# Cede the Political

#### Engaging the policy infrastructure of energy policy is crucial to activism – the hard divide between activists and policymakers is oversimplifying which turns their advocacy

Guilhot ’05

Guilhot, research fellow – Social Science Research Council, prof sociology – LSE, ‘5¶ (Nicolas, The Democracy Makers, p. 11-13)

**The actors who contributed the most to** constructing and **expanding the field of promoting democracy are those who were able to play on different levels, to occupy pivotal positions at the junction of academe, national** and international **institutions, activist movements, and** to **mobilize the diversified resources** **of** all **these fields** — knowledge, affiliations, networks, financial re­sources, etc. **They were able to appear as** both **reformist and realist, to ac­commodate** different **agendas, and** therefore to **establish strong positions.**¶In order to characterize these actors, it is useful to think of them in some sense as "double agents." While more is involved, to make this somewhat ironic reference to characters in spy novels captures well the intrinsic am­bivalence involved. Yet, my intent is less to be provocative than to provoke thought. To speak of "double agents" is a way to take into account the mul­tiple affiliations of social actors, rather than to ascribe to them a unilateral role and to confine them within a limited area of social relations or a single institutional context. Indeed, **most actors**, and the more dominant ones in particular, **occupy multiple positions in different areas of society** (Boltanski 1973). In that sense, it is highly reductive — actually, **it is epistemologically wrong** —**to assign them a unique property** or a set of necessarily congruent characteristics. For instance, **one can be** at the same time **a political science professor, an occasional consultant** for the National Security Council, **and the board member of an** important international human rights **NGO.** Should we speak of a "state actor" or of a "non-state actor," to use two fashionable labels having currency in the academic literature on interna­tional relations and transnational networks? In 1988, the World Bank hired James Clark, former head of Oxfam's policy unit, in order to improve its relations with NGOs: is he a representative of the interests of international financial institutions, or of the NGO sector? Really, such **clear-cut concepts are no longer operational** (if they ever were) **when it comes to providing a reliable sociological analysis of international processes. The same thing can be said about** other related notions, such as "**civil society** actors" **or "human rights activists": such notion**s cannot be taken as appropriate descriptions of social actors for they **capture only specific roles** negotiated **in specific con­texts**. Therefore, using the notion of "double agents" (or multiplying the affiliations and speaking of "triple agents" or even multiple agents, as sug­gested ironically by Peter Sloterdijk in the epigraph of this introduction) is also intended as a reminder of the fact that **social actors can act in different capacities according to the arenas in which they engage. This capacity to multiply affiliations** and positions **is** indeed **the** very **stuff of which networks are made.** By the same token, **this notion has** also a **critical intent**: it shows that **the symbolic boundaries between the national and the international, between** the **governmental and** the **nongovernmental**, between the for-profit and the non-profit, **the scientific and the activist**, **are** actually **constructs rather than facts**, and that **these** artificial **partitions are blurred by the be­havior of agents who constantly shift between these "capacities**" but have at the same time and for the same reason an interest in the maintenance of such boundaries.¶ By acting in different guises or capacities, social actors can indeed engage in several arenas and participate in different networks. **These divisions** and boundaries **are maintained by** the practitioners themselves but also, as we shall see, by **scholars** of political science or international relations **who con­stantly** produce and **reproduce categories such as "non-state actor,"** "NGO representative," "local group," "**grass-roots movement," etc., separating** **artificially ideal roles** that are actually **merged within dense social networks.** Notwithstanding the constant work of division and classification that they pertoim, the twilight world of global governance and market democracies is inhabited only by double agents.¶ By using this notion, my aim is not to deconstruct the categories of agency to work toward some kind of post-modern dissolution of social identities. On the contrary, **keeping in mind that actors cannot be confined** to a single domain of social life is a sound methodological precaution that **avoids re­ductive ascriptions and makes the researcher more receptive to empirical complexity.** In particular, it takes some distance with a too superficial "con­structivism" that has tended to define these new international actors exclusively in terms of their location within advocacy networks (e.g. Keck & Sikkink 1998) or "epistemic communities" (Haas 1992). It calls for taking into consideration other social properties —professional careers, class, position within professional or institutional hierarchies, resources used (eco­nomic, cultural, scientific, etc.) and access to resources — and for resituating liu universalistic and moralistic agendas of these agents within well-defined social contexts.

#### That’s critical to effective activism —proves decisionmaking turns the case and prevents right-wing take-over

Lockman ‘05

Lockman, Chair – Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies @ NYU, Spring ‘5

¶ (Zachary, “Critique from the Right: The Neo-conservative Assault on Middle East Studies,” The New Centennial Review 5.1, Muse)

**There were certainly voices raised, in academia, the think tank world, and elsewhere, in opposition to this agenda and the understanding of the world that underpinned it, as there had been voices offering alternative views about U.S. policy toward the Middle East** at other critical junctures. But during the 1980s, 1990s, and early years of the twenty-first century [End Page 83] these voices received relatively little attention, and university-based scholars seemed to play a decreasing role in influencing foreign policy. **Critics of U.S. foreign policy also found it difficult to make themselves heard through the mass media.** It is striking that the great bulk of **the "talking heads**" who appeared on television to offer their opinions on the 1990–91 Gulf crisis, on the 2003 Iraq war, and on other issues relating to the Middle East and U.S. policy toward it seemed to **come** not from academia but **from professional pundits**, from people associated with think tanks or with one of the public policy schools, and from retired military personnel. **Whatever their knowledge** (**or lack thereof) of the languages, politics, histories, and cultures of the Middle East, these people spoke the language and shared the mindset of the Washington foreign policy world in a way few university-based scholars did**. **They were also used to communicating their perspective in effective sound bites, whereas academics were often put off by the ignorance and political conformism** of much (though by no means all) of American mass media journalism and its tendency to crudely oversimplify complex issues and transform everything (even war) into a form of entertainment.¶ This helped bring about a considerable narrowing of the perspectives available to the public and the consolidation of a powerful, indeed almost impenetrable, consensus about the Middle East that encompassed most of the political class and the punditocracy. **Republicans and Democrats argued mainly over how best to maintain U.S. hegemony in the region, leaving very little room for those who envisioned a fundamentally different foreign policy founded on peace, democracy, human rights, mutual security, multilateral disarmament, nonintervention, and respect for international law**. It is, however, worth noting that despite the virtual absence of such views in the mass media, they were embraced by a good many Americans, as evidenced by the massive demonstrations that preceded the U.S. attack on Iraq in March 2003 and the polls that indicated substantial public opposition to war, partly because of the new modes and channels of communication and organizing made possible by the Internet.¶ Nonetheless, in the **after**math of **September 11th, critical** (and even moderate) **voices were largely drowned out by the right**, which quickly and effectively moved to implement its global agenda by exploiting public [End Page 84] outrage against the Islamist extremists who had perpetrated the September 11th attacks. They succeeded in "selling" first military intervention in Afghanistan (justified by the fact that the Taliban regime had allowed al-Qa'ida to operate in that country and refused to hand over those responsible for organizing the September 11th attacks) and then war against Iraq, even though no one was able to produce any credible evidence that the regime of Saddam Hussein had had anything to do with the September 11th attacks or still possessed weapons of mass destruction. In this effort conservative scholars like Bernard Lewis played a significant part, graphically illustrating their continuing, even enhanced, clout in right-wing policymaking circles long after their standing in scholarly circles had declined, as well as the durability and power of some very old Orientalist notions many had mistakenly thought dead as a doornail.

#### Right-wing takeover makes their impacts inevitable

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Nonetheless, **in the aftermath of September 11th, critical (and even moderate) voices were largely drowned out by the right, which quickly and effectively moved to implement its global agenda by exploiting public** [End Page 84] **outrage** against the Islamist extremists who had perpetrated the September 11th attacks. **They succeeded in "selling" first military intervention in Afghanistan** (justified by the fact that the Taliban regime had allowed al-Qa'ida to operate in that country and refused to hand over those responsible for organizing the September 11th attacks) **and then war against Iraq, even though no one was able to produce any credible evidence that the regime of Saddam Hussein had had anything to do with the September 11th attacks or still possessed weapons of mass destruction**. In this effort conservative scholars like Bernard Lewis played a significant part, graphically illustrating their continuing, even enhanced, clout in right-wing policymaking circles long after their standing in scholarly circles had declined, as well as the durability and power of some very old Orientalist notions many had mistakenly thought dead as a doornail.

# Switch Side Good

#### We are turning the best way to fight oppression and will win enough defense to their exclusion claims - Mitchell ’07 says Switch Side debate solves enough of their offense because the collective respect it maintains for democratic values and the skills to understand how neocons think was integral to overturn holding America’s without trial at Guantanamo.

#### It discusses how certain members of our community went to the EPA and were able to talk about energy policy because of their ability to look to both sides of an issue.

#### Even if you grant them some risk that switch side is bad, the advantages out weigh.

#### Benefits of switching sides comparatively outweigh its drawbacks

**Muir ‘93**

(Star, Professor of Communication – George Mason U., “A Defense of the Ethics of Contemporary Debate”, *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, Vol. 26, No. 4, p. 292)

Contemporary debate, even in the context of a vigorous defense, does have its drawbacks. It tends to overemphasize logic and tactics and to downplay personal feelings; it is by nature competitive, and therefore susceptible to competitive impulses and techniques (such as rapid speaking and a multiplicity of arguments); and it can desensitize debaters to real human problems and needs through continual labeling and discussion of abstract issues on paper. These problems, however, are more than matched by the conceptual flexibility, empathy, and familiarity with significant issues provided by switch-side debate.

#### Switch-side debating on the topic is uniquely important. It allows debaters to become better advocates and increases critical thinking

Dybvig and Iverson 99

Kristin Chisholm Dybvig, and Joel O. Iverson, Can Cutting Cards Carve into Our Personal Lives: An Analysis of Debate Research on Personal Advocacy, http://www.uvm.edu/~debate/dybvigiverson1000.html

Not all debate research appears to generate personal advocacy and challenge peoples' assumptions. Debaters must switch sides, so they must inevitably debate against various cases. While this may seem to be inconsistent with advocacy, supporting and researching both sides of an argument actually created stronger advocates. Not only did debaters learn both sides of an argument, so that they could defend their positions against attack, they also learned the nuances of each position. Learning and the intricate nature of various policy proposals helps debaters to strengthen their own stance on issues.

#### Environment justice must be approached through CONCRETE POLICY analysis that WEIGHS disadvantages– only SWITCH SIDE works

**Foreman 98**

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More frequent resort to a rationalizing, if not solely economic, perspective would encourage minority and low-income citizens and community leaders to think more carefully about priority-setting and myriad tradeoffs. Might widespread successes of NIMBY (not in my back yard) initiatives keep older and dirtier pollution sources active longer and thus adversely affect minority and low-income persons living adjacent to those sources? By the same token, does local insistence on full treatment at some Superfund sites (that is, the obsession with Breyer's "last ten percent") mean that risks elsewhere that might have been addressed under a more limited or flexible regime will not get attended to at all? Such questions cannot be answered here, but the disinclination even to pose them is troubling. That a "nobody should suffer" position advocating maximum citizen engagement could have perverse effects will be painful for many even to consider. But honestly confronting the reality that no environmental amenity (with the possible exception of planetary gravity) is equally distributed may help make citizens more likely to ask hard questions about which inequities matter most. A more careful and comprehensive set of environmental equity comparisons than has been produced to date would probably conclude that there is reason for cheer on some fronts. After all, many Native Americans residing on tribal land, along with rural blacks, doubtless breathe far cleaner air than many far wealthier city dwellers. Of course, once broader social equity concerns—the real motivation for much environmental justice advocacy—are factored in, any clean air advantage may appear insignificant. If Albert Nichols is right that failure to set environmental priorities based on risk has only worsened the inequities faced by minority and low-income communities, then there is even more compelling reason for greater reliance on a rationalizing approach. Writes Nichols in a direct critique of Bullard: If we accept the argument that the existing (politicized] approach has paid insufficient attention to the health and environmental risks faced by minority communities, what does that then say about a risk-based alternative? A strategy that emphasized attacking the largest and most easily reduced risks first would appear to represent a major gain for minority communities. To the extent that such communities bear unusually high risks as a result of past discrimination or other factors, a risk-based approach would redirect more resources to these communities. Indeed, a risk-based approach would give highest priority to attacking precisely the kinds of problems that most concern Bullard.23 If conventional environmental justice advocacy cannot confront risk magnitudes honestly, it cannot help much in the assessment and management of tradeoffs, either of the risk/risk or risk/benefit varieties. The notion that attacking some risks may create others is largely foreign to environmental justice—beyond a fear that attacking the risk of poverty with industrial jobs may expose workers to hazardous conditions. A focus on community inclusion, although necessary to the ultimate acceptability of decisions, offers no automatic or painless way to sort through tradeoffs.24 When confronted with choices posing both risks and benefits— such as a proposed hazardous waste treatment facility that would create jobs, and impose relatively low risks, in a needy area—environmental justice offers, along with disgust that such horrendous choices exist, mainly community engagement and participation. But because such situations tend to stimulate multiple (and often harshly raised) local voices on both sides of the issue, activists are at pains to decide where (besides additional participation and deliberation) the community's interest lies. Because an activist group will be in close touch with both the fear of toxics and the hunger for economic opportunity, the organization itself may be torn. The locally one-sided issue presents far preferable terrain for activists. It should surprise no one that activists are anxious to deemphasize community-level disagreement of this sort. Nor is it surprising to learn from the head of a prominent environmental justice organization that her group tries to avoid situations that pose precisely these locally polarizing tradeoffs.25 Faced with such tensions, environmental justice partisans may simply retreat into cant, attacking a system that facilitates "environmental blackmail," allowing disadvantaged communities to become "hooked on toxics."26

#### Only switching sides produces an energy dialogue that activates critique

Stevenson 9

Stevenson, PhD, senior lecturer and independent consultant – Graduate School of the Environment @ Centre for Alternative Technology, ‘9

(Ruth, “Discourse, power, and energy conflicts: understanding Welsh renewable energy planning policy,” Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy, Volume 27, p. 512-526)

It could be argued that this result arose from the lack of expertise of the convenors of the TAN 8 in consensual decision making. Indeed, there is now more research and advice on popular participation in policy issues at a community level (eg Kaner et al, 1996; Ostrom, 1995; Paddison, 1999). However, for policy making the state remains the vehicle through which policy goals must be achieved (Rydin, 2003) and it is through the state that global issues such as climate change and sustainable development must be legislated for, and to some extent enacted. It is therefore through this structure that any consensual decision making must be tested. This research indicates that the policy process cannot actually overcome contradictions and conflict. Instead, encompassing them may well be a more fruitful way forward than attempts at consensus. Foucault reinforces the notion that the `field of power' can prove to be positive both for individuals and for the state by allowing both to act (Darier, 1996; Foucault, 1979). Rydin (2003) suggests that actors can be involved in policy making but through `deliberative' policy making rather than aiming for consensus: ``the key to success here is not consensus but building a position based on divergent positions'' (page 69).¶ Deliberative policy making for Rydin involves: particular dialogic mechanisms such as speakers being explicit about their values, understandings, and activities: the need to move back and forth between memories (historical) and aspirations (future); moving between general and the particular; and the adoption of role taking (sometimes someone else's role). There is much to be trialed and tested in these deliberative models, however, a strong state is still required as part of the equation if we are to work in the interests of global equity, at least until the messages about climate change and sustainable development are strong enough to filter through to the local level. It is at the policy level that the usefulness of these various new techniques of deliberative policy making must be tested, and at the heart of this must be an understanding of the power rationalities at work in the process.

#### Switch-side debate develops a unique educational flexibility --- arguing both sides allows students to see the interconnection between varied subjects

**Muir ‘93**

(Star, Professor of Communication – George Mason U., “A Defense of the Ethics of Contemporary Debate”, *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, Vol. 26, No. 4, p. 282-5)

The debate over moral education and values clarification parallels in many ways the controversy over switch-side debate. Where values clarification recognizes no one set of values, debate forces a questioning and exploration of both sides of an issue. Where cognitive-development emphasizes the use of role playing in the inception of moral judgment, debate requires an empathy for alternative points of view. Where discussion provides an opportunity for expressions of personal feelings, debate fosters an analytic and explicit approach to value assessment. Freelev describes the activity this way: Educational debate provides an opportunity for students to consider the significant problems in the context of a multivalued orientation. They learn to look at a problem from many points of view. As debaters analyze the potential affirmative cases and the potential negative cases, including the possibility of negative counterplans, thev being to realize the complexity of most contemporary problems and to appreciate the worth of a multivalucd orientation; as they debate both sides of a proposition under consideration, they learn not only that most problems of contemporary affairs have more than one side but also that even one side of a proposition embodies a considerable range of values. The comparison between moral education and debate is useful because it contextualizes the process of moral development within an educational setting. Several objections have been raised about the practice of moral education, and these objections have direct relevance to the issue of switch-side debate. A view of debate as a form of moral education can be developed by addressing questions of efficacy, isolation from the real world. and of relativism. The first issue is one of effectiveness: Do clarification activities achieve the espoused goals? Social coercion and peer pressure, for example, still occur in the group setting, leaving the individual choice of values an indoctrination of sorts. Likewise, the focus of clarification exercises is arguably less analytic than expressive, less critical than embroyonic. The expression of individual preferences may be guided by simple reaction rather than by rational criteria. These problems arc minimized in the debate setting, especially where advocacy is not aligned with personal belief. Such advocacy requires explicit analysis of values and the decision criteria for evaluating them. In contemporarv debate, confronted with a case they believe in, debaters assigned to the negative side have several options: present a morass of arguments to see what arguments "stick," concede the problem and offer a "counterplan"a s a better way of solving the problem, or attack the value structure of the affirmative and be more effective in defending a particular hierarchy of values. While the first option is certainly exercised with some frequency, the second and third motivations arc also often used and are of critical importance in the development of cognitive skills associated with moral judgment. For example, in attacking a case that restricts police powers and upholds a personal right to privacy, debaters might question the reasoning of scholars and justices in raising privacy rights to such significant heights (analyzing Griswold v. Connecticut and other landmark cases), offer alternative value structures (social order, drug control), and defend the criteria through which such choices are made (utilitarian vs. deontological premises). Even within the context of a "see what sticks" paradigm, these arguments require debaters to assess and evaluate value structures opposite of their own personal feelings about their right to privacy. Social coercion, or peer pressure lo adopt certain value structures, is minimized in such a context because of competitive pressures. Adopting a value just because everyone else does may be the surest way of losing a debate. A second objection to debate as values clarification, consonant with Ehninger's concerns about gamesmanship, is the separation of the educational process from the real world. A significant concern here is how such learning about morality will be used in the rest of a student's life. Some critics question whether moral school knowledge "may be quite separate from living moral experience in a similar way as proficiency in speaking one's native language generally appears quite separate from the knowledge of formal grammar imparted by school." Edelstein discusses two forms of segmentation: division between realms of school knowledge (e.g., history separated from science) and between school and living experience (institutional learning separate from everyday life). Ehninger's point, that debate becomes a pastime, and that application of these skills to solving real problems is diminished if it is viewed as a game, is largely a reflection on institutional segmentation. The melding of different areas of knowledge, however. is a particular benefit of debate, as it addresses to is considerable importance in a real world setting. Recent college and high school topics include energy policy, prison reform, care for the elderly, trade policy, homelessness. and the right to privacy. These topics are notable because they exceed the knowledge boundaries of particular school subjects, they reach into issues of everyday life, and they are broad enough to force student to address a variety of value appeals. The explosion of "squirrels," or small and specific cases. in the 1960s and 1970s has had the effect of opening up each topic to many different case approaches. National topics are no longer of the one-case variety (as in 1955's "the U.S. should recognize Rcd China"). On the privacy topic, for example, cases include search and seizure issues, abortion, sexual privacy, tradeoffs with the first amendment, birth control, information privacy, pornography, and obscenity. The multiplicitv of issues pavs special dividends for debaters required to defend both sides of many issues because the value criteria change from round to round and evolve over the year. The development of flexibility in coping with the intertwining of' issues is an essential component in the interconnection of knowledge, and is a major rationale for switch-side debate.

#### Switch-side debate fosters tolerance and empathy toward others --- their framework inevitably degrades into dogmatism and bigotry—turns the aff

**Muir ‘93**

(Star, Professor of Communication – George Mason U., “A Defense of the Ethics of Contemporary Debate”, *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, Vol. 26, No. 4, p. 288-9)

The role of switch-side debate is especially important in the oral defense of arguments that foster tolerance without accruing the moral complications of acting on such beliefs. The forum is therefore unique in providing debaters with attitudes of tolerance without committing them to active moral irresponsibility. As Freeley notes, debaters are indeed exposed to a multivalued world, both within and between the sides of a given topic. Yet this exposure hardly commits them to such "mistaken" values. In this view, the divorce of the game from the "real world" can be seen as a means of gaining perspective without obligating students to validate their hypothetical value structure through immoral actions.'s Values clarification, Stewart is correct in pointing out, does not mean that no values are developed. Two very important values— tolerance and fairness—inhere to a significant degree in the ethics of switch-side debate. A second point about the charge of relativism is that tolerance is related to the development of reasoned moral viewpoints. The willingness to recognize the existence of other views, and to grant alternative positions a degree of credibility, is a value fostered by switch-side debate: Alternately debating both sides of the same question . . . inculcates a deep-seated attitude of tolerance toward differing points of view. To be forced to debate only one side leads to an ego-identification with that side. , . . The other side in contrast is seen only as something to be discredited. Arguing as persuasively as one can for completely opposing views is one way of giving recognition to the idea that a strong case can generally be made for the views of earnest and intelligent men, however such views may clash with one's own. . . .Promoting this kind of tolerance is perhaps one of the greatest benefits debating both sides has to offer. 5' The activity should encourage debating both sides of a topic, reasons Thompson, because debaters are "more likely to realize that propositions are bilateral. It is those who fail to recognize this fact who become intolerant, dogmatic, and bigoted.""\* While Theodore Roosevelt can hardly be said to be advocating bigotry, his efforts to turn out advocates convinced of their rightness is not a position imbued with tolerance.