of collective interests (Chandler 2004b). The clearest example is old representational politics – this forced engagement in order to win the votes of people necessary for political parties to assume political power. Individuals with a belief in a collective programme knocked on strangers' doors and were willing to engage with them, not on the basis of personal feelings but on what they understood were their potential shared interests. Few people would engage in this type of campaigning today; engaging with people who do not share our views, in an attempt to change their minds, is increasingly anathema and most people would rather share their individual vulnerabilities or express their identities in protest than attempt to argue with a peer. This paper is not intended to be a nostalgic paean to the old world of collective subjects and national interests or a call for a revival of territorial state-based politics or even to reject global aspirations: quite the reverse. Today, politics has been 'freed' from the constraints of territorial political community – governments without coherent policy programmes do not face the constraints of failure or the constraints of the electorate in any meaningful way; activists, without any collective opposition to relate to, are free to choose their causes and ethical identities; protest, from Al Qaeda, to anti-war demonstrations, to the riots in France, is inchoate and atomized. When attempts are made to formally organize opposition, the ephemeral and incoherent character of protest is immediately apparent.

### \*\*\*\*A2: Perm

#### Identity politics makes the realization of a true universal impossible—the 1AC’s obsession with exposing marginalized viewpoints makes short-circuits universalism

* Liberal politics as usual

Zizek, ’09 (Slavoj, senior researcher at the Institute of Sociology, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, professor at the European Graduate School, and total BAMF, First as Tragedy, Then as Farce, p. 102, bgm)

***\*e tutti quanit = all the rest***

Liberals who acknowledge the problems of those excluded from the socio-political process formulate their goal as being the inclusion of those whose voices are not heard: all positions should be listened to, all interests taken into account, the human rights of everyone guaranteed, all ways of life, cultures, and practices respected, and so on. The obsession of this democratic discourse is the protection of all kinds of minorities: cultural, religious, sexual, *e tutti quanti*. The formula of democracy is patient negotiation and compromise. What gets lost here is the proletarian position, the position of universality embodied in the Excluded. This is why, upon a closer look, it becomes clear that what Hugo Chavez has begun doing in Venezuela differs markedly from the standard liberal form of inclusion: Chavez is not including the “excluded” dwellers of favelas as his *base* and then reorganizing political space and political forms so that the latter will “fit” the excluded. Pedantic and abstract as it may appear, this difference—between “bourgeois democracy” and “dictatorship of the proletariat” —is crucial.

#### Revolution must take the working class as its point of departure—identity politics are inherently reactionary because they are a struggle for positions of power within the current social matrix rather than the struggle for a radical new symbolic order

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Much Marxism has been stuck in the idea that any revolutionary change has to take the working class as its point of departure. The ‘ideal’ has been dirty, hard working industrial workers. It has been discussed whether small, private farmers were poor enough; whether one could be progressive, if one had changed from overalls to a suit. The central point for Žižek, however, is not the particular attributes of a certain group, but its placement in relation to the whole of capi -talism. The proletariat for Marx is the symbol of a universal human -ity – and as such it points towards a society beyond exploitation and humiliation. For Žižek, the important point is not whether the prole - tariat was or is the most suppressed class, but whether its existence embodies the internal contradictions and imbalances of capitalism. One must therefore distinguish between the working class as a social group (as placed within the social matrix, as majority) and the pro -letariat as an agent, which in a militant way struggles for ‘universal truth’ (as the group that breaks with the social matrix, as minority) (Žižek 1999: 226f). There is no necessary connection between these two groups. The crucial point is therefore whether one is answering to the idea of a system beyond the exploitation and impoverishment of capitalism, or whether one is fighting for one’s own privileges. Should the struggle be understood as a struggle for positions within the same social matrix, or is the struggle a struggle for a new and radically different society? Class struggle is not initially a struggle between classes, but rather a struggle to cover up or make apparent the flaws and inconsistencies of capitalism. The danger of perceiving class struggle as the strug - gle for recognition and rights, for example, is that it thereby supports fixed identities and social roles – and in effect capitalism as a system. Class struggle and classes themselves are not that which all social phenomena can be reduced to, but rather a generative matrix that conditions the different ideological horizons, through which society is attributed meaning (Žižek 2002b: 190). [A] class society in which the ideological perception of the class division was pure and direct would be a harmonious structure with no struggle – or to put it in Laclau’s terms, class antagonism would thereby be fully symbolized; it would no longer be impossible/real, but a simple differential structural feature. (Žižek 1999: 187) Žižek’s view of the proletariat is strongly inspired by Hegel’s thoughts of the Lumpenproletariat . This group was exactly charac - terised by not being contemplated as a class sui generis . For Žižek, similarly, the proletariat is the group that does not fit into the capital - ist whole. Revolutionary struggle is therefore not a struggle for more salary, for instance, as such a struggle will only make certain dis - placements within a given system possible. Any political act that is taking its point of departure in particular identities and their demands – whether they be ethnic, religious, sexual or simply different life - styles – remains reactionary (Žižek 2003: 132f). Revolutionary strug - gle, on the contrary, questions the symbolic itself – the fact that the being of the worker is reduced to a commodity.

#### Particular struggles sap energy from the alt and cause interpassivity

**Valentić 07** (Tonči, University of Zagreb, “Socialism reconsidered: Remarks on Žižek`s *Repeating Lenin”,* International Journal of Zizek Studies, <http://zizekstudies.org/index.php/ijzs/article/view/47/92>)

Žižek`s assertion that the main failure of today's Left is the acceptance of the cultural wars (such as anti-racist or feminist) as the dominant terrain of the emancipatory politics is very easy to defend. There are basically two possible ways for the socio-political engagement: either to play the game of the system, i.e. to engage in the "long march through the institutions" or to get active in new social movements (such as feminism, ecology, antiracism, minority rights, etc.). Žižek rejects both of them, being mainly negative towards the second since they are not political in a strict sense of the word: they are not more that "single issue movements" with the lack of social totality, focused only on one group of people or one single social issue, thus rejecting the universalism as an important part of any struggle in the public sphere. Instead of a "right to narrate" one personal story or story from one particular point of view of the so-called socially deprived groups, he emphasizes the "right to truth" as embodied in historical figure of St. Paul, calling on the traces of Alain Badiou for humanity beyond particular disintegration or abstract humanism, beyond pathetic brotherhood, instead based on the "politics of truth". He puts into play the role of Saint Paul because in the realm of political theology he aimed to ground a new collective that abandons and leaves behind both the "Roman" and "Jewish" way, i.e. false universalism of liberal democracy's discourse and orthodox right-wing fundamentalism. With his assertion of today's world seen as period of post-modern relativism where we should articulate the universal truth as prerequisite for emancipatory politics, he overwrites the Leninist notion of "politics of truth" claiming it still has to be reinvented and implied. Since Badoiu`s notion of Event tends to "emerge out of nowhere", the same goes for Leninism as radical gesture: it is the only way to cope with contemporary totalitarian liberal democracy, so this reference to Lenin serves as an effort to break the vicious circle of these false options, i.e. either to play the game in hope you can one day beat the system or to fight the system emphasizing social particularities. The statement is very clear and convincing: partial emancipation is possible only through universal emancipation, which means particular experience cannot be universalized and therefore denotes a conservative political gesture, such as an emphasis on minority rights, gay and lesbian organizations, etc. Žižek`s critical remarks on the contemporary dominant fetish of repressed "otherness" as well as a concept of social intolerance towards the Other become the battlefield for analysis of Other's intolerance towards us, which is not politically correct but is politically true. Just as radicalism often represents an empty gesture, by the same token it is also the case with the political correctness as well as fascination with victimized Other, which leads us to the new type of exclusion, the exclusion of those who do not play by those imposed rules and are a priori considered terrorists or oppressors if they belong to the majority group (for example, single white Anglo-American male in today's United States in contrast to black lesbian woman). The important step, or to put it more clearly, the main theoretical act, is precisely to define hegemonic ideological coordinates because if you act you are already in the game, playing by the rules. Regarding political Denkverbot mentioned before, Žižek humorously but nonetheless punctually paraphrases Max Horkheimer`s sentence "those who do not want to talk about fascism, should keep silent about capitalism" into "those who do not want to talk about global capitalism, should keep silent about socialism". Political activity is here accurately seen as an example of *political* *interpassivity*, i.e. doing things not to achieve something, but to prevent something from really changing, as in an unmentioned reference to famous Visconti`s phrase in one of his movies that "everything has to be changed in order to remain the same". The Return to Lenin has a quite different aim. Instead of playing the role of leftist intellectual who pretends to be critical towards capitalism discussing the transition from commodity fetishism to fetishism which is today itself commodified or to support the naïve belief in cyber communism as the possible way of resistance, he calls for repetition of Lenin's historical gesture with the famous question, once more brought into the intellectual debate: "Čto djelat?" or "What Is To Be Done?" Here it is crucial to emphasize the relevance of so called "high theory" today for the most concrete political struggle – as we remember from socialism, theoretical knowledge is not unimportant; quite contrary, as Žižek argues, it is the main incentive for the revolutionary act which follows it. Another author who uses Lenin as a crucial figure is Toni Negri (article "What to do with "What to do?" Or rather: The body of General Intellect"), who grippingly emphasized the biopolitical aspect of Leninism, (Lenin beyond Lenin), i.e. interpreting communist struggle as inevitably biopolitical struggle. Since the present ideologico-political constellation is characterized by the tendency to introduce moralistic reasoning into the political struggle, we are only a few steps away from a teleological explanation of liberal-democratic capitalism as the ultimate and eternal social order. The true problem with the democracy as *liberal* democracy is in its inherent paradox, since it is possible only in the conditions of its impossibility, and the major problem with the state from the socialist point of view is that it has always been seen as an instrument of oppression which can never be fully democratized. For that reason, socialist interventions pinpoint the dominant role of the state as well as democracy's insufficiencies.

### A2 perm – wendy brown DA

#### The permutation is a tactic of liberal inclusion- their reliance on [gender/race/sexuality] as the site of political contestation is not an accidental instance of ignoring class. The demand arises out of the crisis of liberalism—such politics particularizes the oppressions of capitalism to the point that the universal system is naturalized. Attaining white, male bourgeoisse privilege becomes the bench-mark of success, re-entrenching the foundation of the system

Wendy Brown, Professor & genuis, “Wounded Attachments,” POLITICAL THEORY, August 1993, ASP.

Although this détente between universal and particular within liberalism is potted with volatile conceits, it is rather thoroughly unraveled by two features of late modernity, spurred by developments in what Marx and Foucault, respectively, reveal as liberalism's companion powers: capitalism and disciplinarity. On one side, the state loses even its guise of universality as it becomes ever more transparently invested in particular economic interests, political ends, and social formations. This occurs as it shifts from a relatively minimalist "night watchman" state to a heavily bureaucratized, managerial, fiscally complex, and highly interventionist welfare-warfare state, a transmogrification occasioned by the combined imperatives of capital and the autoproliferating characteristics of bureaucracy.6 On the other side, a range of economic and political forces increasingly disinter the liberal subject from substantive nation-state identification: deterritorializing demo- graphic flows; disintegration from within and invasion from without of family and community as (relatively) autonomous sites of social production and identification; consumer capitalism's marketing discourse in which individual (and subindividual) desires are produced, commodified, and mo- bilized as identities; and disciplinary productions of a fantastic array of behavior-based identities ranging from recovering alcoholic professionals to unrepentant crack mothers. These disciplinary productions work to conjure and regulate subjects through classificatory schemes, naming and normaliz- ing social behaviors as social positions. Operating through what Foucault calls "an anatomy of detail," "disciplinary power" produces social identifies (available for politicization because they are deployed for purposes of political regulation) that crosscut juridical identities based on abstract right. Thus, for example, the welfare state's production of welfare subjects-themselves subdi- vided through the socially regulated categories of motherhood, disability, race, age, and so forth-potentially produce political identity through these categories, produce identities as these categories. In this story, the always imminent but increasingly politically manifest failure of liberal universalism to be universal-the transparent fiction of state universality-combines with the increasing individuation of social subjects through capitalist disinternments and disciplinary productions. Together, they breed the emergence of politicized identity rooted in disciplinary pro- ductions but oriented by liberal discourse toward protest against exclusion from a discursive formation of universal justice. This production, however, is not linear or even but highly contradictory: although the terms of liberalism are part of the ground of production of a politicized identity that reiterates yet exceeds these terms, liberal discourse itself also continuously recolonizes political identity as political interest-a conversion that recasts politicized identity's substantive and often deconstructive cultural claims and critiques as generic claims of particularism endemic to universalist political culture. Similarly, disciplinary power manages liberalism's production of politicized subjectivity by neutralizing (re-depoliticizing) identity through normalizing practices. As liberal discourse converts political identity into essentialized private interest, disciplinary power converts interest into normativized social identity manageable by regulatory regimes. Thus disciplinary power politi- cally neutralizes entitlement claims generated by liberal individuation, whereas liberalism politically neutralizes rights claims generated by disciplinary identities. In addition to the formations of identity that may be the complex effects of disciplinary and liberal modalities of power, I want to suggest one other historical strand relevant to the production of politicized identity, this one hewn more specifically to recent developments in political culture. Although sanguine to varying degrees about the phenomenon they are describing, many on the European and North American Left have argued that identity politics emerges from the demise of class politics consequent to post-Fordism or pursuant to May 1968. Without adjudicating the precise relationship between the breakup of class politics and the proliferation of other sites of political identification, I want to refigure this claim by suggesting that what we have come to call identity politics is partly dependent on the demise of a critique of capitalism and of bourgeois cultural and economic values. In a reading that links the new identity claims to a certain relegitimation of capitalism, identity politics concerned with race, sexuality, and gender will appear not as a supplement to class politics, not as an expansion of Left categories of oppression and emancipation, not as an enriching complexification of pro- gressive formulations of power and persons-all of which they also are-but as tethered to a formulation of justice which, ironically, reinscribes a bour- geois ideal as its measure.

If it is this ideal that signifies educational and vocational opportunity, upward mobility, relative protection against arbitrary violence, and reward in proportion to effort, and if it is this ideal against which many of the exclusions and privations of people of color, gays and lesbians, and women are articulated, then the political purchase of contemporary American identity politics would seem to be achieved in part through a certain discursive renaturalization of capitalism that can be said to have marked progressive discourse since the 1970s. What this suggests is that identity politics may be partly configured by a peculiarly shaped and peculiarly disguised form of resentment-class resent- ment without class consciousness or class analysis. This resentment is displaced onto discourses of injustice other than class but, like all resent- ments, retains the real or imagined holdings of its reviled subject-in this case, bourgeois male privileges-as objects of desire. From this perspective, it would appear that the articulation of politicized identities through race, gender, and sexuality require, rather than incidentally produce, a relatively limited identification through class. They necessarily rather than incidentally abjure a critique of class power and class norms precisely because the injuries suffered by these identities are measured by bourgeois norms of social acceptance, legal protection, relative material comfort, and social indepen- dence. The problem is that when not only economic stratification but other injuries to body and psyche enacted by capitalism (alienation, cornmodifica- tion, exploitation, displacement, disintegration of sustaining, albeit contra- dictory, social forms such as families and neighborhoods) are discursively normalized and thus depoliticized, other markers of social difference may come to bear an inordinate weight. Absent an articulation of capitalism in the political discourse of identity, the marked identity bears all the weight of the sufferings produced by capitalism in addition to that bound to the explicitly politicized marking.

### \*\*\*A2: Reductionist / Intersectionality

#### Even if it’s not perfect, our alternative is better starting point:

#### Intersecting inequality is real, but prior focus on class antagonism is key to historicize the oppression they outline and address collective imperatives

* Their argument ignores class differences with other identities…

Petras, 97 (James, Bartle Professor (Emeritus) of Sociology at Binghamton University in Binghamton, New York and adjunct professor at Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, November 1997, A Marxist critique of post-Marxists, <http://www.rebelion.org/hemeroteca/petras/english/critique170102.htm>, jj)

The post-Marxists attack the Marxist notion of class analysis from various perspectives. On the one hand, they claim that it obscures the equal or more significant importance of cultural identities (gender, ethnicity). They accuse class analysts of being “economic reductionists” and failing to explain gender and ethnic differences within classes. They then proceed further to argue that these “differences” define the nature of contemporary politics. The second line of attack on class analysis stems from a view that class is merely an intellectual constructionit is essentially a subjective phenomenon that is culturally determined. Hence, there are no “objective class interests” that divide society since “interests” are purely subjective and each culture defines individual preferences. The third line of attack argues that there have been vast transformations in the economy and society that have obliterated the old class distinctions. In “post-industrial” society, some post-Marxists argue, the source of power is in the new information systems, the new technologies and those who manage and control them. Society, according to this view, is evolving toward a new society in which industrial workers are disappearing in two directions: upward into the “new middle class” of high technology and downward into the marginal “underclass”.

Marxists have never denied the importance of racial, gender and ethnic divisions within classes. What they have emphasised, however, is the wider social system which generates these differences and the need to join class forces to eliminate these inequalities at every point: work, neighborhood, family. What most Marxists object to is the idea that gender and race inequalities can and should be analysed and solved outside of the class framework: that landowner women with servants and wealth have an essential “identity” with the peasant women who are employed at starvation wages; that Indian bureaucrats of neo-liberal governments have a common “identity” with peasant Indians who are displaced from their land by the free market economic policies. For example, Bolivia has an Indian vice-president presiding over the mass arrest of cocoa-growing Indian farmers.

Identity politics in the sense of consciousness of a particular form of oppression by an immediate group can be an appropriate point of departure. This understanding, however, will become an “identity prison” (race or gender) isolated from other exploited social groups unless it transcends the immediate points of oppression and confronts the social system in which it is embedded. And that requires a broader class analysis of the structure of social power which presides over and defines the conditions of general and specific inequalities.

#### We have to foreground class, not footnote it—their claim to have mentioned economics and class in passing during the 1AC is the link. The reduction of class to a neutral level among a long list of other oppressions such as race, destroys the emancipatory potential of class to reach across all lines of identity and forge political action. Class must be recognized as qualitatively more important—otherwise the system is able to satisfy demands on grounds of formal equality, destroying attempts to overcome capitalist oppression\*

Giminez, ’01 [Martha, Prof. Sociology at UC Boulder, “Marxism and Class; Gender and Race”, Race, Gender and Class, Vol. 8, p. online: <http://www.colorado.edu/Sociology/gimenez/work/cgr.html>]

There are many competing theories of race, gender, class, American society, political economy, power, etc. but no specific theory is invoked to define how the terms race, gender and class are used, or to identify how they are related to the rest of the social system. To some extent, race, gender and class and their intersections and interlockings have become a mantra to be invoked in any and all theoretical contexts, for a tacit agreement about their ubiquitousness and meaning seems to have developed among RGC studies advocates, so that all that remains to be dome is empirically to document their intersections everywhere, for everything that happens is, by definition, raced, classed, and gendered. **This pragmatic acceptance of race, gender and class, as givens, results in the downplaying of theory**, and the resort to experience as the source of knowledge. The emphasis on experience in the construction of knowledge is intended as a corrective to theories that, presumably, reflect only the experience of the powerful. RGC seems to offer a subjectivist understanding of theory as simply a reflection of the experience and consciousness of the individual theorist, rather than as a body of propositions which is collectively and systematically produced under historically specific conditions of possibility which grant them historical validity for as long as those conditions prevail. Instead, knowledge and theory are pragmatically conceived as the products or reflection of experience and, as such, unavoidably partial, so that greater accuracy and relative completeness can be approximated only through gathering the experiential accounts of all groups. Such is the importance given to the role of experience in the production of knowledge that in the eight page introduction to the first section of an RGC anthology, the word experience is repeated thirty six times (Andersen and Collins, 1995: 1-9). I agree with the importance of learning from the experience of all groups, especially those who have been silenced by oppression and exclusion and by the effects of ideologies that mystify their actual conditions of existence. To learn how people describe their understanding of their lives is very illuminating, for "ideas are the conscious expression -- real or illusory -- of (our) actual relations and activities" (Marx, 1994: 111), because "social existence determines consciousness" (Marx, 1994: 211). **Given that our existence is shaped by the capitalist mode of production, experience, to be fully understood in its broader social and political implications, has to be situated in the context of the capitalist forces and relations that produce it.** Experience in itself, however, is suspect because, dialectically, it is a unity of opposites; it is, at the same time, unique, personal, insightful and revealing and, at the same time, thoroughly social, partial, mystifying, itself the product of historical forces about which individuals may know little or nothing about (for a critical assessment of experience as a source of knowledge see Sherry Gorelick, "Contradictions of feminist methodology," in Chow, Wilkinson, and Baca Zinn, 1996; applicable to the role of experience in contemporary RGC and feminist research is Jacoby's critique of the 1960s politics of subjectivity: Jacoby, 1973: 37- 49). Given the emancipatory goals of the RGC perspective, it is through the analytical tools of Marxist theory that it can move forward, beyond the impasse revealed by the constant reiteration of variations on the "interlocking" metaphor. This would require, however, a) a rethinking and modification of the postulated relationships between race, class and gender, and b) a reconsideration of the notion that, because everyone is located at the intersection of these structures, all social relations and interactions are "raced," "classed," and "gendered." In the RGC perspective, race, gender and class are presented as equivalent systems of oppression with extremely negative consequences for the oppressed. It is also asserted that the theorization of the connections between these systems require "a working hypothesis of equivalency" (Collins, 1997:74). **Whether or not it is possible to view class as just another system of oppression depends on the theoretical framework within class is defined. If defined within the traditional sociology of stratification perspective, in terms of a gradation perspective, class refers simply to strata or population aggregates ranked on the basis of standard SES indicators** (income, occupation, and education) (for an excellent discussion of the difference between gradational and relational concepts of class, see Ossowski, 1963). **Class in this non-relational, descriptive sense has no claims to being more fundamental than gender or racial oppression; it simply refers to the set of individual attributes that place individuals within an aggregate or strata arbitrarily defined by the researcher** (i.e., depending on their data and research purposes, anywhere from three or four to twelve "classes" can be identified). From the standpoint of Marxist theory, however, class is qualitatively different from gender and race and cannot be considered just another system of oppression. As Eagleton points out, whereas racism and sexism are unremittingly bad, class is not entirely a "bad thing" even though socialists would like to abolish it. The bourgeoisie in its revolutionary stage was instrumental in ushering a new era in historical development, one which liberated the average person from the oppressions of feudalism and put forth the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. Today, however, it has an unquestionably negative role to play as it expands and deepens the rule of capital over the entire globe. **The working class**, on the other hand**, is pivotally located to wage the final struggle against capital** and, consequently, it is "an excellent thing" (Eagleton, 1996: 57). **While racism and sexism have no redeeming feature, class relations are, dialectically, a unity of opposites; both a site of exploitation and, objectively, a site where the potential agents of social change are forged**. To argue that the working class is the fundamental agent of change does not entail the notion that it is the only agent of change. **The working class is of course composed of women and men who belong to different races, ethnicities, national origins, cultures, and so forth**, so that gender and racial/ethnic struggles have the potential of fueling class struggles because, given the patterns of wealth ownership and income distribution in this and all capitalist countries, those who raise the banners of gender and racial struggles are overwhelmingly propertyless workers, technically members of the working class, people who need to work for economic survival whether it is for a wage or a salary, for whom racism, sexism and class exploitation matter. But this vision of a mobilized working class where gender and racial struggles are not subsumed but are nevertheless related requires a class conscious effort to link RGC studies to the Marxist analysis of historical change. **In so far as** the **"class"** in RGC **remains a neutral concept, open to any and all theoretical meanings, just one oppression among others, intersectionality will not realize its revolutionary potential.** Nevertheless, **I want to argue against the notion that class should be considered equivalent to gender and race. I find the grounds for my argument** not only **on the crucial role class struggles play in processes of epochal change** but also in the very assumptions of RGC studies and the ethnomethodological insights put forth by West and Fenstermaker (1994). The assumption of the simultaneity of experience (i.e., all interactions are raced, classed, gendered) together with the ambiguity inherent in the interactions themselves, so that while one person might think he or she is "doing gender," another might interpret those "doings" in terms of "doing class," highlight the basic issue that Collins accurately identifies when she argues that ethnomethodology ignores power relations. Power relations underlie all processes of social interaction and this is why social facts are constraining upon people. But the pervasiveness of power ought not to obfuscate the fact that **some power relations are more important and consequential than others**. **For example, the power that physical attractiveness might confer a woman in her interactions with her less attractive female supervisor or employer does not match the economic power of the latter over the former**. In my view, **the flattening or erasure of the qualitative difference between class, race and gender in the RGC perspective is the foundation for the recognition that it is important to deal with "basic relations of domination and subordination" which now appear disembodied, outside class relations.** In the effort to reject "class reductionism," by postulating the equivalence between class and other forms of oppression**, the RGC perspective both negates the fundamental importance of class but it is forced to acknowledge its importance by postulating some other "basic" structures of domination**. **Class relations** -- whether we are referring to the relations between capitalist and wage workers, or to the relations between workers (salaried and waged) and their managers and supervisors, those who are placed in "contradictory class locations," (Wright, 1978) -- **are of paramount importance, for most people's economic survival is determined by them.** **Those in dominant class positions do exert power over their employees and subordinates and a crucial way in which that power is used is through their choosing the identity they impute their workers.** **Whatever identity workers might claim or "do," employers can, in turn, disregard their claims and "read" their "doings" differently as "raced" or "gendered" or both, rather than as "classed," thus downplaying their class location and the class nature of their grievances.** **To argue**, then, **that class is fundamental is not to "reduce" gender or racial oppression to class, but to acknowledge that the underlying basic and "nameless" power at the root of what happens in social interactions grounded in "intersectionality" is class power.**

# 1NR

### 2AC – A2: Authenticity

***Making debate SOLELY about personal narratives is self-destructive and shuts down debate***

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Having traced a major strand in the development of CRT, we turn now to the strands' effect on the relationships of CRATs with each other and with outsiders. As the foregoing material suggests, **the central** CRT **message is not simply that minorities are being treated unfairly**, or even that individuals out there are in pain - assertions for which there are data to serve as grist for the academic mill - **but that the minority scholar himself or herself hurts and hurts badly**.¶ An important problem that concerns the very definition of the scholarly enterprise now comes into focus. **What can an academic** trained to [\*694] question and to doubt n72 **possibly say to Patricia Williams when effectively she announces, "I hurt bad"?** n73 **"No, you don't hurt"? "You shouldn't hurt"?** "Other people hurt too"? Or, most dangerously - and perhaps most tellingly - "What do you expect when you keep shooting yourself in the foot?" If the majority were perceived as having the well- being of minority groups in mind, these responses might be acceptable, even welcomed. And they might lead to real conversation. But, **writes Williams, the failure by those "cushioned within the invisible privileges of race and power**... to incorporate a sense of precarious connection as a part of our **lives is... ultimately obliterating**." n74¶ "Precarious." "Obliterating." **These words will clearly invite responses only from fools and sociopaths; they will, by effectively precluding objection, disconcert and disunite others**. **"I hurt," in academic discourse, has three broad though interrelated effects**. First, **it demands priority from the reader's conscience. It is for this reason that law review editors, waiving usual standards, have privileged a long trail of undisciplined - even silly** n75 **- destructive and, above all, *self-destructive* articles.** n76 **Second, by emphasizing the emotional bond between those who hurt in a similar way, "I hurt" discourages fellow sufferers from *abstracting themselves* from their pain in order *to gain perspective* on their condition**. n77¶ [\*696] **Last, as we have seen, it precludes the possibility of open and structured conversation with others**. n78 [\*697] **It is because of this *conversation-stopping effect*** of what they insensitively call "first-person agony stories" **that Farber and Sherry deplore their use.** "The norms of academic civility hamper readers from challenging the accuracy of the researcher's account; it would be rather difficult, for example, to criticize a law review article by questioning the author's emotional stability or veracity." n79 Perhaps, a better practice would be to put the scholar's experience on the table, along with other relevant material, but to subject that experience to the same level of scrutiny.¶ If **through the foregoing rhetorical strategies CRATs succeeded in limiting academic debate**, why do they not have greater influence on public policy? **Discouraging white legal scholars from entering the national conversation about race, n80 I suggest, has generated a kind of *cynicism* in white audiences** which, in turn, has had precisely the reverse effect of that ostensibly desired by CRATs. **It drives the American public to the right and ensures that anything CRT offers is reflexively rejected.**¶ In the absence of scholarly work by white males in the area of race, of course, it is difficult to be sure what reasons they would give for not having rallied behind CRT. Two things, however, are certain. First, **the kinds of issues** raised by Williams **are too important** in their implications [\*698] for American life **to be confined to communities of color.** If the lives of minorities are heavily constrained, if not fully defined, by the thoughts and actions of the majority elements in society, **it would seem to be of great importance that white thinkers and doers participate in open discourse** to bring about change. Second, given the lack of engagement of CRT by the community of legal scholars as a whole, the discourse that should be taking place at the highest scholarly levels has, by default, been displaced to faculty offices and, more generally, the streets and the airwaves.

**2NC /1NR Autobiography Bad**

***Turns the case—proves their performance is counter-productive to their goals and supercharges the links to our Cap K.***

***Auto-biography fails and can’t translate into workable politics***

Christopher A. **McAuley ‘01**, University of California, Santa Barbara, American Literature, Volume 73, Number 2, June 2001, pp. 438-439 (Article), Autobiography and Black Identity Politics: Racialization in Twentieth-Century America (review), Project Muse, online, jj

In Autobiography and Black Identity Politics, Kenneth Mostern considers ‘‘the extent to which nearly all **African American political leaders** regardless of politics . . . **have chosen** to write **personal stories as a means of theorizing their political positions’’** (12). Mostern’s definition of the African American autobiography is key to his assessment of its particular strengths and weaknesses: ‘‘an articulation based on the determinate memory and recall of experience via the lens of traumatically constrained ideology, to describe the continuing racialization of politics’’ (10). However, ***it is precisely on the political front***, Mostern argues, ***that the autobiography is inadequate***: **mere description does not provide a political plan of action**. Still, he concludes that the ‘‘recognition of the limitation of the process, like the identity itself, can only emerge through the process, to which there is no alternative’’ (11).

**The autobiography as political project**, Mostern argues, **falls short of what he proposes is its goal, by either failing to do justice to the sociological groundings of the author’s racialized identity or by emphasizing racialized social structure to the point of virtually denying the author’s subjectivity**. An example of the first type, according to Mostern, is Zora Neale Hurston’s Dust Tracks on a Road, and of the second, Angela Davis’s Autobiography.

***Personal narratives aren’t radical—prioritizing them makes social location the new dogma, and tying it to the ballot commodifies their story-telling replicating the worst excesses of liberalism***

Turns commodification---they flips the hierarchy of framework---subjectivity becomes an unquestionable dogma and personal experience gets instrumentalized as advocacy

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Several prominent outsider **scholars have offered what seems to be a simple solution: outsiders should start telling stories about themselves**. **Storytelling, they claim, has a radical transformative** [\*1231] **potential. If the experiences of African-Americans and women have been invisible to or misconstrued by lawmakers, then outsider** law professor**s** **must use their positions** of influence **to communicate the intangibles of outsider experience**, intangibles that are repressed by traditional legal doctrine, analysis and theory. **By telling stories about their individual experiences and pain, outsiders strive to transform the** legal **academy and** legal **scholarship, the law itself, and ultimately the larger culture**. This proposal has proved to be invigorating for both outsider and insider scholars. **Outsiders have begun including autobiographical narratives** in their law review articles and books, and insiders have responded with praise and criticism, and also with some stories of their own. n4

**For outsiders, autobiography would seem to be a foolproof strategy for recuperating marginalized experience**. **It is politically interventionist and theoretically disruptive, and yet at the same time flexible, sensitive, and immediately accessible. What harm can outsiders do by telling their own stories?** At best, their stories will disturb and then persuade insiders that law should reflect the reality of outsider experience. At worst, the insiders will not listen or will mishear. In either case, storytelling should reinforce outsiders' commitment to a resistant scholarship and inspire other outsiders to offer their own autobiographies in support of the cause.

***These claims on behalf of storytelling deserve serious scrutiny***. **Outsider scholars** - or, for that matter, insider scholars who also employ autobiography - **must consider whether and in what sense this form of representation achieves the goals of outsider scholarship**. To what extent does outsider autobiography rescue formerly ignored experiences and points of view, or permit the author to break through the cultural limitations of legal discourse? If the law is to comprehend its social obligations through the perspective of the individual storyteller, the tactic affirmed by the autobiographical project, then it is imperative to clarify and evaluate the nature of the perspectives that storytellers construct.

In this paper, I will argue that **autobiography is not simply a transparent medium through which the self may give voice to what** [\*1232] **it alone knows**. **Nor is autobiography an unconditioned mode of representation that opens up subjective spaces hitherto unexplored**. For one thing, an autobiographical narrative makes the same ontological commitments to readers as legal discourse. **Autobiography places limitations on the range of available meanings similar to those imposed by law**. In addition, many literary critics and historians have suggested that autobiography and the experiences it constructs are shaped by the same cultural values reflected in law. **Far from eluding the constraints of legal discourse and cultural bias**, therefore, **autobiography may lead outsiders to become the unwitting proponents of the very values they most want to resist.**

Perhaps more crucially, **the outsiders' intention to liberate discourse from dogmatic or culture-bound types of objectivity is threatened by the possibility that their works will merely achieve a simple reversal of academic orthodoxy**. ***By celebrating individual perspectives, reliance on autobiography may establish authorial subjectivity as the new form of unassailable dogma, the new tale that wags our legal discourse.***

Despite its potential complicity in a culture the outsiders decry, storytelling is an attractive enterprise because it is remunerative. Yet this feature of outsider storytelling raises additional questions about the role of these ostensibly resistant texts, particularly the meaning that context imposes on them. The **scholars who tell the stories receive** material **rewards** for publishing them. The authors are also lawyers or, at least, critics of the law, whose purpose in offering the stories is instrumental to some end. **By recounting painful, personal experiences to an audience** willing to pay for them, ***the authors use themselves and their suffering as a market commodity***. Similarly, **because the storytellers want lawmakers to recognize and remedy their suffering, they must make their stories intelligible (and in some sense marketable) to the audience whose understanding and intervention they seek, even as they rebuke it**. Thus, **the storyteller is never free from the constraints imposed by her audience's expectations**. **While autobiographies may possess a transformative power, one must wonder what they transform. Will the practice of telling one's own stories transform legal culture, as the outsiders claim? Or will that practice more likely transform the self who tells the story?** [\*1233]

***Elevating the self and personal experience replicates individualistic liberalism***

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**Far from being** discomforting, let alone **subversive, the story these ostensibly resistant texts tell about the relationship between the self and law is surprisingly consistent with the guiding tenets of liberalism**. **These texts describe the individual self, its material needs, and psychological desires as central concerns of law**. At the same time, the texts provide evidence of the satisfactions the self achieves by earning its way independently of the various forms of social assistance law might afford. Since this story is difficult to distinguish from the stock legal narratives the outsiders oppose, n77 **we must consider whether narrative conventions**, like those of legal discourse, **have a tendency to manipulate the storyteller into affirming the status quo**.

Curiously, although outsiders' stories contest the mechanisms through which law and other cultural institutions evaluate and (thereby) produce truth claims, n78 **none of the storytellers has pondered the role that the narrative form plays in shaping the meaning of the activities, relationships, and feelings being narrated**. n79 On the contrary, **the storytellers are, in general, unselfconscious and unreflective with regard to the potential of narrative to guide and even predetermine the experiences they report**. Instead, as I argued above, **they insist that autobiography furnishes a transparent window onto experience**. n80 **If we believe, however, that** [\*1253] **actual lived experiences and narratives of those experiences occupy different orders of existence - perhaps, because the form in which lived events present themselves to us is not identical to the form in which they are represented in the narrative vehicle** n81 - **then we must examine the inevitable ways in which narrative arranges, orders, elaborates, and filters** (through additions and subtractions) **the original experience**. **That outsider autobiographical narratives are refined, rhetorically adroit mediations of experience further complicates the claim that these representations are purer, or more authentic, than other kinds of mediating discourse**. **Thus, one question on which we must focus "is not "What does any given story mean?' but rather "What does narrative itself (or narrativizing a text) mean?**' " n82

It may be that **reliance on the narrative form is problematic for those pursuing a radical social agenda, for some theorists have argued that narrative is made possible by and inevitably reinforces** [\*1254] **the reigning system** of law. n83 Professor Hayden **White has been particularly concerned with discovering the kind of meaning that narrative supplies when real events are recorded in the form of a story**. n84 As White argues, **real events do not present themselves to us as stories**, with the formal characteristics of coherent plot, or the "central subjects, proper beginnings, middles, and ends," that we have come to associate with stories. n85 **Real events simply occur, waiting for an observer with the impulse to record them to select a form of representation and in the process impose order on reality, even create a culture-specific reality out of mere sequences of events**. n86

Our culture privileges the narrative mode of representation above other available forms, according to White, because **narrative gratifies our desire to invest real events with moral and ethical meaning**. n87 For example, **narrative contrives a sense of closure** [\*1255] **through the author's selection of a point at which to conclude, which real events themselves stubbornly refuse to do**. n88 This closure, White argues, is produced by a human consciousness aware of its location within and dependence on a social system governed by law. n89 For it is law that endows the historian with a conception of justice or morality, against which she distinguishes the real events worthy of being represented from those that are unworthy. n90

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 2NC – Resistance Bad Link EXT

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

**A2: You Silence Us**

***We have to be willing to recognize that strategic silence might be preferable to the 1AC’s rush to narrate. Instead of assuming the revelation of the truth is the only path to emancipation, we should explore the potential of silence as a route to liberation.***

Wendy **Brown**, Professor of Political Theory @ UC Berkeley, 19**96** (“Constitutions and 'Survivor Stories': In the 'folds of our own discourse' The Pleasures and Freedoms of Silence.” 3 U Chi L Sch Roundtable 185)

But if these practices tacitly silence those whose experiences do not parallel those whose suffering is most marked (or whom the discourse produces as suffering markedly), they also condemn those whose sufferings they record to a permanent identification with that suffering. Here, we experience a temporal ensnaring in 'the folds of our own discourses' insofar as we identify ourselves in speech in a manner that condemns us to live in a present dominated by the past. But what if speech and silence aren't really opposites? Indeed, what if to speak incessantly of one's suffering is to silence the possibilities of overcoming it, of living beyond it, of identifying as something other than it? What if this incessant speech not only overwhelms the experiences of others, but alternative (unutterable? traumatized? fragmentary? inassimilable?) zones of one's own experience? Conversely, what if a certain modality of silence about one's suffering--and I am suggesting that we must consider modalities of silence as varied as modalities of speech and discourse--is to articulate a variety of possibilities not otherwise available to the sufferer? In The Drowned and the Saved, 24 Primo Levi offers drowning as a metaphor for the initial experience of entering concentration camps, particularly for those who did not speak German or Polish: " . . . filled with a dreadful sound and fury signifying nothing: a hubbub of people without names or faces drowned in a continuous, deafening background noise from which, however, the human word did not surface." 25 This is a drowning in a world of unfamiliar as well as terrifying words and noise, a world of no civil structure but so much humanity that one's own becomes a question. Primo Levi thus makes drowning function as a symbol for a lost linguistic order and as a sign of a lost civil order, for being at sea in words which do not communicate and by which one cannot communicate. 26 In a radically different context, Adrienne Rich also relates drowning to speech: "your silence today is a pond where drowned things live." 27 Allowing, perhaps perversely, the Rich to rest on the Levi, I wonder if Rich's line need only be read in its most obvious meaning-- as an injunction to speak or die, a mandate to speak in order to recover the drowned things, recover life. What if the accent marks were placed differently so that silence becomes a place where drowned things live, a place where Levi's drowning inmates survive despite being overwhelmed by the words which fill and consume the air necessary for life? What if the drowned things live in the pond, where it is silent, as they could not survive if brought back into the exposure of light and air, the cacophony of the Camp? What if silence is a reprieve from drowning in words which do not communicate or confer recognition, which only bombard or drown? 28 Of course, this possibility is heavy with paradox insofar as drowning already signals death and a pond where drowned things live therefore harbors death rather than life. But this paradox may also serve the other point I am after here: perhaps there are dead or deadening (anti-life) things which must be allowed residence in that pond of silence rather than surfaced into discourse if life is to be lived without being claimed by their weight. Certain experiences--concentration camp existence or childhood abuse--may conservatively claim their subjects when those experiences are incessantly remembered in speech, when survivors can only and always speak of what they almost did not survive and thus cannot break with that threat to live in a present not dominated by it. And what if this endless speaking about one's past of suffering is a means of attempting to excoriate guilt about what one did not do to prevent the suffering, an attempt which is doomed insofar as the speaking actually perpetuates by disavowing the guilt? 29 If to speak repeatedly of a trauma is a mode of encoding it as identity, it may be the case that drowned things must be consigned to live in a pond of silence in order to make a world--a future--that is other than them. Put slightly differently by Primo Levi, "a memory evoked too often, and in the form of a story, tends to become fixed in a stereotype . . . crystallized, perfected, adorned, installing itself in the place of the raw memory and growing at its expense." 30 Many feminist narratives of suffering would seem to bear precisely this character; rather than working through the "raw memo- ry" to a place of an emancipation, our discourses of survivorship become stories by which we live, or refuse to live, in the present. There is a fine but critical distinction here between on the one hand, re-entering a trauma, speaking its unspeakable elements, even politicizing it, in order to reconfigure the trauma and the traumatized subject, and on the other, retelling the trauma in such a way as to preserve by resisting the pain of it, and thus to preserve the traumatized subject. While such a distinction is probably not always sustainable, it may be all that secures the possibility that we dwell in neither a politics ofpain nor of pain's disavowal. Finally, I wonder if by putting all into discourse women do not risk sacrificing the rewards of the fragile hold some of us have acquired on autonomy, on the capacity to craft our own lives and experiences rather than living almost fully at the behest of others. If there are some experiences which, according to Hannah Arendt, "cannot withstand the glare of public light without being extinguished," 31 do we not set at risk this very recent acquisi- tion? Here I am thinking about the pleasures of creative writing and other artistic practices; therapeutic work intended to fortify and emancipate rather than discipline its subjects; relatively uncoerced sexual lives; and some modi- cum of choice in reproductive and mothering practices. When all such experi- ences are put into discourse--when our sexual, emotional, reproductive, and creative lives are all exhaustively chronicled--this would seem to imperil the experiences of autonomy, § Marked 21:02 § creation, and even privacy so long denied women and so hard won. Indeed, are we so accustomed to being without privacy and autonomy that we compulsively evade and sabotage them? Do we feel we have nothing of value to protect from public circulation and scrutiny? Are we compelled to reiterate the experience of the historically subordinated to be without a room of one's own, without a zone of privacy in which our lives go unreported, without a domain of creativity free from surveillance . . . this time by our own eyes? Are we so habituated to being watched that we cannot feel real, cannot feel our experiences to be real, unless we are watching and reporting them? Might we need to examine whether we eroticize the denigration in the conventional lack of privacy afforded women? Or are we still wres- tling with an insufficiently developed feminine ego, one which fears autonomy more than its absence? Cast in a different idiom, if femininity is, among other things, a disciplinary practice, Foucault reminds us that the good disciplinary subject is one who has fully introjected the surveillant gaze.

**Link – Confessional Discourse (if not in 1nc)**

***The affirmative’s belief in exposure of stories of private violence to the public sphere in order to politicize and negate the injury rest on the belief that truth will set us free, but this is part of a mystification where the breaking of silence is a political act. The process of exposure makes this previously private action an act of a regulatory discipline with the state normalizing its intervention into our lives depoliticizing the structural, economic, social, and political conditions that allow violence to exist.***

Wendy **Brown**, Professor of Political Theory @ UC Berkeley, 19**96** (“Constitutions and 'Survivor Stories': In the 'folds of our own discourse' The Pleasures and Freedoms of Silence.” 3 U Chi L Sch Roundtable 185)

But **if the silences in discourses of domination are a site for insurrectionary noise, if they are the corridors we must fill with explosive counter-tales, it is also possible to make a fetish of breaking silence**. **Even more than a fetish, it is possible that this ostensible tool of emancipation carries its own techniques of subjugation**--that **it converges with non-emancipatory tendencies in contem- porary culture (for example, the ubiquity of confessional discourse and rampant personalization of political life**), **that it establishes regulatory norms, coincides with the disciplinary power of confession, in short, feeds the powers we meant to starve**. While attempting to avoid a simple reversal of feminist valorizations of breaking silence, it is this dimension of silence and its putative opposite with which this Article is concerned.

In the course of this work, **I want to make the case for silence** not simply **as** an aesthetic but **a political value**, **a means of preserving certain practices and dimensions of existence from regulatory power, from normative violence, as well as from the scorching rays of public exposure**. **I** also **want to suggest a link between**, on the one hand, **a certain contemporary tendency** concerning the lives of public figures**--the confession or extraction of every detail of private and personal life** (sexual, familial, therapeutic, financial) **and, on the other, a certain practice in feminist culture: the compulsive putting into public discourse of heretofore hidden or private experiences**--from catalogues of sexual pleasures to litanies of sexual abuses, from chronicles of eating disorders to diaries of homebirths, lesbian mothering, and Gloria Steinam's inner revolution. **In linking these two phenomena--the privatization of public life via the mechanism of public exposure of private life on the one hand, and the compulsive/compulsory cataloguing of the details of women's lives on the other--I want to highlight a modality of regulation and depoliticization specific to our age that is not simply confessional but empties private life into the public domain, and thereby also usurps public space with the relatively trivial, rendering the political personal in a fashion that leaves injurious social, political and economic powers unremarked and untouched**. In short, **while intended as a practice of freedom (premised on the modernist conceit that the truth shall make us free), these productions of truth not only bear the capacity to chain us to our injurious histories as well as the stations of our small lives but also to instigate the further regulation of those lives, all the while depoliti- cizing their conditions.**