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#### Death and misfortune are inevitable – the joy of life comes in accepting things as they are – plans to save the world only bring more suffering

Slabbert 1 [Jos, Taoist teacher and philosopher, “Tao te Ching: How to Deal with Suffering” http://www.taoism.net/theway/suffer.htm]

Dealing with loss Express yourself completely, then keep quiet. Be like the forces of nature: when it blows, there is only wind; when it rains, there is only rain; when the clouds pass, the sun shines through. If you open yourself to the Tao, you are at one with the Tao and you can embody it completely. If you open yourself to insight, you are at one with insight and you can use it completely. If you open yourself to loss, you are at one with loss and you can accept it completely. Open yourself to the Tao, then trust your natural responses; and everything will fall into place. (Chapter 23) The word "open" is repeated often in this poem. Most people think the only way to handle suffering is to withdraw and to close yourself. The poet is clearly saying in this poem that the opposite is true: If you open yourself to loss, you are at one with loss and you can accept it completely. This openness, a willingness and courage to face reality, is the only way to deal with suffering, particularly inescapable suffering. But the openness the poet is describing is more than just facing reality. It is facing reality in total harmony with the Tao: If you open yourself to the Tao, you are at one with the Tao and you can embody it completely. It is only when you "embody" the Tao that you can face suffering with true equanimity. You will then have the openness that insight into your own nature and the natural way of Tao brings you. The right approach to suffering is only possible when you have reduced your ego to a minimum. The less ego you have, the less you suffer. Facing death with unresolved agendas is a terrible form of suffering. You will have to let go of selfish interests and futile aims to concentrate on dealing with the moment. **It is the acceptance of the inevitable that makes suffering bearable**. On his death bed, his family mourning, he is serene, for he knows Death, like Life, is an illusion: there is no beginning and no end. There is only the endless flow of Tao. The man of Tao has no fear, for he walks with Tao. (The Tao is Tao, 154) Agendas A good traveler has no fixed plans and is not intent upon arriving. (Chapter 27) Plans, aims, objectives and agendas have become the routes of suffering for so many people, and not only the ambitious. Agendas often take spontaneity and joy out of life. In the process, many people have become bad travelers, concentrating only on their objectives, and arriving at their destinations only to find that even their destinations are not really worth the trouble. Having no fixed plans? This does not sound like survival in a modern technological environment, does it? I mean, who but the extremely fortunate have the luxury of not having agendas running their lives? In most cases, one could justifiably point out, agendas are forced on you by your professional and familial obligations. You do not really have a choice, do you? How could one then become a good traveler through life in this modern world? I think the key lies in the second line of the quotation. One should not be "intent upon arriving". You should adopt an attitude of detachment. The moment your aims become egocentric, your suffering increases. The less your own ego is involved, the less seriously you will take life, and the more you will enjoy the journey. It is easier said than done, though, particularly when the job you are doing seems to be devoid of meaning, and the activities on your agenda tedious. They might even go against what you truly believe. It is clear. To become a good traveler in the modern world often entails more than just a change of attitude. It could also mean changing your life style, even your profession. It could mean taking risks in the process. But liberation has always been a risky undertaking, hasn’t it? People are willing to take risks for the most mundane things like profit and possession. Why not take a few risks when your spiritual progress is at stake? Truly good travelers often leave the beaten track and become masters of their own far more adventurous journeys. Tampering with the world Do you want to improve the world? I don't think it can be done. The world is sacred. It can't be improved. If you tamper with it, you'll ruin it. If you treat it like an object, you'll lose it. (Chapter 29) If anything, the Twentieth Century will be called the century of social engineering. Simplistic ideologies, like fascism, were used to try to change the world, with terrible consequences inducing suffering on a scale never seen before in the history of the human being. A savage economic system based on greed - capitalism - has ravaged the world. Yet, the human being has not learnt from this. Still, politicians show their ignorance by tampering with the sacred. It is the age of management, that euphemistic word for manipulating society. It is still happening. What else are many political programs but tampering with the sacred and ruining it in the process? It is the source of endless suffering. Forcing issues Whoever relies on the Tao in governing men doesn't try to force issues or defeat enemies by force of arms. For every force there is a counterforce. Violence, even well intentioned, always rebounds upon oneself. The Master does his job and then stops. He understands that the universe is forever out of control, and that trying to dominate events goes against the current of the Tao. (Chapter 30) Understanding that the universe is out of control is the key to wisdom and patience. No amount of tampering with the universe will change this. In fact, the more we tamper with it, the more damage we will do.

#### No one knows what is good and bad. Reject the aff’s judgments, even if we lose all life on earth

Kirkland 98 [Russell Kirkland, Associate Professor of Religion (and Asian Studies), “"Responsible Non-Action" In a Natural World: Perspectives from the Nei-Yeh, Chuang-Tzu, and Tao-Te Ching,” 1998, University of Georgia, http://kirkland.myweb.uga.edu/rk/pdf/pubs/ECO.pdf]

Why It Is Wrong to Resent Unexpected Changes In Chuang-tzu 18, we find two famous stories in which a man experiences a sudden and deeply personal transformation, a transformation that strikes others around him as deeply troubling.5 In one, the philosopher Hui-tzu goes to offer his sympathies to Chuang-tzu upon the event of the death of Chuang's wife. In the next story, a willow suddenly sprouts from the elbow of a fictional character. In each story, a sympathetic friend is shocked and dismayed to find that the first character in each story is not shocked and dismayed by the unexpected turn of events. In each story, the first character patiently and rationally explains the nature of life, and counsels his companion to accept the course of events that life brings to us, without imposing judgment as to the value of those events. In each case, the reader learns that it is foolish and inappropriate to feel emotional distress at such events, for a proper understanding of the real nature of life leads us to accept all events with the same equanimity, even those events that might have once sticken us as deeply distressing. In the Taoist classic Huai-nan-tzu, one finds a famous story of a man who suddenly finds himself the unexpected owner of a new horse. His neighbors congratulate him on his good fortune, until his son falls from the horse and breaks his leg. The man's neighbors then act to console him on his bad fortune, until army conscriptors arrive and carry off all the able-bodied young men, leaving the injured young man behind as worthless. The lesson of the story is that when an event occurs, we are quick to judge it as fortunate or unfortunate, but our judgments are often mistaken, as later events often prove.6 And one of the most heavily stressed lessons of the Chuang-tzu is that humans quickly judge events on the basis of what we accept on the basis of simplistic assumptions — e.g., that life is inherently better than death — and that the wise person learns to question and discard such assumptions, and forego such judgments regarding events. When Chuang-tzu's wife died, Chuang-tzu does not argue that the world is a better place for her absence, or that his life is improved by his sudden new freedom. In fact, there is no issue in the passage of whether the world is better off with Chuang-tzu's wife alive or dead. The only issue in the passage is that people are born and that people later die, and to ignore that basic fact would display culpable stupidity. The very same lesson is impressed upon the reader of the previous passage, regarding the sudden transformation of a character's elbow. What we are taught in that passage is that life is a process of ineluctable change and transformation, and that humans would be profoundly wrong and clearly silly to object to such change. Another element of the lesson is that the nature of human life is not separate from, or other than, the nature of nonhuman life. When one says that "life is ineluctable change, and we must accept such change with serenity," one is speaking about "life" in such a way that it clearly involves the lives of individual humans just as fully as it involves the events that occur in the broader world, and vice versa. Imagine the story of the death of Chuang-tzu's wife involving, instead, the death of the species we call whooping cranes: Chuang-tzu would, in that case, patiently point out to his deeply caring but deeply shallow friend that he had indeed felt grief to see such beautiful birds come to their end, but had gone on to engage in appropriate rational reflection upon the nature of life, and had come to accept the transitory nature of all such creatures, just as in the present story Chuang-tzu had come to accept the transitory nature of his own spouse. If one must learn to accept with serenity the death of someone we love, someone without whose life our own life would have never been what it is, wouldn't the author urge us to accept that the death of some birds, birds that have never played a role in our lives the way that one's deceased spouse had done, is an event that we should accept with equanimity? If change catches up with us, even to the extent that the planet that we live on should become permanently devoid of all forms of life, the response of the author of these passages would logically be that **such is the nature of things**, and that crying over such a sudden turn of events would be very silly indeed, like a child crying over a spilt glass of milk, or the death of some easily replaceable goldfish. The only reason that a child cries over the death of a goldfish is that he or she has become irrationally attached to that creature as it exists in its present form, and has formed an immature sentimental bond to it. As adults, we appreciate the color and motion of fish in our aquaria, but seldom cry over the death of one of its inmates: we know very well that to cry over the death of such a fish would be silly and a sign of juvenile behavior. As our children grow, we teach them, likewise, never to follow their raw emotional responses, but rather to govern their emotions, and to learn to behave in a responsible manner, according to principles that are morally correct, whether or not they are emotionally satisfying. If, for instance, one were to see a driver accidentally run over one's child or beloved, one's first instinct might be to attack the driver with a righteous fury, falsely equating emotional intensity and violent action with the responsible exercise of moral judgment. In general, we work to teach ourselves and each other not to respond in that way, to take a course of self-restraint, curbing emotion, lest it propel us into actions that will later, upon calm reflection, be revealed to have been emotionally satisfying but morally wrong. If I saw my child run down by a car, it might give me great emotional satisfaction to drag the driver from her car and beat her to death. But it might well turn out that she had in fact done nothing wrong, and had been driving legally and quite responsibly when a careless child suddenly ran into her path, giving her no time to stop or to evade the child. Because we have all learned that the truth of events is often not apparent to the parties that are experiencing them, we generally work to learn some degree of self-control, so that our immediate emotional reaction to events does not mislead us into a foolish course of action. Now if we take these facts and transfer them into our consideration of Chuang-tzu and Mencius on the riverbank, that episode should, logically, be read as follows. If Mencius feels an emotional urge to jump into the river to save the baby, his emotional response to the baby's presence there must be seen as immature and irresponsible. After all, one might muse, one never knows, any more than the man with the horse, when an event that seems fortunate is actually unfortunate, or vice versa. What if the baby in the water had been the ancient Chinese equivalent of Adolf Hitler, and the saving of young Adolf — though occasioned by the deepest feelings of compassion, and a deep-felt veneration for "life" — led to the systematic extermination of millions of innocent men, women, and children? If one knew, in retrospect, that Hitler's atrocities could have been totally prevented by the simple moral act of refraining from leaping to save an endangered child, would one not conclude, by sound moral reasoning, that letting that particular baby drown would have represented a supremely moral act? How, Chuang-tzu constantly challenges us, **how can we possibly know what course of action is truly justified?** What if, just for the sake of argument, a dreadful plague soon wipes out millions of innocent people, and the pathogen involved is soon traced back to an organism that had once dwelt harmlessly in the system of a certain species of bird, such as, for instance, the whooping crane? In retrospect, one can imagine, the afflicted people of the next century — bereft of their wives or husbands, parents or children — might curse the day when simple-minded do-gooders of the twentieth-century had brazenly intervened with the natural course of events and preserved the cursed specied of crane, thereby damning millions of innocents to suffering and death. We assume that such could never happen, that all living things are somehow inherently good to have on the planet, that saving the earthly existence of any life-form is somehow inherently a virtuous action. But our motivations in such cases are clearly, from a Taoist point of view, so shallow and foolish as to warrant no respect. If Mencius, or a sentimental modern lover of "life," were to leap into the river and save a floating baby, he or she would doubtless exult in his or her selfless act of moral heroism, deriving a sense of satisfaction from having done a good deed, and having prevented a terrible tragedy. But who can really know when a given event is truly a tragedy, or perhaps, like the horse that breaks a boy's leg, really a blessing in disguise. Since human wisdom, Chuang-tzu suggests, is inherently incapable of successfully comprehending the true meaning of events as they are happening, when can we ever truly know that our emotional urge to save babies, pretty birds, and entertaining sea-mammals is really an urge that is morally sound. The Taoist answer seems to be that we can never be sure, and **even if the extinction** of Chuangtzu's wife or of the whooping crane really **brought no actual blessing to the world, such events are natural and proper in the way of life itself, and to bemoan such events is to show that one is no more insightful about life than a child who sentimentally cries over the loss of a toy**, a glass of milk, a beloved pet, or even her mommy, run over by a drunken driver. The Taoist lesson seems, in this regard, to be the same in each case: things happen, and some things cause us distress because we attach ourselves sentimentally to certain people, objects, and patterns of life; when those people, objects, or patterns of life take a sudden or drastic turn into a very different direction, a mature and responsible person calms his or her irrational emotions, and takes the morally responsible course of simply **accepting the new state of things**.

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#### A. Interpretation—the aff has to defend USFG action energy production—‘resolved’ means to enact a policy by law.

Words and Phrases 64 (Permanent Edition)

Definition of the word “resolve,” given by Webster is “to express an opinion or determination by resolution or vote; as ‘it was resolved by the legislature;” It is of similar force to the word “enact,” which is defined by Bouvier as meaning “to establish by law”.

#### B. Our interpretation is best ---

#### 1. Predictability—ignoring the resolution opens up an infinite number of topics—this undermines our ability to have in-depth research on their arguments destroying the value of debate.

#### 2. Ground—the resolution exists to create fair division of aff and neg ground—any alternative framework allows the aff to pick a moral high ground that destroys neg offense.

#### 3. Education—academics must learn to engage the public’s line of thinking—abstract moralism without addressing how to get our policies passed is useless.

Isaac 2—Jeffrey Isaac, Professor of Political Science at Indiana University [Spring 2002, “Ends, Means, and Politics,” *Dissent*, http://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/?article=601]

What is striking about much of the political discussion on the left today is its failure to engage this earlier tradition of argument. The left, particularly the campus left—by which I mean “progressive” faculty and student groups, often centered around labor solidarity organizations and campus Green affiliates—has become moralistic rather than politically serious. Some of its moralizing—about Chiapas, Palestine, and Iraq—continues the third worldism that plagued the New Left in its waning years. Some of it—about globalization and sweatshops— is new and in some ways promising (see my “Thinking About the Antisweatshop Movement,” Dissent, Fall 2001). But what characterizes much campus left discourse is a substitution of moral rhetoric about evil policies or institutions for a sober consideration of what might improve or replace them, how the improvement might be achieved, **and what the likely costs**, as well as the benefits, **are of any reasonable strategy**. One consequence of this tendency is a failure to worry about methods of securing political support through democratic means or to recognize the distinctive value of democracy itself. It is not that conspiratorial or antidemocratic means are promoted. On the contrary, the means employed tend to be preeminently democratic—petitions, demonstrations, marches, boycotts, corporate campaigns, vigorous public criticism. And it is not that political democracy is derided. Projects such as the Green Party engage with electoral politics, locally and nationally, in order to win public office and achieve political objectives. But what is absent is a sober reckoning with the preoccupations and opinions of **the vast majority of Americans**, who are not drawn to vocal denunciations of the International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organization and **who do not believe that the discourse of “anti-imperialism” speaks to their lives**. Equally absent is critical thinking about why citizens of liberal democratic states—including most workers and the poor—value liberal democracy and subscribe to what Jürgen Habermas has called “constitutional patriotism”: a patriotic identification with the democratic state because of the civil, political, and social rights it defends. Vicarious identifications with Subcommandante Marcos or starving Iraqi children allow left activists to express a genuine solidarity with the oppressed elsewhere that is surely legitimate in a globalizing age. But these symbolic avowals are not an effective way of contending for political influence or power in the society in which these activists live. The ease with which the campus left responded to September 11 by rehearsing an all too-familiar narrative of American militarism and imperialism is not simply disturbing. **It is a sign of this left’s alienation from the society in which it operates** (the worst examples of this are statements of the Student Peace Action Coalition Network, which declare that “the United States Government is the world’s greatest terror organization,” and suggest that “homicidal psychopaths of the United States Government” engineered the World Trade Center attacks as a pretext for imperialist aggression. See http://www.gospan.org). Many left activists seem more able to identify with (idealized versions of) Iraqi or Afghan civilians than with American citizens, whether these are the people who perished in the Twin Towers or the rest of us who legitimately fear that we might be next. This is not because of any “disloyalty.” Charges like that lack intellectual or political merit. It is because of a debilitating moralism; because it is easier to denounce wrong than to take real responsibility for correcting it, easier to locate and to oppose a remote evil than to address a proximate difficulty. The campus left says what it thinks. But it exhibits little interest in how and why so many Americans think differently. The “peace” demonstrations organized across the country within a few days of the September 11 attacks—in which local Green Party activists often played a crucial role—were, whatever else they were, a sign of their organizers’ lack of judgment and common sense. Although they often expressed genuine horror about the terrorism, they focused their energy not on the legitimate fear and outrage of American citizens but rather on the evils of the American government and its widely supported response to the terror. Hardly anyone was paying attention, but they alienated anyone who was. This was utterly predictable. And that is my point. The predictable consequences did not matter. What mattered was simply the expression of righteous indignation about what is wrong with the United States, as if September 11 hadn’t really happened. Whatever one thinks about America’s deficiencies, it must be acknowledged that a political praxis preoccupation with this is foolish and self-defeating. The other, more serious consequence of this moralizing tendency is the failure to think seriously about global politics. The campus left is rightly interested in the ills of global capitalism. But politically it seems limited to two options: expressions of “solidarity” with certain oppressed groups—Palestinians but not Syrians, Afghan civilians (though not those who welcome liberation from the Taliban), but not Bosnians or Kosovars or Rwandans—and automatic opposition to American foreign policy in the name of anti-imperialism. The economic discourse of the campus left is a universalist discourse of human needs and workers rights; but it is accompanied by a refusal to think in political terms about the realities of states, international institutions, violence, and power. This refusal is linked to a peculiar strain of pacifism, according to which any use of military force by the United States is viewed as aggression or militarism. case in point is a petition circulated on the campus of Indiana University within days of September 11. Drafted by the Bloomington Peace Coalition, it opposed what was then an imminent war in Afghanistan against al-Qaeda, and called for peace. It declared: “Retaliation will not lead to healing; rather it will harm innocent people and further the cycle of violence. Rather than engage in military aggression, those in authority should apprehend and charge those individuals believed to be directly responsible for the attacks and try them in a court of law in accordance with due process of international law.” This declaration was hardly unique. Similar statements were issued on college campuses across the country, by local student or faculty coalitions, the national Campus Greens, 9- 11peace.org, and the National Youth and Student Peace Coalition. As Global Exchange declared in its antiwar statement of September 11: “vengeance offers no relief. . . retaliation can never guarantee healing. . . and to meet violence with violence breeds more rage and more senseless deaths. Only love leads to peace with justice, while hate takes us toward war and injustice.” On this view military action of any kind is figured as “aggression” or “vengeance”; harm to innocents, whether substantial or marginal, intended or unintended, is absolutely proscribed; legality is treated as having its own force, independent of any means of enforcement; and, most revealingly, “healing” is treated as the principal goal of any legitimate response. None of these points withstands serious scrutiny. A military response to terrorist aggression is not in any obvious sense an act of aggression, unless any military response—or at least any U.S. military response—is simply defined as aggression. While any justifiable military response should certainly be governed by just-war principles, the criterion of absolute harm avoidance would rule out the possibility of any military response. It is virtually impossible either to “apprehend” and prosecute terrorists or to put an end to terrorist networks without the use of military force, for the “criminals” in question are not law-abiding citizens but mass murderers, and there are no police to “arrest” them. And, finally, while “healing” is surely a legitimate moral goal, it is not clear that it is a political goal. Justice, however, most assuredly is a political goal. The most notable thing about the Bloomington statement is its avoidance of political justice. Like many antiwar texts, it calls for “social justice abroad.” It supports redistributing wealth. But criminal and retributive justice, protection against terrorist violence, or the political enforcement of the minimal conditions of global civility—these are unmentioned. They are unmentioned because to broach them is to enter a terrain that the campus left is unwilling to enter—the terrain of violence, a realm of complex choices and dirty hands. This aversion to violence is understandable and in some ways laudable. America’s use of violence has caused much harm in the world, from Southeast Asia to Central and Latin America to Africa. The so-called “Vietnam Syndrome” was the product of a real learning experience that should not be forgotten. In addition, the destructive capacities of modern warfare— which jeopardize the civilian/combatant distinction, and introduce the possibility of enormous ecological devastation—make war under any circumstances something to be feared. No civilized person should approach the topic of war with anything other than great trepidation. And yet the left’s reflexive hostility toward violence in the international domain is strange. It is inconsistent with avowals of “materialism” and evocations of “struggle,” especially on the part of those many who are not pacifists; it is in tension with a commitment to human emancipation (is there no cause for which it is justifiable to fight?); and it is oblivious to the tradition of left thinking about ends and means. To compare the debates within the left about the two world wars or the Spanish Civil War with the predictable “anti-militarism” of today’s campus left is to compare a discourse that was serious about political power with a discourse that is not. This unpragmatic approach has become a hallmark of post–cold war left commentary, from the Gulf War protests of 1991, to the denunciation of the 1999 U.S.-led NATO intervention in Kosovo, to the current post–September 11 antiwar movement. In each case protesters have raised serious questions about U.S. policy and its likely consequences, but in a strikingly ineffective way. They sound a few key themes: the broader context of grievances that supposedly explains why Saddam Hussein, or Slobodan Milosevic, or Osama bin Laden have done what they have done; the hypocrisy of official U.S. rhetoric, which denounces terrorism even though the U.S. government has often supported terrorism; the harm that will come to ordinary Iraqi or Serbian or Afghan citizens as a result of intervention; and the cycle of violence that is likely to ensue. These are important issues. But they typically are raised by left critics not to promote real debate about practical alternatives, but to avoid such a debate or to trump it. As a result, the most important political questions are simply not asked. It is assumed that U.S. military intervention is an act of “aggression,” but no consideration is given to the aggression to which intervention is a response. The status quo ante in Afghanistan is not, as peace activists would have it, peace, but rather terrorist violence abetted by a regime—the Taliban—that rose to power through brutality and repression. This requires us to ask a question that most “peace” activists would prefer not to ask: What should be done to respond to the violence of a Saddam Hussein, or a Milosevic, or a Taliban regime? What means are likely to stop violence and bring criminals to justice? Calls for diplomacy and international law are well intended and important; they implicate a decent and civilized ethic of global order. But they are also vague and empty, because they are not accompanied by any account of how diplomacy or international law can work effectively to address the problem at hand. The campus left offers no such account. To do so would require it to contemplate tragic choices in which moral goodness is of limited utility. Here what matters is not purity of intention but the intelligent exercise of power. Power is not a dirty word or an unfortunate feature of the world. It is the core of politics. Power is the ability to effect outcomes in the world. Politics, in large part, involves contests over the distribution and use of power. To accomplish anything in the political world, one must attend to the means that are necessary to bring it about. And to develop such means is to develop, and to exercise, power. To say this is not to say that power is beyond morality. It is to say that power is not reducible to morality. As writers such as Niccolo Machiavelli, Max Weber, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Hannah Arendt have taught, an unyielding concern with moral goodness undercuts political responsibility. The concern may be morally laudable, reflecting a kind of personal integrity, but it suffers from three fatal flaws: (1) It fails to see that the purity of one’s intention does not ensure the achievement of what one intends. Abjuring violence or refusing to make common cause with morally compromised parties may seem like the right thing; but if such tactics entail impotence, then it is hard to view them as serving any moral good beyond the clean conscience of their supporters; (2) it fails to see that in a world of real violence and injustice, moral purity is not simply a form of powerlessness; it is often a form of complicity in injustice. This is why, from the standpoint of politics—as opposed to religion—pacifism is always a potentially immoral stand. In categorically repudiating violence, it refuses in principle to oppose certain violent injustices with any effect; and (3) it fails to see that politics is as much about unintended consequences as it is about intentions; it is the effects of action, rather than the motives of action, that is most significant. Just as the alignment with “good” may engender impotence, it is often the pursuit of “good” that generates evil. This is the lesson of communism in the twentieth century: **it is not enough that one’s goals be sincere or idealistic; it is equally important, always, to ask about the effects of pursuing these goals** and to judge these effects in pragmatic and historically contextualized ways. Moral absolutism inhibits this judgment. It alienates those who are not true believers. It promotes arrogance. And it undermines political effectiveness.

#### C. Voting issue—resolving the topicality is a pre-condition for debate to occur.

Shively 2k—Ruth Lessl Shively, Assistant Prof Political Science, Texas A&M University [Partisan Politics and Political Theory, p. 181-2]

The requirements given thus far are primarily negative. The ambiguists must say "no" to-they must reject and limit-some ideas and actions. In what follows, we will also find that they must say "yes" to some things. In particular, they must say "yes" to the idea of rational persuasion. This means, first, that they must recognize the role of agreement in political contest, or the basic accord that is necessary to discord. The mistake that the ambiguists make here is a common one. The mistake is in thinking that agreement marks the end of contest-that consensus kills debate. But this is true only if the agreement is perfect-if there is nothing at all left to question or contest. In most cases, however, our agreements are highly imperfect. We agree on some matters but not on others, on generalities but not on specifics, on principles but not on their applications, and so on. And this kind of limited agreement is the starting condition of contest and debate. As John Courtney Murray writes: We hold certain truths; therefore we can argue about them. It seems to have been one of the corruptions of intelligence by positivism to assume that argument ends when agreement is reached. In a basic sense, the reverse is true. There can be no argument except on the premise, and within a context, of agreement. (Murray 1960, 10) In other words, **we cannot argue about something** if we are not communicating: **if we cannot agree on the topic and terms of argument** **or if we have utterly different ideas about what counts as evidence or good argument**. At the very least, we must agree about what it is that is being debated before we can debate it. For instance, one cannot have an argument about euthanasia with someone who thinks euthanasia is a musical group. One cannot successfully stage a sit-in if one's target audience simply thinks everyone is resting or if those doing the sitting have no complaints. Nor can one demonstrate resistance to a policy if no one knows that it is a policy. In other words, contest is **meaningless** if there is a lack of agreement or communication about what is being contested. Resisters, demonstrators, and **debaters** **must** have some shared ideas about the subject and/or the terms of their disagreements. The participants and the target of a sit-in must share an understanding of the complaint at hand. And a demonstrator's audience must know what is being resisted. In short, the contesting of an idea presumes some agreement about what that idea is and how one might go about intelligibly contesting it. In other words, contestation rests on some basic agreement or harmony.

#### They’ll say that our argument is exclusionary, but they have excluded us from the debate—basic fairness is a reason to vote negative.

Galloway 7 — Ryan Galloway, Assistant Professor and Director of Debate at Samford University, 2007 (“Dinner and Conversation at the Argumentative Table: Re-Conceptualizing Debate As An Argumentative Dialogue,” *Contemporary Argumentation & Debate*, Volume 28, September, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via Academic Search Premier, p. 12)

While affirmative teams often accuse the negative of using a juridical rule to exclude them, the affirmative also relies upon **an unstated rule** to **exclude the negative response**. This unstated but understood rule is that the negative speech act must serve to negate the affirmative act. Thus, affirmative teams often exclude **an entire range of negative arguments**, including arguments designed to challenge the hegemony, domination, and oppression inherent in topical approaches to the resolution. Becoming more than just a ritualistic tag-line of “fairness, education, time skew, voting issue,” **fairness exists in the implicit right to be heard in a meaningful way**. Ground is just that—**a ground to stand on**, **a ground to speak from**, **a ground by which to meaningfully contribute to an ongoing conversation**.

#### And fairness comes first—absent fairness, debate as an activity would cease to exist.

Speice and Lyle 3 — Patrick Speice, Debater at Wake Forest University, and Jim Lyle, Director of Debate at Clarion University, 2003 (“Traditional Policy Debate: Now More Than Ever,” *Debater’s Research Guide*, Available Online at http://groups.wfu.edu/debate/ MiscSites/DRGArticles/SpeiceLyle2003htm.htm, Accessed 09-11-2005)

As with any game or sport, creating a level playing field that affords each competitor a fair chance of victory is integral to the continued existence of debate as an activity. If the game is slanted toward one particular competitor, the other participants are likely to pack up their tubs and go home, as they don’t have a realistic shot of winning such a “rigged game.” Debate simply wouldn’t be fun if the outcome was pre-determined and certain teams knew that they would always win or lose. The incentive to work hard to develop new and innovative arguments would be non-existent because wins and losses would not relate to how much research a particular team did. TPD, as defined above, offers the best hope for a level playing field that makes the game of debate fun and educational for all participants.

#### They’ll say limits are bad, but constraints are more conducive to creative thinking—following the rules is key to innovation.

Gibbert et al. 7 — Michael Gibbert, Assistant Professor of Management at Bocconi University (Italy), et al., with Martin Hoeglis, Professor of Leadership and Human Resource Management at WHU—Otto Beisheim School of Management (Germany), and Lifsa Valikangas, Professor of Innovation Management at the Helsinki School of Economics (Finland) and Director of the Woodside Institute, 2007 (“In Praise of Resource Constraints,” *MIT Sloan Management Review*, Spring, Available Online at https://umdrive.memphis.edu/gdeitz/public/The%20Moneyball%20Hypothesis/Gibbert%20et%20al.%20-%20SMR%20(2007)%20Praise%20Resource%20Constraints.pdf, Accessed 04-08-2012, p. 15-16)

Resource constraints can also fuel innovative team performance directly. In the spirit of the proverb "necessity is the mother of invention," [end page 15] teams may produce better results because of resource constraints. Cognitive psychology provides experimental support for the "less is more" hypothesis. For example, scholars in creative cognition find in laboratory tests that subjects are most innovative when given fewer rather than more resources for solving a problem.

The reason seems to be that the human mind is most productive when restricted. Limited—or better focused—by specific rules and constraints, we are more likely to recognize an unexpected idea. Suppose, for example, that we need to put dinner on the table for unexpected guests arriving later that day. The main constraints here are the ingredients available and how much time is left. One way to solve this problem is to think of a familiar recipe and then head off to the supermarket for the extra ingredients. Alternatively, we may start by looking in the refrigerator and cupboard to see what is already there, then allowing ourselves to devise innovative ways of combining subsets of these ingredients. Many cooks attest that the latter option, while riskier, often leads to more creative and better appreciated dinners. In fact, it is the option invariably preferred by professional chefs.

The heightened innovativeness of such "constraints-driven" solutions comes from team members' tendencies, under the circumstances, to look for alternatives beyond "how things are normally done," write C. Page Moreau and Darren W. Dahl in a 2005 Journal of Consumer Research article. Would-be innovators facing constraints are more likely to find creative analogies and combinations that would otherwise be hidden under a glut of resources.

### 1NC—DA

#### Obama will win—key states, electoral votes, Nate Silver, and Intrade.

Lobe 9/8/12—Washington Bureau Chief of the International News Agency Inter Press Service (IPS), JD Berkeley [Jim Lobe, U.S.: Advantage Obama As Election Begins in Earnest, <http://www.ipsnews.net/2012/09/u-s-advantage-obama-as-election-begins-in-earnest/>]

Despite persistent high levels of unemployment and some 60 percent of the electorate telling pollsters that the country is headed “in the wrong direction”, most political analysts believe that Obama enters the final 60 days of the race with a leg up over his challenger.

The latest Gallup poll, released just hours after Obama’s acceptance speech Thursday night at the Democratic convention in Charlotte, North Carolina—another key swing state—showed Obama with a 48-45 percent lead over Romney and with a 52-percent overall job approval rating, his highest since June 2011, when he was still basking in the afterglow of the successful U.S. commando raid that killed Al-Qaeda’s chief, Osama bin Laden—an event to which many speakers referred repeatedly during the proceedings.

Gallup suggested in its analysis that Obama appeared likely to benefit from a bigger post-convention “bounce” in the polls than Romney received after the Republican convention in Tampa, Florida, the week before. Indeed, Romney’s “bounce” coming off the convention was virtually non-existent, according to the polls.

Because the president is not elected by the popular vote, however, both political experts and the two campaigns are focused much more on the swing states—those that are considered neither solidly Republican (red) nor Democratic (blue)—that will decide outcome.

Instead of a direct popular vote, the president and vice president are actually elected by an “electoral college” in which each state is allocated a certain number of votes based on their representation in the U.S. Congress.

Almost all states use a “winner-take-all” formula in which whatever candidate wins a majority of the state’s vote receives all of that state’s electoral votes. To win, a candidate must receive a total of at least 271 electoral votes in the electoral college.

Thus, the country’s most populous state, California, has 55 electoral votes all of which will, as appears virtually certain given California’s strongly Democratic electorate, be cast in Obama’s favour. The second-most populous state, Texas, has 38 electoral votes all of which, given the state’s strongly Republican cast, will almost certainly go to Romney.

According to most political analysts, including Republicans, Obama enjoys a significant advantage in the electoral contest.

Current polling shows Romney and his running-mate, Wisconsin Rep. Joe Ryan, with a decisive lead in more states, especially in the Midwest and the Southeast, than Obama and Vice President Joe Biden. But the combined electoral votes of those solidly Republican states come to less than those—including California, New York, New Jersey, Illinois, and Washington State—where the Democratic ticket is considered sure to win.

Different analysts disagree on precisely what constitutes a decisive lead. CNN, for example, currently estimates 237 electoral votes are either solidly in or leaning strongly toward Obama’s column, compared to 191 in Romney’s. Estimates by the Congressional Quarterly a week ago yielded a closer result—201-191.

Analysts likewise disagree on how many toss-up, or swing, states remain. Going into this week’s Democratic convention, CNN named seven states—Florida, Virginia, New Hampshire, Ohio, Iowa, Colorado, and Nevada as true toss-ups. It found four other states—North Carolina, Indiana, Missouri, and Arizona—“leaning” to the Republican ticket, and four more—New Mexico, Wisconsin (despite Ryan’s candidacy), Michigan, and Pennsylvania—“leaning” toward Obama.

If the leaning states fell into their respective columns, Obama would lead Romney by a 247-206 margin and put him within relatively easy striking distance of the magic 271 electoral votes needed to win.

The fact that Obama swept all seven of the remaining toss-up states in 2008 is seen here as making Romney’s task considerably more difficult, particularly given the growing voting strength of Latinos—whose appeals for immigration reform were soundly rebuffed at the Republican convention—in Nevada and Colorado—and concerns among the substantial numbers of retired and elderly voters in Florida about what the Republicans intend to do about the Social Security and Medicare programmes.

In addition, the commitment of former President Bill Clinton—the only living national politician with a 70-percent approval rating whose rousing nomination speech for Obama Thursday fired up the convention in Charlotte and drew rave reviews from all but the most right-wing commentators—to play an active role in the campaign, especially in the industrial swing states, could help shore up support for Obama among white male—especially blue-collar — voters who, of all demographic groups, are seen as most susceptible to Romney’s appeals.

Indeed, those who are actually betting money on the race give Obama much better odder than the polls would suggest. As of Friday, Intrade, the main U.S. on-line betting site, is giving Obama a 59-percent chance of winning, up from a mid-June low of around 54 percent.

The New York Times’ polling guru, Nate Silver, who pays closest attention to state polling, rates Obama’s chances of winning even higher. While Obama will win 51.3 percent of the popular vote Nov 6, Silver estimated Friday, the electoral margin is likely be 313-225 margin. Based on his statistical methods, Silver, the accuracy of whose predictions in the 2008 election persuaded the Times to hire him, is currently estimating Obama’s chances of winning at 77.3 percent.

Of course, all of these predictions could still be upset by a number of intervening factors, such as a sharp rise in unemployment, which is still running at more than eight percent, or a major international crisis, although Obama appears far more eager to inject foreign-policy issues into the campaign than Romney whose failure to praise the U.S. military in his nomination acceptance speech in Tampa was widely criticised, even by fellow-Republicans.

#### The aff obviously gets people pissed at Obama—they incentivize death. No one would ever vote for him.

#### Romney will undermine Russia relations

Larison 6/27/12—Columnist for the American Conservative [Daniel Larison “U.S.-Russian Relations Would Get Much Worse Under Romney” http://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/u-s-russian-relations-would-get-much-worse-under-romney/]

Putin doesn’t actually want a “hard-line conservative in the White House.” Putin distrusts the U.S. because he believes that the Bush administration behaved in an ungrateful and untrustworthy fashion in the previous decade, and U.S.-Russian relations improved as much as they did because the current administration seemed to be more reliable. U.S.-Russian relations reached their lowest point in the last twenty years in no small part because of a “more active U.S. policy” toward the Middle East, the South Caucasus, and central Europe. Putin might be willing to deal with a more hard-line American President, but only so long as it this translated into tangible gains for Russia. Provided that the hard-liner was willing to live up to his end of the bargain, there could be some room for agreement, but there isn’t any. Since Romney’s Russia policy is essentially to never make any deals with the current Russian government, Putin doesn’t have much of an incentive to cooperate. That will guarantee that U.S.-Russian relations will deteriorate much more than they have in the last year.

#### Nuclear war—Terrorism, Prolif, multiple hotspots, turns case

Allison 11—Director @ Belfer Center for Science and Int’l Affairs @ Harvard’s Kennedy School, Former Assistant Secretary of Defense, Robert D. Blackwill, Senior Fellow—Council on Foreign Relations [Graham Allison, “10 Reasons Why Russia Still Matters”, Politico -- October 31 -- <http://dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=161EF282-72F9-4D48-8B9C-C5B3396CA0E6>]

That central point is that Russia matters a great deal to a U.S. government seeking to defend and advance its national interests. Prime Minister Vladimir Putin’s decision to return next year as president makes it all the more critical for Washington to manage its relationship with Russia through coherent, realistic policies. No one denies that Russia is a dangerous, difficult, often disappointing state to do business with. We should not overlook its many human rights and legal failures. Nonetheless, Russia is a player whose choices affect our vital interests in nuclear security and energy. It is key to supplying 100,000 U.S. troops fighting in Afghanistan and preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Ten realities require U.S. policymakers to advance our nation’s interests by engaging and working with Moscow. First, Russia remains the only nation that can erase the United States from the map in 30 minutes. As every president since John F. Kennedy has recognized, Russia’s cooperation is critical to averting nuclear war. Second, Russia is our most consequential partner in preventing nuclear terrorism. Through a combination of more than $11 billion in U.S. aid, provided through the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, and impressive Russian professionalism, two decades after the collapse of the “evil empire,” not one nuclear weapon has been found loose. Third, Russia plays an essential role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and missile-delivery systems. As Washington seeks to stop Iran’s drive toward nuclear weapons, Russian choices to sell or withhold sensitive technologies are the difference between failure and the possibility of success. Fourth, Russian support in sharing intelligence and cooperating in operations remains essential to the U.S. war to destroy Al Qaeda and combat other transnational terrorist groups. Fifth, Russia provides a vital supply line to 100,000 U.S. troops fighting in Afghanistan. As U.S. relations with Pakistan have deteriorated, the Russian lifeline has grown ever more important and now accounts for half all daily deliveries. Sixth, Russia is the world’s largest oil producer and second largest gas producer. Over the past decade, Russia has added more oil and gas exports to world energy markets than any other nation. Most major energy transport routes from Eurasia start in Russia or cross its nine time zones. As citizens of a country that imports two of every three of the 20 million barrels of oil that fuel U.S. cars daily, Americans feel Russia’s impact at our gas pumps. Seventh, Moscow is an important player in today’s international system. It is no accident that Russia is one of the five veto-wielding, permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, as well as a member of the G-8 and G-20. A Moscow more closely aligned with U.S. goals would be significant in the balance of power to shape an environment in which China can emerge as a global power without overturning the existing order. Eighth, Russia is the largest country on Earth by land area, abutting China on the East, Poland in the West and the United States across the Arctic. This territory provides transit corridors for supplies to global markets whose stability is vital to the U.S. economy. Ninth, Russia’s brainpower is reflected in the fact that it has won more Nobel Prizes for science than all of Asia, places first in most math competitions and dominates the world chess masters list. The only way U.S. astronauts can now travel to and from the International Space Station is to hitch a ride on Russian rockets. The co-founder of the most advanced digital company in the world, Google, is Russian-born Sergei Brin. Tenth, Russia’s potential as a spoiler is difficult to exaggerate. Consider what a Russian president intent on frustrating U.S. international objectives could do — from stopping the supply flow to Afghanistan to selling S-300 air defense missiles to Tehran to joining China in preventing U.N. Security Council resolutions. So next time you hear a policymaker dismissing Russia with rhetoric about “who cares?” ask them to identify nations that matter more to U.S. success, or failure, in advancing our national interests.

### 1NC—CP

#### Text: the United States Federal Government should substantially reduce restrictions on and substantially increase ritual blood orgies to increase solar energy production.

#### This is the “don’t give incentives for anything” counterplan: the United States federal government should give.

#### The plan text only gives *incentives in exchange for energy production*. This ties their gift to the logic of exchange instead of true sacrifice and expenditure.

John Fortuna, Ph.d candidate in Political Philosophy and International Relations, UC-Santa Barbara, “Loss and Sacrifice in the Thought of Georges Bataille (And their Political Implications),” Prepared for the Conference of the Western Political Science Association, March 19-21, 2009, http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p317285\_index.html

Bataille makes precisely this point in Inner Experience where he specifically distinguishes sacrifice from project, claiming that the former is the opposite of the latter. Bataille continues on to explain some of the differences between sacrifice and project, pointing out that "whereas, in project, the result alone counts, in sacrifice, it is **in the act itself that value is concentrated**. Nothing in sacrifice is **put off until later**—it has the power to **contest everything at the instant that it takes place**, to summon everything, to render everything present” (Bataille 1988a, 137). As was pointed out earlier, one of the problems associated with project for Bataille is that its singular concern for the future resulted in a **perpetual forestalling of existence;** something that sacrifice avoids because of its emphasis upon the present over the future and the placing of value in the **present act and not on some future result.** Contrasting sacrifice to project results in an additional conclusion; namely that sacrifice is to be understood as an **essentially useless activity**. If project is governed by the reign of utility as Bataille has suggested, and sacrifice is the opposite of project, then sacrifice is devoid of utility—it is useless10. But sacrifice is useless in the terms in which utility is understood within the context of a limited and restricted rational economy. The uselessness of sacrifice for Bataille can be understood to mean that sacrifice is not a means to a practical end or purpose; it is **not** **productive or constructive of anything** and hence is an example of a sovereign activity in which the sacred is reintroduced. It is in this sense that Bataille might claim that the sacrifice of the first fruits or an animal is useless; because it serves no practical purpose as understood within the context of a restricted economy. This is obviously not to say that Bataille failed to recognize any consequences or results that stem from sacrifice, but rather as Irwin points out “he did maintain that these aspects were secondary” (Irwin 2002, 14)11.

#### Their utilitarian logic of attaching value to the avoidance of harm is antithetical to the anti-politics of sacrifice. They reinscribe the traditional logic of incentives as part of the *exchange economy*—you get to avoid something bad in exchange for your ballot.

John Fortuna, Ph.d candidate in Political Philosophy and International Relations, UC-Santa Barbara, “Loss and Sacrifice in the Thought of Georges Bataille (And their Political Implications),” Prepared for the Conference of the Western Political Science Association, March 19-21, 2009, http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p317285\_index.html

As I have argued elsewhere18, the traditional approaches to loss within the west have tended to either avoid the subject altogether, mostly by theorizing a politics in which no one actually experiences loss; or identifying instances of loss and then setting about to provide compensation to those who suffer it. It is certainly the case that neither of these approaches accounts for the experience of sacrificial loss in the manner Bataille seems to be recommending. But Bataille need not have recourse to these arguments about the dismissal of loss within the west; as his general position shows that the emphasis on project(s) *as such*, works to eliminate any legitimate place for the experience of loss—particularly sacrificial loss as a kind of unproductive expenditure. The realm of project, with its all-encompassing logic of utility, must necessarily make no place for loss within its system. The utilitarian logic operating within such a system requires, in order to remain consistent with itself, that loss be understood in a negative manner. Because it cannot be ‘folded into’ a system that seeks a particular end or goal, loss must be characterized as waste; it is **irrational and antithetical to even the *idea* of project.** This is not to say that the world of project and restricted economy cannot comprehend the appearance of loss; only that such a comprehension must necessarily be negative. Loss, from this perspective, is something that is to be avoided if at all possible and if not, to be minimized to the extent one is able to do so.

#### Turns the case

John Fortuna, Ph.d candidate in Political Philosophy and International Relations, UC-Santa Barbara, “Loss and Sacrifice in the Thought of Georges Bataille (And their Political Implications),” Prepared for the Conference of the Western Political Science Association, March 19-21, 2009, http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p317285\_index.html

Such an understanding of loss provides a unique though difficult alternative to the typical ways in which loss, particularly sacrificial loss, is understood within the contemporary political context. It is usually the case that calls for sacrifice, when made at all, are couched in a rhetoric that at least implicitly seeks to **sell** that call to sacrifice. In other words, calls to sacrifice (and hence calls to lose) are often accompanied with arguments and explanations of the **eventual gains that will result** from the sacrificial loss that one is being asked to currently undergo. The Bataillean position would **reject** such attempts to sell others on sacrifice for a number of reasons, perhaps the most important of which is that these attempts misrepresent what it means to sacrifice in the first place. Sacrifice and loss for Bataille **have nothing in common with an economic rationale that thinks only in terms of means/ends relationships.** By separating sacrifice and loss from a logic of utility Bataille at the very least clarifies what it really means to engage in a sacrifice. Sacrifice is no longer simply a stand-in for what is really an economic logic of trade-offs. Bataille clearly means to highlight the anguish and pain involved in sacrificial loss by incorporating the figure of death into his analysis. Just as physical death represents a kind of ultimate finality, the loss experienced in sacrifice is similarly final—one does not relinquish in sacrifice with the thought of what one might gain from doing so; it is rather the case that one simply sacrifices. Sacrifice is not about trading off one good or value in favor of another; but instead consists in the **absolute relinquishment** of a given good or value—and the mental and psychological states which accompany such a relinquishment. Conceptualizing loss in this way more accurately illuminates for citizens what is really at stake when the operation of politics may at certain times ask, and at other times command, that one engage in sacrifice20.

### Case

#### Death is the ultimate evil—it is a metaphysical lightning strike that obliterates what it is to be human in our present state—there is no possible warrant for their argument

**Paterson, 03** - Department of Philosophy, Providence College, Rhode Island (Craig, “A Life Not Worth

Living?”, Studies in Christian Ethics, <http://sce.sagepub.com>)

Contrary to those accounts, I would argue that it is **death** per se that is really the objective evil for us, not because it deprives us of a prospective future of overall good judged better than the alternative of non-being. It cannot be about harm to a former person who has ceased to exist, for no person actually suffers from the sub-sequent non-participation. Rather, death in itself is an evil to us because it ontologically destroys the current existent subject **— it is the ultimate in metaphysical lightening strikes.** 80 The evil of death is truly an ontological evil borne by the person who already exists, **independently of calculations about better or worse possible lives.** Such an evil need not be consciously experienced in order to be an evil **for the kind of being a human person is**. Death is an evil because of the change in kind it brings about**, a change that is destructive of the type of entity that we essentially are**. Anything, whether caused naturally or caused by human intervention (intentional or unintentional) that drastically interferes in the process of maintaining the person in existence is an objective evil for the person. What is crucially at stake here, and is dialectically supportive of the self-evidency of the basic good of human life, is that death is a **radical interference** with the current life process of the kind of being that we are. In consequence, death itself can be credibly thought of as a ‘primitive evil’ for all persons, **regardless of the extent to which they are currently or prospectively capable of participating in a full array of the goods of life.** 81 In conclusion, concerning willed human actions, it is justifiable to state that **any intentional rejection of human life** itself **cannot therefore be warranted** since it is **an expression of an ultimate disvalue for the subject**, namely, **the destruction of the present person; a radical ontological good that we cannot begin to weigh objectively against the travails of life in a rational manner**. To deal with the sources of disvalue (pain, suffering, etc.) **we should not seek to irrationally destroy the person, the very source and condition of all human possibility.**

#### Yes value to life. Our status as beings inheres an affirmation of life in the face of extinction and nonbeing.

**Bernstein ‘2** (Richard J., Vera List Prof. Phil. – New School for Social Research, “Radical Evil: A Philosophical Interrogation”, p. 188-192)

This is precisely what Jonas does in The Phenomenon of Life, his rethinking of the meaning of organic life. He tealizes that his philosophical project goes against many of the deeply embedded prejudices and dogmas of contemporary philosophy. He challenges two well-entrenched dogmas: that there is no metaphysical truth, and that there is no path from the "is" to the "ought". To escape from ethical nihilism, we must show that there is a metaphysical ground of ethics, an objective basis for valueand purpose in being itself. These are strong claims; and, needless to say, they are extremely controversial. In defense of Jonas, it should be said that he approaches this task with both boldness and intellectual modesty. He frequently acknowledges that he cannot "prove" his claims, but he certainly believes that his "premises" do "more justice to the total phenomenon of man and Being in general" than the prevailing dualist or reductionist alternatives. "But in the last analysis my argument can do no more than give a rational grounding to an option it presents as a choice for a thoughtful person — an option that of course has its own inner power of persuasion. Unfortunately I have nothing better to offer. Perhaps a future metaphysics will be able to do more." 8 To appreciate how Jonas's philosophical project unfolds, we need to examine his philosophical interpretation of life. This is the starting point of his grounding of a new imperative of responsibility. It also provides the context for his speculations concerning evil. In the foreword to The Phenomenon of Life, Jonas gives a succinct statement of his aim. Put at its briefest, this volume offers an "existential" interpretation of biological facts. Contemporary existentialism, obsessed with man alone, is in the habit of claiming as his unique privilege and predicament much of what is rooted in organic existence as such: in so doing, it withholds from the organic world the insights to be learned from the awareness of self. On its part, scientific biology, by its rules confined to the physical, outward facts, must ignore the dimension of inwardness that belongs to life: in so doing, it submerges the distinction of "animate" and "inanimate." A new reading of the biological record may recover the inner dimension — that which we know best -- for the understanding of things organic and so reclaim for psycho-physical unity of life that place in the theoretical scheme which it had lost through the divorce of the material and the mental since Descartes. p. ix) Jonas, in his existential interpretation of bios, pursues "this underlying theme of all of life in its developmentthrough the ascending order of organic powers and functions: metabolism, moving and desiring, sensing and perceiving, imagination, art, and mind — a progressive scale of freedom and peril, culminating in man, who may understand his uniqueness anew when he no longer sees himself in metaphysical isolation" (PL, p. ix). The way in which Jonas phrases this theme recalls the Aristotelian approach to bios, and it is clear that Aristotle is a major influence on Jonas. There is an even closer affinity with the philosophy of nature that Schelling sought to elaborate in the nineteenth century. Schelling (like many post- Kantian German thinkers) was troubled by the same fundamental dichotomy that underlies the problem for Jonas. The dichotomy that Kant introduced between the realm of "disenchanted" nature and the realm of freedom leads to untenable antinomies. Jonas differs from both Aristotle and Schelling in taking into account Darwin and contemporary scientific biology. A proper philosophical understanding of biology must always be compatible with the scientific facts. But at the same time, it must also root out misguided materialistic and reductionist interpretations of those biological facts. In this respect, Jonas's naturalism bears a strong affinity with the evolutionary naturalism of Peirce and Dewey. At the same time, Jonas is deeply skeptical of any theory of evolutionary biology that introduces mysterious "vital forces" or neglects the contingencies and perils of evolutionary development.' Jonas seeks to show "that it is in the dark stirrings of primeval organic substance that a principle of freedom shines forth for the first time within the vast necessity of the physical universe" (PL 3). Freedom, in this broad sense, is not identified exclusively with human freedom; it reaches down to the first glimmerings of organic life, and up to the type of freedom manifested by human beings. " 'Freedom' must denote an objectively discernible mode of being, i.e., a manner of executing existence, distinctive of the organic per se and thus shared by all members but by no nonmembers of the class: an ontologically descriptive term which can apply to mere physical evidence at first" (PL 3). This coming into being of freedom is not just a success story. "The privilege of freedom carries the burden of need and means precarious being" (PL 4). It is with biological metabolism that this principle of freedom first arises. Jonas goes "so far as to maintain that metabolism, the basic stratum of all organic existence, already displays freedom — indeed that it is the first form freedom takes." 1 ° With "metabolism — its power and its need — not-being made its appearance in the world as an alternative embodied in being itself; and thereby being itself first assumes an emphatic sense: intrinsically qualified by the threat of its negative it must affirm itself, and existence affirmed is existence as a concern" (PL 4). This broad, ontological understanding of freedom as a characteristic of all organic life serves Jonas as "an Ariadne's thread through the interpretation of Life" (PL 3). The way in which Jonas enlarges our understanding of freedom is indicative of his primary argumentative strategy. He expands and reinterprets categories that are normally applied exclusively to human beings so that we can see that they identify objectively discernible modes of being characteristic of everything animate. Even inwardness, and incipient forms of self; reach down to the simplest forms of organic life. 11 Now it may seem as if Jonas is guilty of anthropomorphism, of projecting what is distinctively human onto the entire domain of living beings. He is acutely aware of this sort of objection, but he argues that even the idea of anthropomorphism must be rethought. 12 We distort Jonas's philosophy of life if we think that he is projecting human characteristics onto the nonhuman animate world. Earlier I quoted the passage in which Jonas speaks of a "third way" — "one by which the dualistic rift can be avoided and yet enough of the dualistic insight saved to uphold the humanity of man" (GEN 234). We avoid the "dualistic rift" by showing that there is genuine continuity of organic life, and that such categories as freedom, inwardness, and selfhood apply to everything that is animate. These categories designate objective modes of being. But we preserve "enough dualistic insight" when we recognize that freedom, inwardness, and selfhood manifest themselves in human beings in a distinctive manner. I do not want to suggest that Jonas is successful in carrying out this ambitious program. He is aware of the tentativeness and fallibility of his claims, but he presents us with an understanding of animate beings such that we can discern both continuity and difference.' 3 It should now be clear that Jonas is not limiting himself to a regional philosophy of the organism or a new "existential" interpretation of biological facts. His goal is nothing less than to provide a new metaphysical understanding of being, a new ontology. And he is quite explicit about this. Our reflections [are] intended to show in what sense the problem of life, and with it that of the body, ought to stand in the center of ontology and, to some extent, also of epistemology. . . The central position of the problem of life means not only that it must be accorded a decisive voice in judging any given ontology but also that any treatment of itself must summon the whole of ontology. (PL 25) The philosophical divide between Levinas and Jonas appears to be enormous. For Levinas, as long as we restrict ourselves to the horizon of Being and to ontology (no matter how broadly these are conceived), there is no place for ethics, and no answer to ethical nihilism. For Jonas, by contrast, unless we can enlarge our understanding of ontology in such a manner as would provide an objective grounding for value and purpose within nature, there is no way to answer the challenge of ethical nihilism. But despite this initial appearance of extreme opposition, there is a way of interpreting Jonas and Levinas that lessens the gap between them. In Levinasian terminology, we can say that Jonas shows that there is a way of understanding ontology and the living body that does justice to the nonreducible alterity of the other (l'autrui). 14 Still, we might ask how Jonas's "existential" interpretation of biological facts and the new ontology he is proposing can provide a metaphysical grounding for a new ethics. Jonas criticizes the philosophical prejudice that there is no place in nature for values, purposes, and ends. Just as he maintains that freedom, inwardness, and selfhood are objective modes of being, so he argues that values and ends are objective modes of being. **There is a basic value inherent in organic being, a basic affirmation, "The Yes' of Life**" (IR 81). 15 "**The self-affirmation of being becomes emphatic in the opposition of life to death. Life is the explicit confrontation of being with not-being**. . . . The 'yes' of all striving is here sharpened by the active `no' to not-being" (IR 81-2). Furthermore — and this is the crucial point for Jonas — **this affirmation of life that is in all organic being has a binding obligatory force upon human beings**. This blindly self-enacting "yes" gains obligating force in the seeing freedom of man, who as the supreme outcome of nature's purposive labor is no longer its automatic executor but, with the power obtained from knowledge, can become its destroyer as well. He must adopt the "yes" into his will and impose the "no" to not-being on his power. But precisely this transition from willing to obligation is the critical point of moral theory at which attempts at laying a foundation for it come so easily to grief. Why does now, in man, that become a duty which hitherto "being" itself took care of through all individual willings? (IR 82). We discover here the transition from is to "ought" — from the self-affirmation of life to the binding obligation of human beings to preserve life not only for the present but also for the future. But why do we need a new ethics? The subtitle of The Imperative of Responsibility — In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age — indicates why we need a new ethics.Modern technology has transformed the nature and consequences of human ac-tion so radically that the underlying premises of traditional ethics are no longer valid. For the first time in history human beings possess the knowledge and the power to destroy life on this planet, including human life. Not only is there the new possibility of total nuclear disaster; there are the even more invidious and threatening possibilities that result from the unconstrained use of technologies that can destroy the environment required for life. The major transformation brought about by modern technology is that the consequences of our actions frequently exceed by far anything we can envision. Jonas was one of the first philosophers to warn us about the unprecedented ethical and political problems that arise with the rapid development of biotechnology. He claimed that this was happening at a time when there was an "ethical vacuum," when there did not seem to be any effective ethical principles to limit ot guide our ethical decisions. In the name of scientific and technological "progress," there is a relentless pressure to adopt a stance where virtually anything is permissible, includ-ing transforming the genetic structure of human beings, as long as it is "freely chosen." We need, Jonas argued, a new categorical imperative that might be formulated as follows: "Act so that the effects of your action are compatible with the permanence of genuine human life"; or expressed negatively: "Act so that the effects of your action are not destructive of the future possibility of such a life"; or simply: "**Do not compromise the conditions for an indefinite continuation of humanity on earth**"; or again turned positive: "In your present choices, include the future wholeness of Man among the objects of your will." (IR 11)

#### Their k is irrational—we don’t know enough about death to choose it as an option—defer to the side of caution because our impact is extinction—if we’re wrong, we can always kill ourselves later. If they’re wrong, the world is gone forever

**Paterson, 03** - Department of Philosophy, Providence College, Rhode Island (Craig, “A Life Not Worth

Living?”, Studies in Christian Ethics, <http://sce.sagepub.com>)

By engaging in such comparisons of future lives, the conclusion is reached by deprivation theorists that death is only an evil for the person if the future lost is one that offers better prospects for the person than death itself. Death itself is typically conceived of as the destruction of the self; the non-existence of the self; the non-state of non-being. How can we respond to this assessment that death can be said to benefit a patient when the patient’s future prospects in life seem so grim? The non-state that death brings in its wake is seen as being preferable to the continuance of life. Yet, are persons who make and act upon such calculations objectively justified in opting for death? Can it truly be a rational act for a person to choose the destruction of self over the continuation of self, even a self racked by the severe impositions of pain and suffering? 65 Philip Devine attempts to criticise the logicality of a decision to self-kill by stating what he considers to be the obscurity of what we can know about death. 66 He argues that if rational choice requires that a person knows what he or she is choosing (a leap in the dark not sufficing), **then it cannot be rationally possible to intentionally choose death because of the ‘opaqueness of death’.** 67 As Devine says, ‘. . . a precondition of rational choice is that one knows what one is choosing, either by experience or by the testimony of others who have experienced it or something very like it’. 68 Death **cannot** be rationally commensurated against, for **we do not know what we are comparing life to**. Life cannot simply be judged an overall evil and acted against by intentionally embracing death, for the ‘overall evil of life’ cannot be rationally traded in for the ‘opaqueness of death’. For Devine, choosing death is simply akin to **leaping into the bowels of radical uncertainty that cannot function as a useful ground for objective rational choice.**

#### It is impossible to draw the line between “good” subversive violence and “bad” totalitarianism – Bataille’s embrace of the former inevitably results in the latter.

Richard Wolin, Distinguished Professor of History and Comparative Literature at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, 2004 (“Left Fascism: Georges Bataille and the German Ideology,” *The Seduction of Unreason: The Intellectual Romance with Fascism from Nietzsche to Postmodernism*, Published by Princeton University Press, ISBN 9781400825967, p. 179-182)

Bataille's unabashed admiration of fascist methods—for example, their aesthetics of violence—had surfaced in a manner that proved profoundly embarrassing to Breton and his allies. In Bataille's view, only the fascist revolutions in Italy and Germany had been successful in challenging liberal democratic decadence. They alone had replaced the decrepit value system of bourgeois society with a [end page 179] new collective mythology, a restoration of myth so avidly desired by the belief-starved masses.

This telltale flirtation with a "left fascism"—the advocacy of fascist methods for left-wing political ends—was apparent from the group's inaugural manifesto of October 1935, "Contre-Attaque: Union de lutte des intellectuals revolutionnaires." A sanguinary fascination with revolutionary violence suffused the manifesto, in which Bataille's views played a formative role. Thus, one of the group's resolutions emphasized that "public safety" ("le salut publique") required an "uncompromising dictatorship of the armed people." Europe's political destiny would be determined by "the creation of a vast network of disciplined and fanatical forces capable of exercis- ing one day a merciless dictatorship." In conclusion, Bataille and his confreres explicitly praised fascist methods: "The time has come for all of us to behave like masters and to physically destroy the slaves of capitalism. . . . We intend to make use of the weapons created by fascism, which has known how to make use of the fundamental human aspiration for affective exaltation and fanaticism.""

The stress on revolutionary violence, the endorsement of "sovereignty" and "mastership," the celebration of "affective exaltation and fanaticism"—the emotional side of mass politics that fascism had excelled in exploiting—represent key aspects of the ethos of left fascism as propagated by Bataille. In the context at hand, it is of more than passing interest to note that the notion of a "revolt of the masters" ("Herren-Aufstand") was one of the key ideas of Ernst Jiinger's prophetic 1932 fascist manifesto Der Arbeiter (The Worker)."

A heuristic definition of left fascism suggests the idea—extremely widespread in 1930s French politics—of appropriating fascist methods for the ends of the political left. But this approach ran up against an insoluble methodological dilemma. At a certain point it became impossible to define the magic line or point of no return where the assimilation of fascist means had become indistinguishable from the fascist cause. As Allan Stoekl has remarked, "Effervescence, the subversive violence of the masses, the baseness of their refusal to enter into boring discussions—all these things, then, without a clear and correct theory behind them, could easily be reversed into fascism///

, as Bataille quickly became aware."84 [end page 180]

Henri Dubief, a former member of Contre-Attaque, has described Bataille's political thinking circa 1935 in the following terms:

Persuaded of [fascism's] intrinsic perversity, Bataille affirmed its historical and political superiority to a depraved workers' movement and to corrupt liberal democracy. . . . There is an inevitable movement from anguish to intoxication over fascism. At this moment there were reflections of the fascist experience among Georges Bataille and his friends. Later, the influence of Hitler's neopaganism was patent in the case of Acephale.85

The publication of a one-page manifesto, "Sous le Feu des Canons Francais" ("Under the Fire of French Canons"), precipitated the break between the factions dominated by Bataille and Breton. Breton had been listed as a signatory to the document without prior consultation. The tract began with a condemnation of the Soviet Union, whose counterrevolutionary nature had been exposed as a result of its willingness to enter into an alliance with the corrupt bourgeois democracies, the "victors of 1918." (Under the auspices of Leon Blum's Popular Front government, the Franco-Soviet cooperation treaty had recently been signed.) The declaration concluded with the following provocative claim: "We are against rags of paper, against the slavish prose of the chancelleries. . . . We prefer to them, come what may, the anti-diplomatic brutality of Hitler, which is more peaceful than the slobbering excitation of the diplomats and politicians."86 Such forthright praise for Hitler came as a major embarrass- ment to the surrealist faction (which, in addition to Breton, included Benjamin Peret and Paul Eluard), which promptly resigned.

Although in his "Manifesto of Surrealism" Breton, in a Dadaist spirit of "epater le bourgeois," had openly celebrated the virtues of random violence—"The simplest surrealist act consists of dashing down into the street, pistol in hand, and firing blindly, as fast as you can pull the trigger, into the crowd. Anyone who has not dreamed of thus putting an end to the petty system of debasement and cre- tinization in effect has a well-defined place in the crowd with his belly at barrel level"87—there were limits beyond which he refused to follow Bataille's fascination with political transgression. This [end page 181] hesitancy certainly pertained to Bataille's advocacy of "fascist heterogeneity."

Bataille's attraction toward fascism was consistent with a position he had articulated for some time, one epitomized by the epithet "left fascism." Like his brethren on the German right, Bataille was convinced of the bankruptcy of both bourgeois democracy and the communist alternative, which under Stalin's reign had degenerated into naked dictatorship. Like Germany's young conservatives, he sought out a "third way" beyond the equally disreputable politics of liberalism and communism."

## \*\*\* 2NC

### AT: You Link to the K

#### 1. Voting neg doesn’t require passing judgment only action is attached to achieving desired ends. Inaction is the natural result of emptying yourself of thought and living in the present moment. You are voting neg to avoid action not against the aff. Simply choose not to endorse their call to action. Presumption theory and the Tao agree.

Kirkland 98 [Russell Kirkland, Associate Professor of Religion (and Asian Studies), “"Responsible Non-Action" In a Natural World: Perspectives from the Nei-Yeh, Chuang-Tzu, and Tao-Te Ching,” 1998, University of Georgia, http://kirkland.myweb.uga.edu/rk/pdf/pubs/ECO.pdf]

But doesn't the Tao te ching enjoin the reader to somehow do something to correct a world that is now in disarray? Doesn't the Tao te ching urge the reader to engage in new and different behaviors, so that the world may thereby be redeemed from the problems that currently afflict it. The answer to these questions appear to be "yes." But note that neither question actually calls for humans to take any action to intervene in worldly events. Rather, the reader of the Tao te ching is enjoined to make a bold and meaningful change in the world by (1) beginning the bold and enlightened process of refraining from interventional activity, and (2) allowing the inherent beneficent forces of the world — forces that cannot be aided by human activity — to hold sway. The bold transition to new and different behavior that are urged upon the reader is a transition away from the assumption that humans can or ought to intervene in life's events. The only wise and beneficent behavior in which humans can engage is a behavior of humble and enlightened self-restraint, self-restraint that is necessary to ensure that we no longer interfere with the beneficent activity of the benign natural force called "the Tao."

### AT: No Link – Plan is Negative Action

#### 3. Avoid action to achieve results even if it opposes other anti-Taoist action

Kirkland 98 [Russell Kirkland, Associate Professor of Religion (and Asian Studies), “"Responsible Non-Action" In a Natural World: Perspectives from the Nei-Yeh, Chuang-Tzu, and Tao-Te Ching,” 1998, University of Georgia, http://kirkland.myweb.uga.edu/rk/pdf/pubs/ECO.pdf]

From the perspective of the texts of ancient Taoism, all such assumptions are patently absurd, and reflect nothing more than the perpetual human glorification of itself. Some misinterpreters of Taoism happily assume that the only human intervention that is deleterious is "their" intervention, never "my" intervention. That is, the interventional activity of a construction crew building a dam on a river is regarded as an unwarranted imposition upon nature; but the interventional activity of a legistor or protest group intended to stop the building of the dam is somehow regarded as not being interventional activity at all. The interventional activity of the "enlightened" and "compassionate" hero is defined away in a self-serving defense of egotistical activity. If we recognize the ancient Chinese term wei as denoting "human action intended to achieve results," then it necessarily follows that action intended to stop the construction of a dam, the draining of a wetland, or the burning of a rain-forest is precisely such action. The only difference is that the developers and their opponents desire different results. And as everyone seems to know, the view of the ancient Taoists is that "human action intended to achieve results" is **contrary to the Tao**, whatever the motivation for such action. So is the Taoist perspective on life that we ought to stop caring about the state of the world? The answer to that question is both yes and no. And in trying to understand those answers, we must be careful to remember the ancient Taoist assumptions about life, which are in certain basic ways utterly alien to all modern assumptions. In relation to the baby floating down the river, the true Taoist answer is not the answer provided by the student whom I quoted. Chuang-tzu would sit and watch the baby float down the river, I contend, not because Mencius would already have jumped in to save the threatened child. Such an answer would be false because it assumes: (1) that the possible death of the child can and must be assumed to be a bad thing, and (2) that human interventional action is actually proper and necessary to prevent catastrophes from occurring to innocent, helpless living things. Neither of those assumptions would be in accord with the contents of the Tao te ching, Chuang-tzu, or Nei-yeh. From the perspective of ancient Taoists, there is no way to know whether any given event is "good" or "bad," for human ability to comprehend the processes of life is grossly fallible and often tragically mistaken. The results of our incomprehension of life is that we frequently take well intentioned actions that are meant to achieve good results, but generally lead to results that are actually not good at all. From the Taoist perspective, it therefore follows that the only good actions are actions that are not taken, and the only good people are the people who are thoughtful enough, considerate enough, humble enough, and brave enough not to take any interventional action at all. From the Taoist perspective, I shall argue, it is only such people who can truly be regarded as enlightened and morally responsible. The basis for my contention is that unlike all modern thinkers, the Taoists of ancient China took seriously an idea that all modern thinkers regard as preposterous. That idea is the idea that living things do not live in an uncaring world, in a world in which no higher power is at work in the lives of living things or the events of the natural world. "Nature" is not a morally insensate juggernaut that sometimes threatens the deserved well-being of innocent living things. A flood that profoundly affects the living inhabitants of a floodplain is not in any sense whatever a disaster or a catastrophe, and there is no sense in which human activity intended to control or prevent such events could possibly be considered wise or appropriate action. The reason for this fact is that — contrary to the assumptions of all modern interpreters, secular or religious — the contention of the Tao te ching is that the natural processes of the world are themselves guided and directed by a natural force that is not only utterly benign, but actually beneficent. Secondly, the Tao te ching argues clearly and repeatedly that that beneficent natural force is — despite our beliefs to the contrary — actually the most powerful force in the universe. Thirdly, the Tao te ching argues clearly and repeatedly that that natural force is — despite our beliefs to the contrary — continuously and ineluctably at work in all the processes and events of the world, whether we can perceive or appreciate it or not. "Returning to the Tao" in the Tao te ching means learning to see that force at work in the world and to rely upon it, rather than our own beliefs or actions, for the fulfillment of the health and harmony of all living things, human and otherwise.

### Extinction Bad

#### Focus on survival is good because it gives future generations the opportunity to love, create, and experience joy

**Morgan,** Prof. Public Speaking and Current Affairs**, December ’09**  (Dennis, Hankuk U., Futures, “World on fire: two scenarios of the destruction of human civilization and possible extinction of the human race”, 41:10, ScienceDirect)

To be or not to be—that is indeed the ultimate question that humanity must answer. Will Shakespeare’s words continue to inspire generations to come, or will his works be completely lost and forgotten? The same question can be asked about all of the great works of art and expressions of the human spirit that have evolved through the ages. Will everything that is good and noble in human evolution, civilization, and culture be abandoned and completely lost or else completely forgotten by the ‘‘lucky’’ remnant that somehow manages to survive—if there are survivors? The ‘‘second death’’ is most tragic, for not only will our history be lost, but the future will be lost too. **Will the yet-born never even be given the opportunity to receive the wisdom and beauty of the human spirit** and experience what it means to be alive? How can we cheat them of this grand opportunity that should be theirs by right? **Love will be lost,** and our planet may very well become just as dead as every other planet that we know about in the universe. Who knows? Perhaps our planet is the only one in which the miracle of life managed to evolve. There is still so much more for us to discover about the universe and our own origins. We have not yet ‘‘come of age’’ as one race—the human race. We have yet to understand what it even means to be human, and before we do, are we to just let it slide through our hands and lose it all? Why??? For various psychological reasons, we have shielded ourselves in a state of denial concerning the price of our progress and the real nature and state of industrial civilization and its development. Perhaps we have shielded ourselves from the ugly side of our own human nature. How could we fail to see that we are standing on a precipice, at the very brink of falling headlong into an abyss of no return? We must not fall into this abyss blind and mute without a fight for life. We should look squarely at it and squarely at ourselves and ask ourselves Stephen Hawking’s question. Our species is about 100,000 years old. Civilization is only a fraction of that, yet long before the advent of human civilization, at a very threshold moment in human evolution, man discovered how to make and use fire. But do we really own it, or will we instead burn by the very fire we make? Do we really have as much control over it as we’d like to think we have**? Knowing the ultimate cost, the risk of the complete destruction of human civilization and the possible extermination of our own species and perhaps all life,** the future itself, **how can we take such a risk**? We live on a planet of finite resources with a finite atmosphere that miraculously supports life. Now, the development of industrial civilization has taken us to such a point that we have reached the endgame: we are standing on a precipice overlooking the abyss—from which there is no return. The 21st century is the most important and critical century because it is the century when humankind will determine whether we fall headlong into that abyss or whether we manage to gather real courage, wisdom and restraint to resist the temptation of such awful and ultimately self-destructive power. We must tear the scales from our eyes and view that power for what it is. This is the time that represents a moment of challenge for the ultimate survival of the species. If we fail, we will pay the ultimate price from which there will be no return. As long as our hearts still beat and we still breathe the air every day, then we are still alive, and that means that we still have a chance to make a difference and change the course that we’re on now. Let us not fall into the abyss headlong, blind and mute. Indeed, **we must fight for life and for the yet-born generations of the future,** and they will bear the fruit of our labor. They will look back proudly and say, ‘‘These are our true ancestors who cared enough about us to fight for our right to exist. Without them, **we would not be able to love, to make music and gaze upon the stars at night**. **We would not be able to be filled with the wonder and joy of life and the beauty of nature**. Without them, this Earth would have been an unlivable place like so many other planets, and we would not have come into existence. **Thus, they have bequeathed to us this precious ethic - to care about the future and the yet-born future generations** - to leave them a world that is at least as wonderful and joyous as the one we were born into.’’

### Shell--Defer to prudence

#### And, their justifications can only possibly be post hoc, making emotional as opposed to rational decisions about the world

**Paterson, 03** - Department of Philosophy, Providence College, Rhode Island (Craig, “A Life Not Worth

Living?”, Studies in Christian Ethics, <http://sce.sagepub.com>)

Again, if a life is judged not worth living, what is it about death that is supposed to be judged objectively commensurable to staying alive? How is it calculated? Perhaps intuition can attempt to supply an answer. **However,** a thoroughgoing appeal to intuition here simply negates the ability we have to use practical reason to inform our decision-making and guide our choices. But this will not do, for it is tantamount to saying that in the very situations where human reason is most crucially needed it is of no use to us! In reality, such a thoroughgoing appeal to intuition **readily degenerates into a form of a posteriori rationalisation** **to justify choices already opted for on the basis of sub-rational emotion.** 50 While use of language sometimes leads us to suspect that lives are often evaluated in terms of their overall worth, we should nevertheless be very suspicious of attempting to extrapolate from statements that (1) ‘doing X is a valuable part of A’s life and that A’s life is diminished by not being able to do X’, to (2) ‘A’s life is no longer worth living and it is therefore right to intentionally end it because A cannot do X’. Such inferences only seem plausible because there is a shift in the correct locus of evaluation, especially in the framework of medical decision-making, from the worthwhileness of certain treatments to the worthwhileness of certain lives.

### AT: Extinction Inevitable

#### Extinction does not make our efforts worthless.

Trisel 4 [Brooke Alan Trisel, Medical Facilities Consultant with the Ohio Department of Health, "Human Extinction and the Value of Our Efforts," *The Philosophical Forum*, Volume XXXV, Number 3, Fall, 2004, p. 390-391]

Although our works will not last forever, this should not matter if we accomplished what we set out to do when we created these works. Wanting our [end page 390] creations to endure forever was not likely part of our goal when we created them. If we accomplish our goals and then later in life conclude that these accomplishments were of no significance, then this is a sign that a desire for long-lastingness has crept into the standards that we use to judge significance. Escalating desires can lead to escalating standards since the standards that we establish reflect our goals and desires.

Including long-lastingness as a criterion for judging the significance of our efforts is unreasonable. If one includes long-lastingness as part of the standard, then one will feel that it is necessary for humanity to persist forever. There is no need for humanity to live forever for our lives and works to be significant. If the standard that we adopt for judging significance does not include long-lastingness as part of the standard, then it will not matter whether humanity will endure for a long time.

Like Tolstoy, we may be unable to keep from wanting to have our achievements remembered forever. We may also be unable to keep from wanting our works to be appreciated forever. But we can refrain from turning these desires into standards for judging whether our efforts and accomplishments are significant. If we can keep from doing this, it will be to our advantage. Then, during those times when we look back on life from an imagined perspective that encompasses times after humanity has become extinct, we will not conclude that our efforts amounted to nothing. Rather, we will conclude that many people made remarkable accomplishments that made their lives, and possibly the lives of others, better than they would have been if these goals had never been pursued. And if we expand our evaluation, as we should, to take into account all experiences associated with living, not just goal-related experiences, we will conclude not that life was empty, but that living was worthwhile.

#### The fact that extinction is inevitable is irrelevant—there’s still value in voting aff.

E. T. Mitchell, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Texas, 1931 (“The Bases of Philosophic Pessimism,” *International Journal of Ethics*, Volume 41, Number 4, July, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via JSTOR, p. 481-482)

For purposes of discussion I am willing to admit that the solar system is due to pass through a cycle and become uninhabitable by man. The arguments for this view are nearly all antiquated' but, since we have no grounds for certainty, let us accept the prediction as not improbable. The doom of the race may, or may not, be bound up with the fate of the solar system, though admirers of Jules Verne, H. G. Wells, and Popular Mechanics will never admit that it is even probable. But it is a problem involving so many unknowns that we fail to sympathize with those determined pessimists who are cast into despair by the prospect. The destiny of the individual comes closer home to us. In the absence of any evidence or argument of a convincing character in favor of personal continuity I shall not question the view that when the physical structure has disintegrated the functions also will be gone. This is not necessarily abandoning the field to materialism; many idealists from Spinoza to Bradley have rejected the popular view of personal immortality.

The assumption, however, that a finite existence is necessarily bad cannot be accepted without scrutiny. A limited time dimension is not in itself any worse than a limited height or a limited girth. In fact there are aesthetic grounds for preferring a reasonable limit. The restrictions which time imposes are felt as evil only when they frustrate our ambitious plans. To demonstrate [end page 481] that a limited duration is bad, one would have to show that an active and well rounded life cannot be planned and lived within the usual bounds of sixty to eighty years. So too with the doom of the solar system. I have yet to hear of any deep-laid plans of the human race that would be cut short by the distant fate of the earthly habitation.

### Shell--VTL = Subjective

#### The relationship towards death is, and must be, an individual determination—if a person perceives their interests as valuable, or that death will be a different state, then our obligation would be to prevent their death

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Living?”, Studies in Christian Ethics, <http://sce.sagepub.com>)

In determining whether a life is worth living or not, **attention should be focused upon an array of ‘interests’ of the person**, and these, for the competent patient at least, are going to vary considerably, since they will be informed by the patient’s underlying dispositions, and, for the incompetent, by a minimal quality threshold. It follows that for competent patients, a broad-ranging assessment of quality of life concerns is the trump card as to whether or not life continues to be worthwhile. Different patients may well decide differently. That is the prerogative of the patient, for the only unpalatable alternative is to force a patient to stay alive. For Harris, life can be judged valuable or not when the person assessing his or her own life determines it to be so. **If a person values his or her own life, then that life is valuable, precisely to the extent that he or she values it**. Without any real capacity to value, there can be no value. As Harris states, ‘. . . the value of our lives is the value we give to our lives’. It follows that the **primary** **injustice** done to a person is to deprive the person of a life **he or she may think valuable**. Objectivity in the value of human life, for Harris, essentially becomes one of negative classification (ruling certain people out of consideration for value), allied positively to a broad range of ‘critical interests’; interests worthy of pursuing — **friendships, family, life goals, etc**. — which are subjected to de facto **self-assessment** for the further determination of meaningful value. Suicide, assisted suicide, and voluntary euthanasia, can therefore be justified, on the grounds that once the competent nature of the person making the decision has been established, the thoroughgoing commensuration between different values, in the form of interests or preferences, is essentially left up to the individual to determine for himself or herself.