### YOU SHOULD EVALUATE EPISTEMOLOGY FIRST BECAUSE THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT PROBLEMS DETERMINES HOW YOU RESPOND TO THEM AND THE CONSEQUENCES THEY ENGENDER

Smith ‘96

[Steve, Professor of International Politics at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, “Positivism and Beyond,” International theory: Positivism and beyond, New York: Cambridge University Press, 12-1 3]

But the stakes are also high because of the links between theory and practice. International theory underpins and informs international practice, even if there is a lengthy lag between the high- point of theories and their gradual absorption into political debate. Once established as common sense, theories become incredibly powerful since they delineate not simply what can be known but also what it is sensible to talk about or suggest. Those who swim outside these safe waters risk more than simply the judgement that their theories are wrong; their entire ethical or moral stance may be ridiculed or seen as dangerous iust because their theoretical assumptions are deemed as unrealistic. Defining common sense is therefore the ultimate act of political power. In this sense what is at stake in debates about epistemology is very significant for political practice. Theories do not simply explain or predict, they tell us what possibilities exist for human action and intervention they define not merely our explanatory possibilities but also our ethical and practical horizons. In this Kantian light epistemology matters, and the stakes are far more considerable than at first sight seem to be the case.

, INTEROGATING THE WAYS WE HAVE DEVELOPED OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD IS A PRIORI TO ANY POLITICAL PRAXIS AND FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN TRYING TO MECHANISTICALLY ‘SOLVE’ PROBLEMS BECAUSE OUR POINT OF DEPARTURE (I.E. EPISTEMOLOGY) IS OUR ENTIRE POLITICAL HORIZON. THAT IS THE SMITH AND

### CRITICISM OUTWEIGHS THE CASE:

### a) RENDERS IT INCOHERENT—EXTEND THE SMITH, TUMINO AND HARNECKE EVIDENCE—CAPITALISM AS A MODE OF SOCIAL METABOLIC CONTROL PRODUCES SPECIFIC FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE THAT MYSTIFY THE NATURE OF THE SYSTEM. THIS RENDERS ALL OF THEIR CLAIMS TO UNDERSTAND AND INTERACT WITHIN THE SYSTEM SUSPECT, THERE IS NO EPISTEMIC FOUNDATION TO THEIR CASE

### b) MAGNITUDE—EXTEND THE DYER EVIDENCE. THE CAPITALIST MODE OF SOCIAL RELATIONS AND IT’S INSTRUMENTAL LOGIC SUBORIDINATES EVERYTHING TO ACCUMULATION. THIS IS WHAT BOTH ALLOWS THEIR HARMS TO HAPPEN BUT ALSO RENDERS ALL LIFE MEANINGLESS, GUARANTEEING EXTINCTION

### c) TURNS THE CASE—CAPITAL WILL USE THE GAINS OF PLAN TO DISARM OPPOSITION THROUGH PICKING OFF KEY PARTS OF RESISTANCE, ALLOWING IT TO REPLICATE ITSELF IN FAR MORE SINISTER WAYS—THAT’S THE BROWN AND KOVEL EVIDENCE

### CAPITALISM IS AN INERTIAL SYSTEM—ANY VESITAGE LEFT REMAINING BY THE PERMUTATION WILL INEVITABLY SPIN BACK UP. LIKE A MANY-HEADED HYDRA, IT WILL REGENERATE WITH EVERY ATTEMPT THAT ATTACKS THE INSTRUMENTS AS OPPOSSED TO THE SYSTEM ITSELF\*\*\*

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[Joel, Prof at Bard, Enemy of Nature, Zed Books]p. 142-3

The value-term that subsumes everything into the spell of capital sets going a kind of wheel of accumulation, from production to consumption and back, spinning ever more rapidly as the inertial mass of capital grows, and generating its force field as a spinning magnet generates an electrical field. This phenomenon has important implications for the reformability of the system. Because capital is so spectral, and succeeds so well in ideologically mystifying its real nature, attention is constantly deflected from the actual source of eco-destabilization to the instruments by which that source acts. The real problem, however, is the whole mass of globally accumulated capital, along with the speed of its circulation and the class structures sustaining this. That is what generates the force field, in proportion to its own scale; and it is this force field, acting across the numberless points of insertion that constitute the ecosphere, that creates ever larger agglomerations of capital, sets the ecological crisis going, and keeps it from being resolved. For one fact may be taken as certain — that to resolve the ecological crisis as a whole, as against tidying up one corner or another, is radically incompatible with the existence of gigantic pools of capital, the force field these induce, the criminal underworld with which they connect, and, by extension, the elites who comprise the transnational bourgeoisie. And by not resolving the crisis as a whole, we open ourselves to the spectre of another mythical creature, the many-headed hydra, that regenerated itself the more its individual tentacles were chopped away. To realize this is to recognize that there is no compromising with capital, no schema of reformism that will clean up its act by making it act more greenly or efficiently We shall explore the practical implications of this thesis in Part III, and here need simply to restate the conclusion in blunt terms: green capital, or non-polluting capital, is preferable to the immediately ecodestructive breed on its immediate terms. But this is the lesser point, and diminishes with its very success. For green capital (or ‘socially/ecologically responsible investing’) exists, by its very capital-nature, essentially to create more value, and this leaches away from the concretely green location to join the great pool, and follows its force field into zones of greater concentration, expanded profitability — and greater ecodestruction.

Like the historical figures I mentioned earlier, these are names representing positions, struggles, and aspirations which should be well-known to every socially-conscious person in North America. They embody the absolute antithesis of the order represented by the "Four Georges"—George Washington, George Custer, George Patton and George Bush—emblemizing the sweep of "American" history as it is conventionally taught in that system of indoctrination the United States passes off as "education." They also stand as the negation of that long stream of "Vichy Indians"5 spawned and deemed "respectable" by the process of predation, colonialism, and genocide the Four Georges signify. The names I have listed cannot be associated with the legacy of the "Hang Around the Fort" Indians, broken, disempowered, and intimidated by their conquerors, or with the sellouts who undermined the integrity of their own cultures, appointed by the United States to sign away their peoples' homelands in exchange for trinkets, sugar, and alcohol. They are not the figurative descendants of those who participated in the assassination of people like Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, and who filled the ranks of the colonial police to enforce an illegitimate and alien order against their own. They are not among those who have queued up to roster the régimes installed by the U.S. to administer Indian Country from the 1930s onward, the craven puppets who to this day cling to and promote the "lawful authority" of federal force as a means of protecting their positions of petty privilege, imagined prestige, and often their very identities as native people. No, indigenists and indigenism have nothing to do with the sorts of Quisling impulses driving the Ross Swimmers, Dickie Wilsons, Webster Two Hawks, Peter McDonalds, Vernon Bellecourts and David Bradleys of this world.6