# 1

## First, effective deliberation requires a forum of discussion that facilitates political agonism and the capacity to substantively engage the topic at hand---in short, a forum of switch side debate where the negative can predict and respond to the aff is the most intellectually effective---this is crucial to affecting productive change in all facets of life---the process in this instance is more important than the substance of their advocacy

**Gutmann et al., UPenn political science and philosophy professor, 1996**

(Amy, Democracy and Disagreement, pg 1-4, ldg)

OF THE CHALLENGES that American democracy faces today, none is more formidable than the problem of moral disagreement. Neither the theory nor the practice of democratic politics has so far found an adequate way to cope with conflicts about fundamental values. We address the challenge of moral disagreement here by developing a conception of democracy that secures a central place for moral discussion in political life. Along with a growing number of other political theorists, we call this conception deliberative democracy. The core idea is simple: when citizens or their representatives disagree morally, they should continue to reason together to reach mutually acceptable decisions. But the meaning and implications of the idea are complex. Although the idea has a long history, it is still in search of a theory. We do not claim that this book provides a comprehensive theory of deliberative democracy, but we do hope that it contributes toward its future development by showing the kind of deliberation that is possible and desirable in the face of moral disagreement in democracies. Some scholars have criticized liberal political theory for neglecting moral deliberation. Others have analyzed the philosophical foundations of deliberative democracy, and still others have begun to explore institutional reforms that would promote deliberation. Yet nearly all of them stop at the point where deliberation itself begins. None has systematically examined the substance of deliberation-the theoretical principles that should guide moral argument and their implications for actual moral disagreements about public policy. That is our subject, and it takes us into the everyday forums of democratic politics, where moral argument regularly appears but where theoretical analysis too rarely goes. Deliberative democracy involves reasoning about politics, and nothing has been more controversial in political philosophy than the nature of reason in politics. We do not believe that these controversies have to be settled before deliberative principles can guide the practice of democracy. Since on occasion citizens and their representatives already engage in the kind of reasoning that those principles recommend, deliberative democracy simply asks that they do so more consistently and comprehensively. The best way to prove the value of this kind of reasoning is to show its role in arguments about specific principles and policies, and its contribution to actual political debates. That is also ultimately the best justification for our conception of deliberative democracy itself. But to forestall possible misunderstandings of our conception of deliberative democracy, we offer some preliminary remarks about the scope and method of this book. The aim of the moral reasoning that our deliberative democracy pre- scribes falls between impartiality, which requires something like altruism, and prudence, which demands no more than enlightened self-interest. Its first principle is reciprocity, the subject of Chapter 2, but no less essential are the other principles developed in later chapters. When citizens reason reciprocally, they seek fair terms of social cooperation for their own sake; they try to End mutually acceptable ways of resolving moral disagreements. The precise content of reciprocity is difficult to determine in theory, but its general countenance is familiar enough in practice. It can be seen in the difference between acting in one"˜s self-interest (say, taking advantage of a legal loophole or a lucky break) and acting fairly (following rules in the spirit that one expects others to adopt). In many of the controversies discussed later in the book, the possibility of any morally acceptable resolution depends on citizens' reasoning beyond their narrow self-interest and considering what can be justified to people who reasonably disagree with them. Even though the quality of deliberation and the conditions under which it is conducted are far from ideal in the controversies we consider, the fact that in each case some citizens and some officials make arguments consistent with reciprocity suggests that a deliberative perspective is not utopian. To clarify what reciprocity might demand under non-ideal conditions, we develop a distinction between deliberative and non-deliberative disagreement. Citizens who reason reciprocally can recognize that a position is worthy of moral respect even when they think it morally wrong. They can believe that a moderate pro-life position on abortion, for example, is morally respectable even though they think it morally mistaken. (The abortion example-to which we often return in the book-is meant to be illustrative. For readers who deny that there is any room for deliberative disagreement on abortion, other political controversies can make the same point.) The presence of deliberative disagreement has important implications for how citizens treat one another and for what policies they should adopt. When a disagreement is not deliberative (for example, about a policy to legalize discrimination against blacks and women), citizens do not have any obligations of mutual respect

 toward their opponents. In deliberative disagreement (for example, about legalizing abortion), citizens should try to accommodate the moral convictions of their opponents to the greatest extent possible, without compromising their own moral convictions. We call this kind of accommodation an economy of moral disagreement, and believe that, though neglected in theory and practice, it is essential to a morally robust democratic life. Although both of us have devoted some of our professional life to urging these ideas on public officials and our fellow citizens in forums of practical politics, this book is primarily the product of scholarly rather than political deliberation. Insofar as it reaches beyond the academic community, it is addressed to citizens and officials in their more reflective frame of mind. Given its academic origins, some readers may be inclined to complain that only professors could be so unrealistic as to believe that moral reasoning can help solve political problems. But such a complaint would misrepresent our aims. To begin with, we do not think that academic discussion (whether in scholarly journals or college classrooms) is a model for moral deliberation in politics. Academic discussion need not aim at justifying a practical decision, as deliberation must. Partly for this reason, academic discussion is likely to be insensitive to the contexts of ordinary politics: the pressures of power, the problems of inequality, the demands of diversity, the exigencies of persuasion. Some critics of deliberative democracy show a similar insensitivity when they judge actual political deliberations by the standards of ideal philosophical reflection. Actual deliberation is inevitably defective, but so is philosophical reflection practiced in politics. The appropriate comparison is between the ideals of democratic deliberation and philosophical reflection, or between the application of each in the non- ideal circumstances of politics. We do not assume that politics should be a realm where the logical syllogism rules. Nor do we expect even the more appropriate standard of mutual respect always to prevail in politics. A deliberative perspective sometimes justifies bargaining, negotiation, force, and even violence. It is partly because moral argument has so much unrealized potential in democratic politics that we believe it deserves more attention. Because its place in politics is so precarious, the need to find it a more secure home and to nourish its development is all the more pressing. Yet because it is also already part of our common experience, we have reason to hope that it can survive and even prosper if philosophers along with citizens and public officials better appreciate its value in politics. Some readers may still wonder why deliberation should have such a prominent place in democracy. Surely, they may say, citizens should care more about the justice of public policies than the process by which they are adopted, at least so long as the process is basically fair and at least minimally democratic. One of our main aims in this book is to cast doubt on the dichotomy between policies and process that this concern assumes. Having good reason as individuals to believe that a policy is just does not mean that collectively as citizens we have sufficient justification to legislate on the basis of those reasons. The moral authority of collective judgments about policy depends in part on the moral quality of the process by which citizens collectively reach those judgments. Deliberation is the most appropriate way for citizens collectively to resolve their moral disagreements not only about policies but also about the process by which policies should be adopted. Deliberation is not only a means to an end, but also a means for deciding what means are morally required to pursue our common ends.

## Effective deliberation is crucial to the activation of personal agency and is only possible in a switch-side debate format where debaters divorce themselves from ideology to engage in political contestation---this activation of agency is vital to preventing mass violence and genocide and overcoming politically debilitating self-obsession

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(Patricia, “Fighting Without Hatred: Hannah Arendt’s Agonistic Rhetoric”, <http://www.jaconlinejournal.com/archives/vol22.3/miller-fighting.pdf>, DOA: 1-31-12, ldg)

Arendt is probably most famous for her analysis of totalitarianism (especially her The Origins of Totalitarianism and Eichmann in Jerusalem), but the recent attention has been on her criticism of mass culture (The Human Condition). Arendt's main criticism of the current human condition is that the common world of deliberate and joint action is fragmented into solipsistic and unreflective behavior. In an especially lovely passage, she says that in mass society people are all imprisoned in the subjectivity of their own singular experience, which does not cease to be singular if the same experience is multiplied innumerable times. The end of the common world has come when it is seen only under one aspect and is permitted to present itself in only one perspective. (Human 58) What Arendt so beautifully describes is that isolation and individualism are not corollaries, and may even be antithetical because obsession with one's own self and the particularities of one ' s life prevents one from engaging in conscious, deliberate, collective action. Individuality, unlike isolation, depends upon a collective with whom one argues in order to direct the common life. Self-obsession, even (especially?) when coupled with isolation from one's community is far from apolitical; it has political consequences. Perhaps a better way to put it is that it is political precisely because it aspires to be apolitical. This fragmented world in which many people live simultaneously and even similarly but not exactly together is what Arendt calls the "social." Arendt does not mean that group behavior is impossible in the realm of the social, but that social behavior consists " in some way of isolated individuals, incapable of solidarity or mutuality, who abdicate their human capacities and responsibilities to a projected ' they' or ' it' with disastrous consequences, both for other people and eventually for themselves" (Pitkin 79). One can behave, but not act. For someone like Arendt, a German-assimilated Jew, one of the most frightening aspects of the Holocaust was the ease with which a people who had not been extraordinarily anti-Semitic could be put to work industriously and efficiently on the genocide of the Jews. And what was striking about the perpetrators of the genocide, ranging from minor functionaries who facilitated the murder transports up to major figures on trial at Nuremberg, was their constant and apparently sincere insistence that they were not responsible. For Arendt, this was not a peculiarity of the German people, but of the current human and heavily bureaucratic condition of twentieth-century culture: we do not consciously choose to engage in life's activities; we drift into them, or we do them out of a desire to conform. Even while we do them, we do not acknowledge an active, willed choice to do them; instead, we attribute our behavior to necessity, and we perceive ourselves as determined by circumstance, by accident, by what "they" tell us to do. We do something from within the anonymity of a mob that we would never do as an individual; we do things for which we will not take responsibility . Yet, whether or not people acknowledge responsibility for the consequences of their actions, those consequences exist. Refusing to accept responsibility can even make those consequences worse, in that the people, who enact the actions in question, because they do not admit their own agency, cannot be persuaded to stop those actions. They are simply doing their jobs. In a totalitarian system, however, everyone is simply doing his or her job; there never seems to be anyone who can explain, defend, and change the policies. Thus, it is, as Arendt says, rule by nobody. It is illustrative to contrast Arendt's attitude toward discourse to Habermas'. While both are critical of modem bureaucratic and totalitarian systems, Arendt's solution is the playful and competitive space of agonism; it is not the rational-critical public sphere. The "actual content of political life" is "the joy and the gratification that arise out of being in company with our peers, out of acting together and appearing in public, out of inserting ourselves into the world by word and deed, thus acquiring and sustaining our personal identity and beginning something entirely new" ("Truth" 263). According to Seyla Benhabib, Arendt's public realm emphasizes the assumption of competition, and it "represents that space of appearances in which moral and political greatness, heroism, and preeminence are revealed, displayed, shared with others. This is a competitive space in which one competes for recognition, precedence, and acclaim" (78). These qualities are displayed, but not entirely for purposes of acclamation; they are not displays of one ' s self, but of ideas and arguments, of one ' s thought. When Arendt discusses Socrates' thinking in public, she emphasizes his performance: "He performed in the marketplace the way the flute-player performed at a banquet. It is sheer performance, sheer activity"; nevertheless, it was thinking: "What he actually did was to make public, in discourse, the thinking process" (Lectures 37). Pitkin summarizes this point: "Arendt says that the heroism associated with politics is not the mythical machismo of ancient Greece but something more like the existential leap into action and public exposure" (175-76). Just as it is not machismo, although it does have considerable ego involved, so it is not instrumental rationality; Arendt's discussion of the kinds of discourse involved in public action include myths, stories, and personal narratives. Furthermore, the competition is not ruthless; it does not imply a willingness to triumph at all costs. Instead, it involves something like having such a passion for ideas and politics that one is willing to take risks. One tries to articulate the best argument, propose the best policy, design the best laws, make the best response. This is a risk in that one might lose; advancing an argument means that one must be open to the criticisms others will make of it. The situation is agonistic not because the participants manufacture or seek conflict, but because conflict is a necessary consequence of difference. This attitude is reminiscent of Kenneth Burke, who did not try to find a language free of domination but who instead theorized a way that the very tendency toward hierarchy in language might be used against itself (for more on this argument, see Kastely). Similarly, Arendt does not propose a public realm of neutral, rational beings who escape differences to live in the discourse of universals; she envisions one of different people who argue with passion, vehemence, and integrity. This point about the necessary presence of difference is important, as there is a tradition of seeing Arendt as antifeminist and of assuming that her theories are necessarily antagonistic to women and feminism. This criticism, made most cogently by Adrienne Rich, is not ungrounded; it results from Arendt's dividing labor from action and putting traditional women' s work in the less valued category of labor. But, as Bonnie Honig has shown, Arendt's agonism can be useful to feminist critiques of identity because it assumes that difference is inherent; it tends to destabilize categories, including the categories "man" and "woman." For Arendt, the common world is up for argument because it is created by argument, and part of what gets created is our own identity. Yet, Arendt's comments concerning labor should still raise concern; they point to what strikes me as one of the most troubling aspects of agonism: the possibility that it is fundamentally elitist. While everyone may engage in labor that is seen by others, Arendt argues, not everyone engages in public action. Although Arendt is clearly not advocating a return to classical Greece or Rome, it is still troubling that the cultures that seem to have gotten the notion of action right are ones that have a leisured class precisely because there are entire categories of people (women, slaves, noncitizens) who spend their time doing the labor that permits the elite to engage in action. I should emphasize that this concern comes not from anything that Arendt says directly, but from the potential implications of Arendt 's distinctions and analogies. The impulse behind the labor/action distinction is certainly not to denigrate women' s work (as both Honig and Pitkin have argued, the equation of " social" and " feminine " is problematic ) , but to describe the lack of genuinely public life in modem political culture. Pitkin explains that the goal of The Human Condition is " to articulate a general theory of free citizenship that would recapture the principled but tough-minded realism of the wartime Resistance without the dreadful , unacceptable cost s that those ye a r s had entailed and without the external constraints on freedom that the occupation had imposed" (112). Arendt ' s primary intention in The Human Condition, as in many of her works, is to argue for the special nature of thought. This goal became especially pressing after she observed the trial of Adolf Eichmann for his part in the attempted genocide of the Jews. In The Life of the Mind, Arendt describes her reaction to Eichmann. Having been taught that evil results from arrogance, envy, hatred, or covetousness, she expected to see some monster who would exemplify such vices: However, what I was confronted with was utterly different and still undeniably factual. I was struck by a manifest shallowness in the doer that made it impossible to trace the uncontestable evil of his deeds to any deeper level of roots or motives. The deeds were monstrous, but the doer - at least the very effective one now on trial was quite ordinary, commonplace, and neither demonic nor monstrous. There was no sign in him of firm ideological convictions or of specific evil motives, and the only notable characteristic one could detect in his past behavior as well as in his behavior during the trial and throughout the pre-trial police examination was something entirely negative: it was not stupidity but thoughtlessness. (4) Eichmann perfectly exemplified what Arendt famously called the "banality of evil" but that might be better thought of as the bureaucratization of evil (or, as a friend once aptly put it, the evil of banality). That is, he was able to engage in mass murder because he was able not to think about it, especially not from the perspective of the victims, and he was able to exempt himself from personal responsibility by telling himself (and anyone else who would listen) that he was jus t following orders. I t was the bureaucratic system that enabled him to do both. He was not exactly passive; he was, on the contrary, very aggressive in trying to do his duty. He behaved with the "ruthless, competitive exploitation" and "inauthentic, self-disparaging conformism" that characterizes those who people totalitarian systems (Pitkin 87). Arendt’s theorizing of totalitarianism has been justly noted as one of her strongest contributions to philosophy. She saw that a situation like Nazi Germany is different from the conventional understanding of a tyranny. Pitkin writes, Totalitarianism cannot be understood, like earlier forms of domination, as the ruthless exploitation of some people by others, whether the motive be selfish calculation, irrational passion, or devotion to some cause. Understanding totalitarianism's essential nature requires solving the central mystery of the holocaust - the objectively useless and indeed dysfunctional, fanatical pursuit of a purely ideological policy, a pointless process to which the people enacting it have fallen captive. (87) Totalitarianism is closely connected to bureaucracy; it is oppression by rules, rather than by people who have willfully chosen to establish certain rules. It is the triumph of the social. Critics (both friendly and hostile) have paid considerable attention to Arendt ' s category of the "social," largely because, despite spending so much time on the notion, Arendt remains vague on certain aspects of it. Pitkin appropriately compares Arendt's concept of the social to the Blob, the type of monster that figured in so many post-war horror movies. That Blob was "an evil monster from outer space, entirely external to and separate from us [that] had fallen upon us intent on debilitating, absorbing, and ultimately destroying us, gobbling up our distinct individuality and turning us into robots that mechanically serve its purposes" (4). Pitkin is critical of this version of the "social" and suggests that Arendt meant (or perhaps should have meant) something much more complicated. The simplistic version of the social-as-Blob can itself be an instance of Blob thinking; Pitkin's criticism is that Arendt talks at times as though the social comes from outside of us and has fallen upon us, turning us into robots. Yet, Arendt's major criticism of the social is that it involves seeing ourselves as victimized by something that comes from outside our own behavior. I agree with Pitkin that Arendt's most powerful descriptions of the social (and the other concepts similar to it, such as her discussion of totalitarianism, imperialism, Eichmann, and parvenus) emphasize that these processes are not entirely out of our control but that they happen to us when, and because, we keep refusing to make active choices. We create the social through negligence. It is not the sort of for ce in a Sorcerer's Apprentice, which once let loose cannot be stopped; on the contrary, it continues to exist because we structure our world to reward social behavior. Pitkin writes, "From childhood on, in virtually all our institutions, we reward euphemism, salesmanship, slogans, and we punish and suppress truth-telling, originality, thoughtfulness. So we continually cultivate ways of (not) thinking that induce the social" (274). I want to emphasize this point, as it is important for thinking about criticisms of some forms of the social construction of knowledge: denying our own agency is what enables the social to thrive. To put it another way, theories of powerlessness are self-fulfilling prophecies. Arendt grants that there are people who willed the Holocaust, but she insists that totalitarian systems result not so much from the Hitlers or Stalins as from the bureaucrats who may or may not agree with the established ideology but who enforce the rules for no stronger motive than a desire to avoid trouble with their superiors (see Eichmann and Life). They do not think about what they do. One might prevent such occurrences--or, a t least, resist the modem tendency toward totalitarianism-by thought: "critical thought is in principle anti-authoritarian" (Lectures 38). By "thought" Arendt does not mean eremitic contemplation; in fact, she has great contempt for what she calls "professional thinkers," refusing herself to become a philosopher or to call her work philosophy. Young-Bruehl, Benhabib, and Pitkin have each said that Heidegger represented jus t such a professional thinker for Arendt, and his embrace of Nazism epitomized the genuine dangers such "thinking" can pose (see Arendt's "Heidegger"). "Thinking" is not typified by the isolated contemplation of philosophers; it requires the arguments of others and close attention to the truth. It is easy to overstate either part of that harmony. One must consider carefully the arguments and viewpoints of ot

hers: Political thought is representative. I form an opinion by considering a given issue from different viewpoints, by making present to my mind the standpoints of those who are absent; that is, I represent them. This process of representation does not blindly adopt the actual views of those who stand somewhere else, and hence look upon the world from a different perspective; this is a question neither of empathy, as though I tried to be or to feel like somebody else, nor of counting noses and joining a majority but of being and thinking in my own identity where actually I am not. The more people's standpoints I have present in my mind while I am pondering a given issue, and the better I can imagine how I would feel and think if I were in their place the stronger will be my capacity for representative thinking and the more valid my final conclusions, my opinion. ( "Truth" 241) There are two points to emphasize in this wonderful passage. First, one does not get these standpoints in one's mind through imagining them, but through listening to them; thus, good thinking requires that one hear the arguments of other people. Hence, as Arendt says, "critical thinking, while still a solitary business, does not cut itself off from all others. '" Thinking is, in this view, necessarily public discourse: critical thinking is possible "only where the standpoints of all others are open to inspection" (Lectures 43). Yet, it is not a discourse in which one simply announces one ' s stance; participants are interlocutors and not just speakers: they must listen. Unlike many current versions of public discourse, this view presumes that speech matters. I t is not asymmetric manipulation of others, nor merely an economic exchange; it must be a world into which one enters and by which one might be changed. Second, passages like the above make some readers think that Arendt puts too much faith in discourse and too little in truth (see Habermas). But Arendt is no crude relativist; she believes in truth, and she believes that there are facts that can be more or less distorted. She does not believe that reality is constructed by discourse, or that truth is indistinguishable from falsehood. She insists that the truth has a different pull on us and, consequently, that it has a difficult place in the world of the political. Facts are different from falsehood because, while they can be distorted or denied, especially when they are inconvenient for the powerful, they also have a certain positive force that falsehood lacks: "Truth, though powerless and always defeated in a head-on clash with the powers that be, possesses a strength f its own: whatever those in power may contrive, they are unable t discover or invent a viable substitute for it. Persuasion and violence can destroy truth, but they cannot replace it" ( "Truth" 259). Facts have a strangely resilient quality partially because a lie "tears, as it were, a hole in the fabric of factuality. As every historian knows, one c an spot a lie by noticing incongruities, holes, or the junctures of patched up places" ("Truth" 253). While she is sometimes discouraging about our ability to see the tears in the fabric, citing the capacity of totalitarian governments to create the whole cloth (see "Truth" 252-54), she is also sometimes optimistic. In Eichmann in Jerusalem, she repeats the story of Anton Schmidt - a man who saved the lives of Jews - and concludes that such stories cannot be silenced (230-32). For facts to exert power in the common world, however, these stories must be told. Rational truth (such as principles of mathematics) might be perceptible and demonstrable through individual contemplation, but "factual truth, on the contrary, is always related to other people: it concerns events and circumstances in which many are involved; it is established by witnesses and depends upon testimony; it exists only to the extent that it is spoken about, even if it occurs in the domain of privacy. It is political by nature" (238). Arendt is neither a positivist who posits an autonomous individual who can correctly perceive truth, nor a relativist who positively asserts the inherent relativism of all perception. Her description of how truth functions does not fall anywhere in the three-part expedition so prevalent in both rhetoric and philosophy: it is not expressivist, positivist, or social constructivist. Good thinking depends upon good public argument, and good public argument depends upon access to facts: "Freedom of opinion is a farce unless factual information is guaranteed" (238). The sort of thinking that Arendt propounds takes the form of action only when it is public argument, and, as such, it is particularly precious: "For if no other test but the experience of being active, no other measure but the extent of sheer activity were to be applied to the various activities within the vita activa, it might well be that thinking as such would surpass them all" (Human 325). Arendt insists that it is "the same general rule - Do not contradict yourself (not your s e l f but your thinking ego ) - that determines both thinking and acting" (Lectures 37). In place of the mildly resentful conformism that fuels totalitarianism, Arendt proposes what Pitkin calls " a tough-minded, open-eyed readiness to perceive and judge reality for oneself, in terms of concrete experience and independent, critical theorizing" (274). The paradoxical nature of agonism ( that it must involve both individuality and commonality) makes it difficult to maintain, as the temptation is great either to think one ' s own thoughts without reference to anyone else or to let others do one ' s thinking. As I said, agonism does have its advocates within rhetoric -Burke , Ong, Sloane, Gage, and Jarratt, for instance -but while each of these theorists proposes a form of conflictual argument, not one of these is as adversarial as Arendt's. Agonism can emphasize persuasion, as does John Gage's textbook The Shape of Reason or William Brandt et a l . ' s The Craft of Writing. That is, the goal of the argument is to identify the disagreement and then construct a text that gains the assent of the audience. This is not the same as what Gage (citing Thomas Conley) calls "asymmetrical theories of rhetoric": theories that "presuppose an active speaker and a passive audience, a speaker whose rhetorical task is therefore to do something to that audience" ("Reasoned" 6). Asymmetric rhetoric is not and cannot be agonistic. Persuasive agonism still values conflict, disagreement, and equality among interlocutors, but it has the goal of reaching agreement, as when Gage says that the process of argument should enable one ' s reasons to be "understood and believed" by others (Shape 5; emphasis added). Arendt's version is what one might call polemical agonism: it puts less emphasis on gaining assent, and it is exemplified both in Arendt's own writing and in Donald Lazere' s "Ground Rules for Polemicists" and "Teaching the Political Conflicts." Both forms of agonism (persuasive and polemical) require substantive debate at two points in a long and recursive process. First, one engages in debate in order to invent one ' s argument; even silent thinking is a "dialogue of myself with myself ' (Lectures 40). The difference between the two approaches to agonism is clearest when one presents an argument to an audience assumed to be an opposition. In persuasive agonism, one plays down conflict and moves through reasons to try to persuade one ' s audience. In polemical agonism, however, one ' s intention is not necessarily to prove one ' s case, but to make public one ' s thought in order to test it. In this way, communicability serves the same function in philosophy that replicability serves in the sciences; it is how one tests the validity of one ' s thought. In persuasive agonism, success is achieved through persuasion; in polemical agonism, success may be marked through the quality of subsequent controversy. Arendt quotes from a letter Kant wrote on this point: You know that I do not approach reasonable objections with the intention merely of refuting them, but that in thinking them over I always weave them into my judgments, and afford them the opportunity of overturning all my most cherished beliefs. I entertain the hope that by thus viewing my judgments impartially from the standpoint of others some third view that will improve upon my previous insight may be obtainable. (Lectures 42) Kant's use of "impartial" here is interesting: he is not describing a stance that is free of all perspective; it is impartial only in the sense that it is not his own view. This is the same way that Arendt uses the term; she does not advocate any kind of positivistic rationality, but instead a "universal interdependence" ("Truth" 242). She does not place the origin of the "disinterested pursuit of truth" in science, but at "the moment when Homer chose to sing the deeds of the Trojans no less than those of the Achaeans, and to praise the glory of Hector, the foe and the defeated man, no less than the glory of Achilles, the hero of his kinfolk" ("Truth" 262- 63). I t is useful to note that Arendt tends not to use the term "universal," opting more often for "common," by which she means both what is shared and what is ordinary, a usage that evades many of the problems associated with universalism while preserving its virtues (for a brief but provocative application of Arendt's notion of common, see Hauser 100-03). In polemical agonism, there is a sense in which one's main goal is not to persuade one's readers; persuading one's readers, i f this means that they fail to see errors and flaws in one's argument, might actually be a sort of failure. I t means that one wishes to put forward an argument that makes clear what one's stance is and why one holds it, but with the intention of provoking critique and counterargument. Arendt describes Kant's "hope" for his writings not that the number of people who agree with him would increase but "that the circle of his examiners would gradually be enlarged" (Lectures 39); he wanted interlocutors, not acolytes. This is not consensus-based argument, nor is it what is sometimes called "consociational argument," nor is this argument as mediation or conflict resolution. Arendt (and her commentators) use the term "fight," and they mean it. When Arendt describes the values that are necessary in our world, she says, "They are a sense of honor, desire for fame and glory, the spirit of fighting without hatred and 'without the spirit of revenge,' and indifference to material advantages" (Crises 167). Pitkin summarizes Arendt's argument: "Free citizenship presupposes the ability to fight - openly, seriously, with commitment, and about things that really matter -without fanaticism, without seeking to exterminate one's opponents" (266). My point here is two-fold: first, there is not a simple binary opposition between persuasive discourse and eristic discourse, the conflictual versus the collaborative, or argument as opposed to debate. Second, while polemical agonism requires diversity among interlocutors, and thus seems an extraordinarily appropriate notion, and while it may be a useful corrective to too much emphasis on persuasion, it seems to me that polemical agonism could easily slide into the kind of wrangling that is simply frustrating. Arendt does not describe jus t how one is to keep the conflict useful. Although she rejects the notion that politics is "no more than a battlefield of partial, conflicting interests, where nothing count[ s] but pleasure and profit, partisanship, and the lust for dominion," she does not say exactly how we are to know when we are engaging in the existential leap of argument versus when we are lusting for dominion ("Truth" 263). Like other proponents of agonism, Arendt argues that rhetoric does not lead individuals or communities to ultimate Truth; it leads to decisions that will necessarily have to be reconsidered. Even Arendt, who tends to express a greater faith than many agonists (such as Burke, Sloane, or Kastely) in the ability of individuals to perceive truth, insists that self deception is always a danger, so public discourse is necessary as a form of testing (see especially Lectures and "Truth"). She remarks that it is difficult to think beyond one ' s self-interest and that "nothing, indeed, is more common, even among highly sophisticated people, than the blind obstinacy that becomes manifest in lack of imagination and failure to judge " ("Truth" 242). Agonism demands that one simultaneously trust and doubt one ' s own perceptions, rely on one ' s own judgment and consider the judgments of others, think for oneself and imagine how others think. The question remains whether this is a kind of thought in which everyone can engage. Is the agonistic public sphere (whether political, academic, or scientific) only available to the few? Benhabib puts this criticism in the form of a question: "That is, is the 'recovery of the public space' under conditions of modernity necessarily an elitist and antidemocratic project that can hardly be reconciled with the demand for universal political emancipation and the universal extension of citizenship rights that have accompanied modernity since the American and French Revolutions?" (75). This is an especially troubling question not only because Arendt ' s examples of agonistic rhetoric are from elitist cultures, but also because of comments she makes, such as this one from The Human Condition: "As a living experience, thought has always been assumed, perhaps wrongly, to be known only to the few. I t may not be presumptuous to believe that these few have not become fewer in our time" (Human 324). Yet, there are important positive political consequences of agonism. Arendt's own promotion of the agonistic sphere helps to explain how the system could be actively moral. I t is not an overstatement to say that a central theme in Arendt's work is the evil of conformity- the fact that the modem bureaucratic state makes possible extraordinary evil carried out by people who do not even have any ill will toward their victims. I t does so by "imposing innumerable and various rules, all of which tend to 'normalize' its members, to make them behave, to exclude spontaneous action or outstanding achievement" (Human 40). It keeps people from thinking, and it keeps them behaving. The agonistic model's celebration of achievement and verbal skill undermines the political force of conformity, so it is a force against the bureaucratizing of evil. I f people think for themselves, they will resist dogma; if people think of themselves as one of many, they will empathize; if people can do both, they will resist totalitarianism. And if they talk about what they see, tell their stories, argue about their perceptions, and listen to one another - that is, engage in rhetoric - then they are engaging in anti-totalitarian action.

## Effective deliberative discourse is the lynchpin to solving all existential social and political problems---a switch-side debate format that sets appropriate limits on argument to foster a targeted discussion is most effective---our K turns the whole case

**Lundberg, UNC Chapel Hill communications professor, 2010**

(Christian, Tradition of Debate in North Carolina” in Navigating Opportunity: Policy Debate in the 21st Century, pg 311-3, ldg)

The second major problem with the critique that identifies a naivety in articulating debate and democracy is that it presumes that the primary pedagogical •outcome of debate is speech capacities. But the democratic capacities built by •debate are not limited to speech—as indicated earlier, debate builds capacity for critical thinking, analysis of public claims, informed decision making, and better public judgment. If the picture of modern political life that underwrites this critique of debate is a pessimistic view of increasingly labyrinthine and bureaucratic administrative politics, rapid scientific and technological change out pacing the capacities of the citizenry to comprehend them, and ever-expanding insular special-interest- and money-driven politics, it is a puzzling solution, at best, to argue that these conditions warrant giving up on debate. If democracy is open to re-articulation, it is open to re-articulation precisely because as the challenges of modern political life proliferate, the citizenry's capacities can change, which is one of the primary reasons that theorists of democracy such as Dewey in The Public and Its Problems place such a high premium on education (Dewey 1988,63,154). Debate provides an indispensible form of education in the modem articulation of democracy because it builds precisely the skills that allow the citizenry to research and be informed about policy decisions that impact them, to sort through and evaluate the evidence for and relative merits of arguments for and against a policy in an increasingly information-rich environment, and to prioritize their time and political energies toward policies that matter the most to them. The merits of debate as a tool for building democratic capacity-building take on a special significance in the context of information literacy. John Larkin (2005, 140) argues that one of the primary failings of modern colleges and universities is that they have not changed curriculum to match with the challenges of a new information environment. This is a problem for the course of academic study in our current context, but perhaps more important, argues Larkin, for the future of a citizenry that will need to make evaluative choices against an increasingly complex and multi-mediated information environment (ibid.), Larkin's study tested the benefits of debate participation on information-literacy skills and concluded that in-class debate participants reported significantly higher self efficacy ratings of their ability to navigate academic search databases and to effectively search and use other Web resources: To analyze the self-report ratings of the instructional and control group students, we first conducted a multivariate analysis of variance on all of the ratings, looking jointly at the effect of instruction/no instruction and debate topic ... that it did not matter which topic students had been assigned... students in the Instructional [debate] group were significantly more confident in their ability to access information and less likely to feel that they needed help to do so.... These findings clearly indicate greater self-efficacy for online searching among students who participated in [debate] These results constitute strong support for the effectiveness of the project on students' self-efficacy for online searching in the academic databases. There was an unintended effect, however: After doing ... the project, instructional group students also felt more confident than the other students in their ability to get good information from Yahoo and Google. It may be that the library research experience increased self-efficacy for any searching, not just in academic databases. (Larkin 2005, 144) Larkin's study substantiates Thomas Worthen and Gaylen Pack's (1992, 3) claim that debate in the college classroom plays a critical role in fostering the kind of problem-solving skills demanded by the increasingly rich media and information environment of modernity. Though their essay was written in 1992 on the cusp of the eventual explosion of the Internet as a medium, Worthen and Pack's framing of the issue was prescient: the primary question facing today's student has changed from how to best research a topic to the crucial question of learning how to best evaluate which arguments to cite and rely upon from an easily accessible and veritable cornucopia of materials. There are, without a doubt, a number of important criticisms of employing debate as a model for democratic deliberation. But cumulatively, the evidence presented here warrants strong support for expanding debate practice in the as a technology for enhancing democratic deliberative capacities. The unique combination of critical-thinking skills, research and information-skills, oral-communication skills, and capacities for listening and thoughtful, open engagement with hotly contested issues argues for debate as a crucial component of a rich and vital democratic life. In-class debate practice both aids students in achieving the best goals of college and university education and serves as an unmatched practice for creating thoughtful, engaged, open-minded, and self-critical students who are open to the possibilities of meaningful political engagement and new articulations of democratic life. Expanding this practice is crucial, if only because the more we produce citizens who can actively and effectively engage the political process, the more likely we are to produce revisions of democratic life that are necessary if democracy is not only to survive, but to thrive and to deal with systemic threats that risk our collective extinction. Democratic societies face a myriad of challenges, including: domestic and international issues of class, gender, and racial justice; wholesale environmental destruction and the potential for rapid climate change; emerging threats to international stability in the form of terrorism, intervention, and new possibilities for great power conflict; and increasing challenges of rapid globalization, including an increasingly volatile global economic structure. More than any specific policy or proposal, an informed and active citizenry that deliberates with greater skill and sensitivity provides one of the best hopes for responsive and effective democratic governance, and by extension, one of the last best hopes for dealing with the existential challenges to democracy in an increasingly complex world. Given the challenge of perfecting our collective political skill, and in drawing on the best of our collective creative intelligence, it is incumbent on us to both make the case for and, more important, to do the concrete work to realize an expanded commitment to debate at colleges and universities.

## Democratic agonism can only successfully operate in a limited forum---it’s not a limitation on the content of argument, but on the form in which it is presented---this is not an appeal to exclusion, but to maximizing the deliberative potential of debate

**Glober, UConn political science professor, 2010**

(Robert, "Games without Frontiers?: Democratic Engagement, Agonistic Pluralism, and the Question of Exclusion", Philosophy Social Criticism published online 16 November 2011, SAGE, ldg)

Recent democratic theory has devoted significant attention to the question of how to revitalize citizen engagement and reshape citizen involvement within the process of collective political decision-making and self-government. Yet these theorists do so with the sober recognition that more robust democratic engagement may provide new means for domination, exploitation, intensification of disagreement, or even the introduction of fanaticism into our public debates.1 Thus, numerous proposals have attempted to define the acceptable boundaries of our day-to-day democratic discourse and establish regulative ideals whereby we restrict the types of justifications that can be employed in democratic argumentation. This subtle form of exclusion delineates which forms of democratic discourse are deemed to be legitimate – worthy of consideration in the larger democratic community, and morally justifiable as a basis for policy. As an outgrowth of these concerns, this newfound emphasis on political legitimacy has provoked a flurry of scholarly analysis and debate.2 Different theorists promote divergent conceptions of what ought to count as acceptable and legitimate forms of democratic engagement, and promote more or less stringent normative conceptions of the grounds for exclusion and de-legitimization. One of the most novel approaches to this question is offered by agonistic pluralism, a strain of democratic theory advanced by political theorists such as William Connolly, Bonnie Honig, Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe and James Tully. Agonistic pluralism, or simply agonism, is a theory of democracy rooted in the ancient Greek notion of the agon, a public struggle or contest between adversaries. While recognizing the necessity of placing restrictions upon democratic discourse, agonistic pluralists also call upon us to guard against the naturalization of such exclusion and the coercive act of power which it implies. Rather, we must treat these actions as contingent, subject to further scrutiny, critique and rearticulation in contentious and widely inclusive democratic spaces. In so doing, agonistic pluralism offers us a novel means of approaching democratic discourse, receptive to the claims of new actors and identities while also recognizing that there must be some, albeit minimal, restrictions placed on the form that such democratic engagement takes. In short, the goal of agonists is not to ‘eradicate the use of power in social relations but to acknowledge its ineradicable nature and attempt to modify power in ways that are compatible with democratic values’.3 This is democracy absent the ‘final guarantee’ or the ‘definitive legitimation’.4 As one recent commentator succinctly put it, agonistic pluralism forces democratic actors to ‘relinquish all claims to finality, to happy endings’. 5 Yet while agonistic pluralism offers valuable insights regarding how we might reshape and revitalize the character of our democratic communities, it is a much more diverse intellectual project than is commonly acknowledged. There are no doubt continuities among these thinkers, yet those engaged in agonistic pluralism ultimately operate with divergent fundamental assumptions, see different processes at work in contemporary democratic politics and aspire towards unique political end-goals. To the extent that we do not recognize these different variants, we risk failing to adequately consider proposals that could positively alter the character of our democratic engagement, enabling us to reframe contemporary pluralism as a positive avenue for social change and inclusion rather than a crisis to be contained. This article begins by outlining agonistic pluralism’s place within the larger theoretical project of revitalizing democratic practice, centered on the theme of what constitutes ‘legitimate’ democratic discourse. Specifically, I focus on agonism’s place in relation to ‘participatory’ and ‘deliberative’ strains of democratic theory. I then highlight the under-examined diversity of those theorists commonly captured under the heading of agonistic pluralism, drawing upon Chantal Mouffe’s recent distinction between ‘dissociative’ and ‘associative’ agonism. However, I depart from her assertion that ‘associative agonists’ such as Bonnie Honig and William Connolly offer us no means by which to engage in the ‘negative determination of frontiers’ of our political spaces. Contra Mouffe, I defend these theorists as offering the most valuable formulation of agonism, due to their articulation of the civic virtues and democratic (re-)education needed to foster greater inclusivity and openness, while retaining the recognition that democratic discourse must operate with limits and frontiers.

## Agreement is a precondition for contestation.

Ruth **Shively**, former professor of political science at Texas A&M, 20**00** (Political Theory and Partisan Politics 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 thing 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.** On

e 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**.

## Academic debate over policy issues like the response to the energy production is critical to improve policymaking---alternatives cede the political.

**Walt, Harvard International Affairs professor, 2011**

(Stephen, “International Affairs and the Public Sphere”, 7-21, <http://publicsphere.ssrc.org/walt-international-affairs-and-the-public-sphere/>, DOA: 9-23-11, ldg)

Academics can make at least three distinct contributions to public discourse on global affairs. First, although the digital revolution has made a wealth of information from around the world accessible on a near real-time basis, most of us still lack both extensive direct data on events in far-flung areas and the background knowledge necessary to understand what new developments mean. If our town’s school district is troubled or the local economy is suffering, we can observe that for ourselves and make reasonably well-informed judgments about what might be done about it. But if the issue is the war in Afghanistan, an uprising in Yemen, a naval confrontation in the South China Sea or the prospects that some battered economy will be bailed out successfully, most of us will lack the factual knowledge or conceptual understanding to know what is really going on. Even when basic information is readily available, it may be hard for most of us to put it in the appropriate context or make sense of what it means. When citizens and leaders seek to grasp the dizzying complexity of modern world politics, therefore, they must inevitably rely upon the knowledge and insights of specialists in military affairs, global trade and finance, diplomatic/international historians, area experts, and many others. And that means relying at least in part on academic scholars who have devoted their careers to mastering various aspects of world affairs and whose professional stature has been established through the usual procedures of academic evaluation (e.g., peer review, confidential assessments by senior scholars, the give-and-take of scholarly debate, etc.). Second, and more importantly, an independent academic community is an essential counterweight to official efforts to shape public understanding of key foreign policy issues. Governments enjoy enormous information asymmetries in many areas of political life, but these advantages are especially pronounced when dealing with international affairs.[5] Much of what we know about the outside world is ultimately derived from government sources (especially when dealing with national security affairs), and public officials often go to considerable lengths to shape how that information is reported to the public. Not only do governments collect vast amounts of information about the outside world, but they routinely use secrecy laws to control public access to this information. Government officials can shape public beliefs by leaking information strategically, or by co-opting sympathetic journalists whose professional success depends in part on maintaining access to key officials.[6] Given these information asymmetries and their obvious interest in retaining public support for their preferred policies, it is hardly surprising that both democratic and non-democratic leaders use their privileged access to information to build support for specific policies, at times by telling outright lies to their own citizens.[7] This situation creates few problems when the policies being sold make good strategic sense, but the results can be disastrous when they don’t. In such cases, alternative voices are needed to challenge conventional wisdoms and official rationales, and to suggest different solutions to the problem(s) at hand. Because scholars are protected by tenure and cherish the principle of academic freedom, and because they are not directly dependent on government support for their livelihoods, they are uniquely positioned to challenge prevailing narratives and policy rationales and to bring their knowledge and training to bear on vital policy issues. If we believe that unfettered debate helps expose errors and correct missteps, thereby fostering more effective public policies, then a sophisticated, diverse and engaged scholarly community is essential to a healthy polity. Third, the scholarly world also offers a potentially valuable model of constructive political disagreement. Political discourse in many countries (and especially the United States) has become increasingly personal and ad hominem, with little attention paid to facts and logic; a trend reinforced by an increasingly competitive and loosely regulated media environment. Within academia, by contrast, even intense disputes are supposed to be conducted in accordance with established canons of logic and evidence. Ad hominem attacks and other forms of character assassination have no place in scholarly discourse and are more likely to discredit those who employ them than those who are attacked. By bringing the norms of academic discourse into the public sphere, academic scholars could help restore some of the civility that has been lost in recent years. For all of these reasons, it is highly desirable for university-based scholars to play a significant role in public discourse about key real-world issues and to engage directly with policymakers where appropriate. As I have argued elsewhere, academic research can provide policymakers with relevant factual knowledge, provide typologies and frameworks that help policymakers and citizens make sense of emerging trends, and create and test theories that leaders can use to choose among different policy instruments. Academic theories can also be useful when they help policymakers anticipate events, when they identify recurring tendencies or obstacles to success, and when they facilitate the formulation of policy alternatives and the identification of benchmarks that can guide policy evaluation. Because academic scholars are free from daily responsibility for managing public affairs, they are in an ideal position to develop new concepts and theories to help us understand a complex and changing world.[8]

# 2

## Bataille’s anthropology re-establishes a human/nonhuman dichotomy – viewing animals as domesticated objects

## Brodine, Ph.D. Student in Anthropology at Columbia University, 06

[Maria, “We have never been modern: take 2”, http://www.columbia.edu/~sf2220/TT2007/web-content/Pages/maria1.html, 11/19/11, atl]

Modern anthropology is often said to be borne of humanism. According to Wikipedia, humanism is "a broad category of ethical philosophies that affirm the dignity and worth of all people, based on the ability to determine right and wrong by appeal to universal human qualities—particularly rationalism". Anthropologists have long sought after universal truths and morals that apply to all people, and have been responsible for a leftist turn in the social sciences and humanities recognizing that that there are many perspectives all over the world and, therefore, many means of approaching truth (see Benedict, Mead, Boas). In addition, many anthropologists were central to expanding the scientific threshold for how we talk about race and cultural differences. However, a critique of anthropological humanism – aside from some of its naïve associations with colonialism – could be that it is too human-centered, that it holds humans responsible for higher truths that are constructed to be somehow oppositional to, or transcendent above, nature and the world of "things". Although cultural anthropology has recently become more preoccupied with the world of things, many of its major texts – Baudrillard and Bataille among them – utilize in their models dichotomies between humans and things, subjects and objects, and so reinforce that habitus of scientific discourses that only legitimizes the scientific approach to things in relation to their relevance to people. It is debatable whether or not this is a bad thing, but one interesting way to illuminate the questionable nature of these dichotomies is to look at the way we discuss animals in media and in science. Animals, according to Baudrillard and Bataille, exist somewhere between the planes of subject and object (Baudrillard 2005:95), and so are somewhat problematic to this conception of the world. These particular theorists say between, but treat animals as if they belong squarely in the object category (95): The pathos-laden presence of a dog, cat, a tortoise or a canary is a testimonial to a failure of the interhuman relationship and an attendant recourse to a narcissistic domestic universe where subjectivity finds fulfilment in the most quietistic way … The object is in fact the finest of domestic animals … They all converge submissively upon me and accumulate with the greatest of ease in my consciousness. However, a quick look at discourses concerning animals shows that the relationship between humans and animals, including domestic ones, is far more complex than this. One useful way to begin to look at this issue is by examining the way the boundaries between human and animals are portrayed in media, themselves objects through which we converse and exchange, and whose subtle use of images and "given truths" reveal a great deal about the way we have constructed ourselves as beings with spirit, with choice, and therefore in a realm apart from those things that are assumed to be devoid of consciousness, such as rocks, cows, monsters and mice. In literature, movies and common characters of folklore, a fear of "monsters" is often expressed, beings that are otherworldly or subhuman, and which often exhibit animalistic traits and behaviors or which are human-animal hybrids. A ready example is of course the Werewolf, who often appears as a good-natured human afraid of, but unable to control the wild instincts brought about by nature. Werewolves represent madness, violence, and sometimes lust, as we see in the above illustration. They often seem to revel in animalistic pleasures, and are associated with the "profane" and uncivilized behaviors brought on by reckless abandon. Humans become victims of those humans who have werewolves within them, much in the same way that many religions teach us that we are prey to our own desires (Engelke discusses this in Materiality 2005:118-139). Among most of these stories there is a common theme having to do with an irrepressible nature, a desire to behave like an animal who, as Bataille says, lives in a world without meaning, of "immanence", an inability to differentiate between self and other – essentially, a state devoid of morals. Stories such as those about werewolves reflect a fear of this state as an external imposition upon ourselves and what it means to be human. Our fear of the animal-human hybrid, or perhaps the animal nature of humans, can be attributed to the assumption often reflected in science that humans alone possess consciousness and subjectivity, while the world of animals and objects is somehow wild, alien, guided only by instinct. This assumption is described (and endorsed) by Bataille (20): Nothing, as a matter of fact, is more closed to us than this animal life from which we are descended. Nothing is more foreign to our way of thinking than the earth in the middle of the silent universe and having neither the meaning that man gives things, nor the meaninglessness of things as soon as we try to imagine them without a consciousness that reflects them. In reality, we can never imagine things without consciousness except arbitrarily, since we and imagine imply consciousness ... However, the assumption that humans alone possess consciousness and that monsters and animals don't share some sense of the social is, according to some, only an assumption. Mary Shelley brought this up in Frankenstein, when she takes up the banner carried by the likes of John Milton and Danté, and gives a voice to the lost, and to the monster. In the end of the book, the monster, who has been characterized as a murderer, and who is referred to as a "wretch" and unpalatably ugly by the narrator, explains his story. Shelley's novel is different from most monster stories, which are about the good killing the evil guy, or a hero overcoming his own vices, or some version thereof. In Frankenstein, we are forced to feel some compassion for the monster who is in the end driven to defeat not by his own nature but by the neglect and derision he has experienced in the world of humans (Shelley 1996:154): No sympathy may I ever find. When I first sought it, it was the love of virtue, the feelings of happiness and affection with which my whole being overflowed, that I wished to be participated. But now, that virtue has become to me a shadow, and that happiness and affection are turned into bitter and loathing despair, in what should I seek for sympathy? I am content to suffer alone, while my sufferings shall endure … Once my fancy was soothed with dreams of virtue, of fame, and of enjoyment. Once I falsely hoped to meet with beings who, pardoning my outward form, would love me for the excellent qualities which I was capable of bringing forth… But now vice has degraded me beneath the meanest animal. The Cow, an Iranian film by Dariush Mehrjui that is acclaimed as a landmark in international cinema, is about a man who lives in a rural village and happens to be the only person who owns a cow, and therefore is a wealthy and respected man in the village. He is attached to the cow, and treats her like a person, even more so than his wife. After we meet Hassan and the cow, we see that he has decided to sleep in the shed, in order to guard the cow from night marauders. The other villagers do not seem to regard this as strange since the cow is very valuable and so it makes sense that he would covet her. When the cow suddenly and mysteriously dies while Hassan is away, the villagers decide that they will hide the news from him by claiming that the cow ran away. They bury her and all agree to keep the secret, even hiding a townsman in order to be able to proclaim that he went off in search of her. Indeed, Hassan does not take the news well, nor does he believe the villagers. He begins to assume the identity of the cow, until in every manner he behaves like a wretched, threatened cow. The villagers try to help him, but he treats them as enemies. In the end, they decide to bind him and lead him, in driving rain, far away to the city to obtain medical help. In the process, they resort to treating him like an animal. There is then a poignant moment when we see the shame of the village leader Eslam who, driven to his own madness, resorts to whipping Hassan, transforming the formerly well respected member of the community, a fellow human being who had great influence, to a disobedient animal. The other men stop and gaze at Eslam, trapped in the same realization, and the onus of the burden of transgression of human/animal boundaries lies not on the sick mad man, but on Eslam himself. Hassan is shown here eating grass, just like a cow. In this scene he says "I am not Hassan" in response to the villagers' polite and concerned attempts to bring him back to sanity. Aside from the political implications of the film, which have to do with the national politics of Iran at the time the film was made, it portrays a rare sensitivity toward the man who becomes an animal to avoid the realm of the human social world where he only meets threats and deception, even from those who mean well. It is also interesting that consciousness is not lost by Hassan's transgression, but in the transgression of the villagers when they reach the point where they no longer see him as a fellow human being and so do violence upon his person. Interestingly, this kind of transgression occurs often in science, not only in the talk of social science but in the hard sciences as well, especially where human medicine is involved. Shelley's critique of the scientist is not far off base in a world where technology now invites the possibility of the creation of hybrids. As the Frankenstein monster has become a popular figure in pop culture, he has lost his voice and become largely just another representation of that which we fear, a hybrid that comes close enough to being human that the ultimate transgression is made by all humankind in the creation of such a being, and therefore something for which we must atone. Such a theme can be found in the movie Aliens: Resurrection, in which we see dozens of test tubes full of grotesque living animal-alien hybrids, results of science gone wrong and unregulated. Sigourney Weaver, the heroine and herself a hybrid, kills them all. Yet despite this fear, scientific experiments having to do with hybrids is sanctioned, as long as the resulting hybrid is on the side of animal rather than human. Only when the creature becomes too human, does the act become inhumane. In 2005, the National Geographic Magazine published an article announcing that a researcher would be allowed to go ahead with his research plan to create a mouse and human hybrid "as long as it remains more mouse than human" (Mott:1-2). This precaution is imposed as a result of the fear of the Frankenstein monster, a fear that something would be too human. Only then would the project become too "inhumane". Such projects follow the experiments conducted in the nineties and early Millenium in which scientists grew human-like ears in the spines of living mice who were implanted with cartilage cells (incidentally, cells derived from cow cartilage rather than human). In a PBS article on the subject, a picture of the ear-toting mouse is captioned as follows: "After this human ear is removed, the mouse will remain healthy" as if to suggest to the liberal readers of PBS that despite the unnerving transgression of human/animal boundaries, the use of mice as human organ factories can be a "humane" practice. Underlying this practice of defining humane practice as that which is applied to humans (or hypothetical hybrids that are too human), and so limiting the amount and types of transgressions which we are allowed, is the assumption that humans own consciousness and subjectivity. The issue goes beyond sentience, since nearly everyone would agree that despite animals' subhuman status, they are indeed sentient; however, to be humane to a being that is only sentient is completely different than being humane to one that is subjective. To the likes of Latour, observing people – the realm of the social – as an entity to be explored separately from other fields, from the so-called "natural sciences", is detrimental to the social sciences. Rather, people exist embedded within a constructed world of things and institutions, and as such we are things in our own right. Animals, too, are members of these complex "sociotechnological networks" to which he refers. As we see in films like Charlotte's Web and Babe, the animals are imbued with human characteristics, especially speech, so that they have the ability to speak for themselves. By anthropomorphizing the animal, we are able to imagine what it would be like for an item of livestock, such as a pig, to be raised for the purpose of human consumption and an industry with little regard for animal welfare. As part of this type of portrayal however, these characters or caricatures are removed from the animal world and classified in a way as creatures to be understood, in our imaginations, to be on the same level of humans. As idols in a sense, taking on human attributes, these cartoons inhabit the realm of the sacred – to the point where they become fable-bearers, messengers of "human" morals and values in relation to other humans, or to life in general, not to nonhuman animals. Baudrillard reduces the human preoccupation with domestication of animals as pets to a behavior akin to collecting antiques. Aside from being shortsighted, Baudrillard overlooks the fact that animals are often more than just objects, or commodities, and themselves enter the realm of the social as companions, guides, etc. Perhaps it is that we feel an affinity with animals beyond the capabilities of speech, but are not quite able to explain this affinity without admitting to ourselves the degree to which we are animals ourselves and so embedded in natural and social worlds between which the distinctions we draw might not be so clear. Fundamentally, it is difficult if not impossible for anthropology to divorce itself from its humanistic origins. Humans are at the center of our debates, and we study humans as something essentially apart from the rest of the world, governed by social laws as opposed to natural laws. This is the central tenet which we are beginning to question in Thing Theory, as we question whether we humans are at the center of the universe, or if that is simply a construction of the sciences as we know them.

## Focusing on liberation requires re-affirmation of animality to justify the liberation of those the affirmative targets which re-entrenches speciesism.

**Kim, UC Irvine political science professor, 2009**

(Claire, “Slaying the Beast: Reflections on Race, Culture, and Species”, <http://aapf.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/kalfou.pdf>, ldg)

Dyson gives a perfunctory nod to the animal question and then turns to focus on the issue of true moral significance and urgency: racism. It is as if defending the humanity of Black people requires reaffirming the animality of animals, their categorical subordination. Similarly, feminist Sandra Kobin asks why Vick was treated more harshly than professional athletes who beat their wives and girlfriends, writing: “Beat a woman? Play on; Beat a dog? You’re gone” (Kobin 2007). Kobin does not critique dogfighting for its promotion of masculinist violence or show any appreciation of the fact that women and animals are both victims of male violence. Instead, she bristles at the idea that dogs might be valued more than women and insists that women are the victims that really matter. What is troubling about the racial persecution narrative advanced by Vick’s defenders is not that it is wrong per se but that it subsumes, deflects, and ultimately denies the other moral question being raised, the animal question. Its response to the interdependency of Blackness and animalness in the white imagination is not to deconstruct both notions but rather to vigorously affirm that Blacks are human and therefore deserving of better treatment than animals. It is a narrative that embraces an ideology of human supremacy in the name of fighting white supremacy and sees no contradiction in this position. It is as if Dyson and Kobin are saying that people of color and women have the most at stake in reinscribing the impassable line between humans and animals, whereas these groups may in fact have the most at stake in its erasure. Most humans are unaccustomed to thinking about how their politics reinscribe notions of human superiority over all other species, but the notion of species-free space is as improbable as that of race-free space. Categories of difference saturate our thinking, our discourse, our experience, and our actions

## Speciesism makes possible “systematic beastilization” which justifies non-criminal putting to death of the other—root cause of all oppression

**Rossini, postdoctoral Fellow ASCA, 2006**

(Manuela, “To the Dogs: Companion speciesism and the new feminist materialism”, text and image Volume 3, September, <http://intertheory.org/rossini>, ldg)

What is equally sobering, however, is the fact that the most radical metaposthumanists (and the humanities more broadly) do not quite manage to make an epistemological break with liberal humanism, insofar as their writing is also marked by an unquestioned “speciesism”; i.e., in the definition of ethicist Peter Singer who popularised the term three decades ago in his book Animal Liberation, “a prejudice or attitude of bias in favour of the interests of members of one’s own species and against those of members of other species.”[17] Both postcolonial, feminist and queer theories and discussion of subjectivity, identity, and difference as well as the claims on the right to freedom by new social movements have recourse to an Enlightenment concept of the subject whose conditio sine qua non is the absolute control of that subject over the life of nonhuman others/objects. The rhetorical strategy of radically separating non-white, non-male and non-heterosexual human beings from animals in order to have the subject status of these members of the human species recognised was and is successful and also legitimate – given that the racist, sexist and homophobic discourse of animality or an animalistic „nature“ has hitherto served to exclude most individuals of those groups of people from many privileges – but the speciesist logic of the dominance of human animals over nonhuman animals has remained in place. If we fight racism and (hetero)sexism because we declare discrimination on the basis of specific and identifiable characteristics – such as “black“, “woman” or “lesbian“ to be wrong and unjust, then we should also vehemently oppose the exploitation, imprisoning, killing and eating of nonhuman animals on the basis of their species identity. Moreover, if our research and teaching as cultural critics endeavours to do justice to the diversity of human experience and life styles and feel responsible towards marginalised others, should we then not seriously think about Cary Wolfe’s question „how must our work itself change when the other to which it tries to do justice is no longer human?“[18] Wolfe is not making a claim for animal rights here – at least not primarily. This is also why his book puns on “rites/rights“: Animal Rites is the intervention of the anti-speciesist cultural critic who scrutinizes the rituals that human beings form around the figures of animals, including the literary and cinematic enactments of cannibalism, monstrosity and normativity. Wolfe subsumes all of these stagings under the heading the discourse of species, with “discourse“ understood in the sense of Michel Foucault as not only a rhetoric but above all as the condition for the production and ordering of meaning and knowledge in institutions like medicine, the law, the church, the family or universities. In addition, Wolfe wants to sharpen our awareness that a speciesist metaphysics has also a deadly impact on human animals, especially because speciesism is grounded in the juridical state apparatus: “the full transcendence of the ‘human‘ requires the sacrifice of the ‘animal‘ and the animalistic, which in turn makes possible a symbolic economy in which we engage in what Derrida [calls] a ‚non-criminal putting to death‘ of other humans as well by marking them as animal.“[19] The dog lies buried in the singular: “The animal – what a word!”, Derrida exclaims: “[t]he animal is a word, it is an appellation that men have instituted, a name they have given themselves the right and authority to give to another living creature [à l'autre vivant].” [20] In order to problematise this naming, Derrida has created the neologism l'animot: I would like to have the plural of animals heard in the singular. […] We have to envisage the existence of ‘living creatures’ whose plurality cannot be assembled within the single figure of an animality that is simply opposed to humanity. […] The suffix mot in l’animot should bring us back to the word […]. It opens onto the referential experience of the thing as such, as what it is in its being, and therefore to the reference point by means of which one has always sought to draw the limit, the unique and indivisible limit held to separate man from animal. As I propose in what follows, this clearly defined caesura of the „anthropological machine”,[21] which according to Giorgio Agamben was already set in motion by the old Greeks and the messianic thinkers and then accelerated by scientific taxonomies and the birth of anthropology, can be bridged with the help of a zoontological approach and companion speciesism. Posthumanist zoontologies The desperate cry of the historical person Joseph Carey Merrick (in the movie The Elephant Man of 1980), “I am not an animal! I am a human being! I...am...a man!” – for recognition of his human identity through which he claims his right to social integration and personal integrity, is very understandable and hurts. But his words nevertheless reflect the poverty of the humanist stance, insofar as traditional humanism can only secure the “proper” essence of humanitas via a rigid separation from animalitas. If one reads the reports by the victims and witnesses of the tortures in the military prison of Abu Ghraib, it seems to me that it is precisely the continued insistence and reinforcement of the animal-human boundary that legitimises the committed atrocities: Some of the things they did was make me sit down like a dog, … and … bark like a dog and they were laughing at me … One of the police was telling me to crawl … A few days before [this], … the guy who wears glasses, he put red woman's underwear over my head … pissing on me and laughing on me … he put a part of his stick … inside my ass … she was playing with my dick … And they were taking pictures of me during all these instances. … [Another prisoner] was forced to insert a finger into his anus and lick it. He was also forced to lick and chew a shoe. … He was then told to insert his finger in his nose during questioning … his other arm in the air. The Arab interpreter told him he looked like an elephant. [They were] given badges with the letter ‘C’ on it.[22] The US soldiers reduce their prisoners to their corporeal being, to animal being, and then make fun of this “bare life“[23] Instead of accepting their own vulnerability and mortality that they share with their victims as well as with other living beings, the torturers use the “systematic bestialization“[24] of the prisoners to strengthen their own sense of freedom and autonomy and to concomitantly withdraw the right to protection guaranteed by the humanitarian rights of the Geneva Conventions; after all, as barking dogs, crawling insects and ‘elephant men’, these ‘creatures’ cannot respond to the name, the word, the interpellation “human.“ The implicit and explicit analogies between racism, sexism, homophobia that accompany the above description of the torture methods, confirm that the power of the “discourse of species” to affect human others depends on the prior acceptance of the institution “speciesism;” i.e. on taking for granted that the inflicting of pain and the killing of nonhuman animals by human animals does not constitute a criminal act but, on the contrary, is legal. This is why Derrida speaks of the “carnophallogocentrism“[25] of Western metaphysics. And here Wolfe’s argument comes full circle: [Since] the humanist discourse of species will always be available for use by some humans against other humans as well, to countenance violence against the social other of whatever species – or gender, or race, or class, or sexual difference. . . we need to understand that the ethical and philosophical urgency of confronting the institution of speciesism and crafting a posthumanist theory of the subject has nothing to do with whether you like animals. We all, human and nonhuman alike, have a stake in the discourse and institution of speciesism; it is by no means limited to its overwhelmingly direct and disproportionate effects on animals.[26]

NOTE- conditio sine qua non

## The alternative is to embrace the standpoint of the animal—this overcomes the humanist bias of the affirmative scholarship, connects the experiences of human and non-human animals and allows for total liberation by providing understanding of all oppression

**Best, UT El Paso philosophy professor, 2009**

(Steven, “The Rise of Critical Animal Studies: Putting Theory into Action and Animal Liberation into Higher Education “, Journal for Critical Animal Studies, Volume VII, Issue 1, 2009, <http://www.criticalanimalstudies.org/JCAS/Journal_Articles_download/issue_9/JCAS%20VII%20Issue%201%20MAY%20ISSUE%20The%20Rise%20of%20Critical%20Animal%20Studies%20pgs%209-52.pdf>, ldg)

Postmodern critiques have been hugely influential in many theoretical strains of animal studies, but theorists could not employ the insights of postmodernism without overcoming their limitations. This is crucial for two reasons. First, deconstructionists and social constructionists are typically speciesists and dogmatic humanists (even those who deconstruct “humanism”!) who rarely challenge the human/animal dichotomy and analyze how it is used to advance false views of all animal, human and nonhuman. Second, they fail to see that the human/animal opposition underpins oppositions between reason/emotions, thought/body, men/women, white/black, and Western/non-Western. Yet as noted by theorists (e.g., Keith Thomas, Jim Mason, and Charles Patterson) 9 with broader optics and more inclusive theories than humanism, speciesism and animal domestication provided the conceptual template and social practice whereby humans begin to clearly distinguish between “human rationality” and “animal irrationality.” 10 Animals – defined as “brute beasts” lacking “rationality” – thereby provided the moral basement into which one could eject women, people of color, and other humans deemed to be subhuman or deficient in (Western male) “humanity.” Whereas nearly all histories, even so-called “radical” narratives, have been written from the human standpoint, a growing number of theorists have broken free of the speciesist straightjacket to examine history and society from the standpoint of (nonhuman) animals. This approach, as I define it, considers the interaction between human and nonhuman animals – past, present, and future -- and the need for profound changes in the way humans define themselves and relate to other sentient species and to the natural world as a whole. What I call the “animal standpoint” examines the origins and development of societies through the dynamic, symbiotic interrelationship between human and nonhuman animals. It therefore interprets history not from an evolutionary position that reifies human agency as the autonomous actions of a Promethean species, but rather from a co-evolutionary perspective that sees nonhuman animals as inseparably embedded in human history and as dynamic agents in their own right. 11 The animal standpoint seeks to illuminate the origins and development of dominator cultures, to preserve the wisdom and heritage of egalitarian values and social relations, and to discern what moral and social progress means in a far deeper sense than what is discernible through humanist historiography, anthropology, social theory, and philosophy. However “critical,” “subversive,” “groundbreaking,” or “radical” their probing of historical and social dynamics, very few theorists have managed to see beyond the humanist bias in order to adopt a proper analytical and moral relation to other animals; they have failed, in other words, to grasp the importance of nonhuman animals in human life,

 the profound ways in which the domination of humans over other animals creates conflict and disequilibrium in human relations to one another and to the Earth as a whole. Thus, the animal standpoint seeks generally to illuminate human biological and social evolution in important new ways, such as reveal the origins, dynamics, and development of dominator cultures, social hierarchies, economic and political inequalities, and asymmetrical systems of power that are violent and destructive to everything they touch. Providing perspectives and insights unattainable through other historical approaches, the animal standpoint analyzes how the domination of humans over nonhuman animals is intimately linked to the domination of humans over one another, as it also brings to light the environmental impact of large-scale animal slaughter and exploitation. A key thesis of animal standpoint theory is that nonhuman animals have been key driving and shaping forces of human thought, psychology, moral and social life, and history overall, and that in fundamental ways, the oppression of human over human is rooted in the oppression of human over nonhuman animal. Animal standpoint theory thus leads us ineluctably to understanding the commonalities of oppression, and hence to alliance politics and the systemic revolutionary viewpoint of total liberation. 12 It demonstrates – would that dogmatic Left, eco-humanists, and so-called “environmentalists” take note! -- the profound importance of veganism and the animal rights/liberation movement for human liberation, peace and justice, and ecological healing and balance.

# Solvency

## The aff’s call to sacrifice is corrupted with self-serving concerns for transcendence and the ballot—turns the aff by preventing them from having a real sacrifice—vote neg to sacrifice the sacrifice.

Keenan, Fairfield University Philosophy Professor, 2005

(Dennis, The Question of Sacrifice, IUP, accessed via NetLibrary, pg. 1-3, cab)

Sacrifice sacrifice. Ours is the moment in history that calls for this strange imperative. This moment in the genealogy of sacrifice is (in the words of Derrida) a dissident and inventive rupture with respect to tradition. It is a moment in history that calls for the sacrifice of sacrifice. It is a strange moment and a strange imperative. But this “work”—of sacrificing sacrifice, on sacrificing sacrifice—will accomplish very little, almost nothing. And that will make all the difference. In the genealogy of Western sacrifice, one can trace an increasing interiorization, spiritualization, and dialecticization of sacrifice. Throughout this genealogy, sacrifice has predominately been understood as a necessary passage through suffering and/or death (of either oneself or someone else) on the way to a supreme moment of transcendent truth. Sacrifice effects the revelation of truth that overcomes the negative aspect of the sacrifice. In a word, sacrifice pays. One gets a return on one’s investment. But this economical understanding of sacrifice only makes “sense” if it is pushed to its “logical” extreme. Ironically, it is as if the economical understanding of sacrifice inevitably unworks itself. The work of sacrifice unworks itself. To be what it “is” sacrifice must sacrifice itself. Sacrifice is essentially a holocaust. In sacrifice, all (holos) is burned (caustos). There is no remainder. As such, it is essentially essenceless. It involves selflessness, giving without reserve. Sacrifice has to be beyond calculation and hope of a reward, so as not to be construed as self-serving (and, therefore, not a genuine sacrifice). Sacrifice must necessarily be a sacrifice for nothing, a sacrifice for no reason, no goal. It must necessarily be a nonsensical aneconomical sacrifice. According to the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus exhorts his disciples to sacrifice, specifically to give alms, pray, and fast. The sacrifice must be performed without calculation. This extends even to the simple intention of sacrificing. It extends to whatever takes recognition into account. As such, the exhortation to sacrifice comes with the supplemental instruction that it must be done in secret: “do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.” But this exhortation to sacrifice without reserve is only half of the story. The aneconomical understanding of sacrifice inevitably gets sublated by an economical understanding of sacrifice. Even though sacrifice must be aneconomical to genuinely be what it “is,” sacrifice inevitably has been interpreted in economic terms. The sublation of the aneconomical understanding of sacrifice by the economical understanding of sacrifice is likewise evident in the Gospel of Matthew. Though Jesus exhorts his disciples to give alms, pray, and fast in secret, he adds that God the Father sees in secret. • But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matt. 6:3, NRSV) • But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matt. 6:6, NRSV) • But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matt. 6:17, NRSV) Though the sacrifice must be performed without expectation of a terrestrial reward, it comes with a celestial reward. Sacrifice is sacrificed. The aneconomy is sublated by a transcendent economy. If one sacrifices without reserve here on earth, then one’s reward will be great in heaven. The supplemental instruction that the sacrifice must be done in secret (“do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing”) is the condition of the possibility and (at the same time) the condition of the impossibility of sacrifice. The supplemental instruction is necessary, yet impossible. If the essence of a sacrificial action precludes receiving a return on one’s investment of suffering and/or death, and if a sacrificial action only has meaning insofar as it is essentially an all-burning holocaust, and if this all-burning holocaust is essentially an essenceless aneconomical sacrifice that is inevitably sacrificed to an economy, then what is (if it “is” anything at all) sacrifice as such? How does it transform the transcendental intention of sacrifice? How does it transform the very intentionality of sacrifice (i.e., can one perform such a sacrifice)? How does sacrifice as such transform our understanding of sacrificial action and responsibility? Sacrifice is sacrifice only as the sacrifice of sacrifice. Sacrifice is (genuinely) sacrifice only as the sacrifice of (an economical understanding of) sacrifice. It is necessary for sacrifice to consume itself in an all-burning holocaust in order to be what it “is.” Sacrifice sacrifice. This is an imperative that “works” in a variety of ways (and should be read as such). The first “sacrifice” in this strange imperative is an ethical action that one is obliged to do (for sacrifice to genuinely be sacrifice), but that interrupts itself in the very “doing” of the action. Rather than merely a work to be accomplished, or an action to be performed, sacrifice is experienced as a call to action that calls itself into question. It becomes a work that unworks itself in the very performance of the work. But the imperative to sacrifice sacrifice is, at the same time, an imperative that calls into question (sacrifices) the sacrifice without reserve (as well the imperative itself). It is inevitably impossible, for the very intention to sacrifice (even sacrifice) is the sublation of the aneconomical understanding of sacrifice by the economical understanding of sacrifice. Said otherwise, the all-burning holocaust of the sacrifice of sacrifice burns itself (as sacrifice without reserve) up; that is, it burns itself into the existence of the phenomenal economy of sacrifice. Therefore, the imperative to sacrifice sacrifice is at one and the same time the imperative to sacrifice (economical) sacrifice and the imperative of not being able to sustain this pure sacrifice without reserve (as well as the imperative itself). The necessary sacrifice of (economical) sacrifice ( aneconomical sacrifice) is inevitably impossible; it is inevitably the sacrifice of (aneconomical) sacrifice ( economical sacrifice). Ours is the moment in history, if only for a moment, that calls for dwelling with this aporia of sacrifice rather than stilling this strange oscillation between the aneconomical and the economical (by sublating the aneconomical into the economical). At this moment, if only for a moment, the possibility of sacrifice is its impossibility. At this moment, if only for a moment, the meaning of sacrifice undergoes slippage. Said otherwise, ours is the moment in history when sacrifice is experienced at a certain distance from itself. It is experienced as approach, as “not yet.” The necessary step beyond economical sacrifice is inevitably not beyond. One is called to necessarily, yet impossibly, dwell in (borrowing a phrase from Blanchot) the step/ not beyond (le pas au-dela` ) sacrifice. Sacrifice can only sacrifice itself over and over (in an eternal return of the same) because what it seeks to overcome (the nihilistic revelation of truth that sublates the negative aspect of sacrifice) makes this sacrifice of itself both necessary and useless

. The truth is eternally postponed in a necessary sacrificial gesture that can only sacrifice itself, thereby rendering itself useless. Sacrifice begins—echoing Blanchot in “Literature and the Right to Death”—at the moment when sacrifice becomes a question. This question—the “question” that seeks to pose itself in sacrifice, the “question” that is its essence— is posed to sacrifice by sacrifice that has become aneconomical. This question is the irreducible double meaning of sacrifice as economical and sacrifice as aneconomical. The question of sacrifice, sacrifice’s question, is the essence of sacrifice. Sacrifice is what it is only in the necessary, yet impossible (and useless), turning of sacrifice as economical into sacrifice as aneconomical. “The question awaits an answer, but the answer does not appease the question, and even if it puts an end to the question, it does not put an end to the waiting that is the question of the question” (EI 16/IC 14). This question that seeks to pose itself in sacrifice, the question that is its essence, is the necessary, yet (paradoxically) impossible (and useless), sacrifice of the sacrifice. This question is the waiting (without hope) that is the sacrifice of the sacrifice. The necessary, yet impossible (and useless), sacrificing of sacrifice does not, however, absolve one of the responsibility of sacrificing sacrifice. Dwelling with this aporia or question alerts one to the self-serving aspect of sacrificial responsibility without thereby absolving one of the necessity of sacrificial responsibility. Dwelling with this aporia or question means undertaking the necessary yet humbling task of incessant vigilance and questioning that is philosophy itself. Emphasizing either the “necessity” or the “impossibility” (and “uselessness”) of sacrificing sacrifice (at the expense of the other) misses what the strange “logic” of sacrificing sacrifice forces one to think, and leaves one vulnerable to naively justifying a self-serving sacrifice that is obviously nothing but irresponsible. One is called to dwell with the aporia or question characteristic of the strange “logic” of sacrificing sacrifice. Dwelling with the aporia or question of sacrifice will disturb sacrifice on one level while at the same time reinforcing its most extreme ramifications.

## Aff fails and destroys true existence—finite life cannot be sacrificed because it is already given to the world—no transcendence exists to provide meaning to the sacrifice.

Nancy, European Graduate School Philosophy Professor, 1991

(Jean-Luc, translated by Richard Livingston, "The Unsacrificeable," Yale French Studies 79, pg. 35-37, cab)

Consequently, on the other hand, it should be definitively acknowledged that the Western economy of sacrifice has come to a close, and that it is closed by the decomposition of the sacrificial apparatus itself, that bloody transgression by which the "moment of the finite" would be transcended and appropriated infinitely. But finitude is not a "moment" in a process or an economy. A finite existence does not have to let its meaning spring forth through a destructive explosion of its finitude. Not only does it not have to do so; in a sense it cannot even do so: thought rigorously, thought according to its Ereignis, "finitude" signifies that existence cannot be sacrificed. It cannot be sacrificed because, in itself, it is already, not sacrificed, but offered to the world. There is a resemblance, and the two can be mistaken for one another; and yet, there is nothing more dissimilar. One could say: existence is in essence sacrificed. To say this would be to reproduce, in one of its forms, the fundamental utterance of Western sacrifice. And we would have to add this major form, which necessarily follows: that existence is, in its essence, sacrifice. To say that existence is offered is no doubt to use a word from the sacrificial vocabulary (and if we were in the German language, it would be the same word: Opfer, Aufopferung). But it is an attempt to mark that, if we have to say that existence is sacrificed, it is not in any case sacrificed by anyone, nor is it sacrificed to anything. "Existence is offered" means the finitude of existence. Finitude is not negativity cut out of being and granting access, through this cutting, to the restored integrity of being or to sovereignty. Finitude utters what Bataille utters in saying that sovereignty is nothing. Finitude simply corresponds to the generative formula of the thought of existence, which is the thought of the finitude of being, or the thought of the meaning of being as the finitude of meaning. This formula states: "the "essence" of Dasein lies in its existence.22 If its essence (in quotation marks) is in its existence, it is that the existent has no essence. It cannot be returned to the trans-appropriation of an essence. But it is offered, that is to say, it is presented to the existence that it is. The existence exposes being in its essence disappropriated of all essence, and thus of all "being: " the being that is not. Such negativity, however, does not come dialectically to say that it shall be, that it shall finally be a transappropriated Self. On the contrary, this negation affirms the inappropriate as its most appropriate form of appropriation, and in truth as the unique mode of all appropriation. Also, the negative mode of this utterance: "being is not" does not imply a negation but an ontological affirmation. This is what is meant by Ereignis. The existent arrives, takes place, and this is nothing but a being-thrown into the world. In this being-thrown, it is offered. But it is offered by no one, to no one. Nor is it self-sacrificed, if nothing-no being, no subject-pre- cedes its being-thrown. In truth, it is not even offered or sacrificed to a Nothing, to a Nothingness or an Other in whose abyss it would come to enjoy its own impossibility of being impossibly. It is exactly at this point that both Bataille and Heidegger must be relentlessly corrected. Corrected, that is: withdrawn from the slightest tendency towards sacrifice. For this tendency towards sacrifice, or through sacrifice, is always linked to a fascination with an ecstasy turned towards an Other or towards an absolute Outside, into which the subject is diverted/spilled the better to be restored.

Western sacrifice is haunted by an Outside of finitude, as obscure and bot- tomless as this "outside" may be. But there is no "outside." The event of existence, the "there is," means that there is nothing else. There is no "obscure God." There is no obscurity that would be God. In this sense, and since there is no longer any clear divine epiphany, I might say that what technique presents us with could simply be: clarity without God. The clarity, however, of an open space in which an open eye can no longer be fascinated. Fascination is already proof that something has been accorded to obscurity and its bloody heart. But there is nothing to accord, nothing but "nothing." "Nothing" is not an abyss open to the out- side. "Nothing" affirms finitude, and this "nothing" at once returns exis- tence to itself and to nothing else. It de-subjectivizes it, removing all pos- sibility of trans-appropriating itself through anything but its own event, advent. Existence, in this sense, its proper sense, is unsacrificeable.

## The aff presents a metaphysic of transience and death—this reinstates a teleological view of the self, turning the aff, and leads to capitalist cooption and withdrawal from politics.

Johnson, York University English and Related Literature PhD, ‘3

( David, MA in Continental Philosophy “Why view time from the perspective of times end? : A Bergsonian attack on Bataillean Transience” *Time* Society2003 vol. 12, no 2-3 pg. 218 via sage journals accessed: 10-24-12 mlb)

Life proceeds at its own pace, and therefore does not slip towards death in a transient manner. Time’s duration makes up the very substance of life, and duration’s pains or pleasures cannot be avoided or speeded up towards their ends except artificially (in this sense pro-transience, which anticipates the end of all experience in death, is existentially an escapist view of time). People want to avoid spending long periods in slavery or in pain, and wish instead to enjoy extended periods of free time or pleasure. Pro-transience thought, however, evades this sense of time as a material stake. Pro-transience thought therefore maintains a politically impotent view of time  I shall assume that time cannot be separated from space, and that time is essentially a view of what happens to space. If we see time as encompassing all of space, it is difficult to see time as rushing headlong towards an end, since we must imagine time as having to move through the tangled matter of space to get to any end: a tortuous procedure. Time does not cut through space instantly like a magic knife towards an end, so why should we view all time from its end? Moreover, time is ‘everything that happens’, involving the irreducible durations of pleasure or pain, slavery or sovereignty. Again, with such a rich view of time, it is hard to see how time can be authentically described as slipping easily towards its extinction. Since time is made up of everything that occurs, the philosophical act of analysing time from the point of view of the annihilation of all occurrence is narrow to the most extreme degree. How can this backward glance, this posthumous look at time from the illusory vantage point of nothingness, not be an emaciated view, a ‘little’ view? How can such a narrow, such a restricted view of time not be a slave perspective in the Nietzschean sense? Pro-Transience, Accumulation and Projects Transience is ironically the motor of accumulation. Projects can only take place through systems that defer time’s lived spontaneity and flow. Grandiose projects can only take place on the ruins of time. Christian and romantic pessimism depresses and humbles the worker, leading him or her to become detached from the experience of rich duration and to invest the resulting alienated energies in any project of salvation whatsoever. An over-stimulated sense of individual temporal finitude induces the worker to invest his or her energies in absurd long-term projects, the completion of which may transcend his or her own lifetime. A pronounced emphasis on the consciousness that everyone’s life is finite without exception, and in essentially the same way, fosters the belief that no one is especially favoured by that economy which is itself built out of a culture of transience, and so any social and political tensions generated by jealousy are neutralized. At the same time, everyone is assigned their proper place within any given hierarchy under the sign of universal transience. The workers’ disinvestment of energies from rich duration and re-investment of these energies in industrial projects is furthered by the time-consuming rigours of the industrial work process itself. In a society increasingly dominated by advanced technology and science, time appears to fly because it seems to be programmed to the bitter end. The violent aesthetics of postmodern culture provide the final touch in bowing the head of the worker, making him or her derive solace from the vain promises of the future. Although pro-transience is the motor of accumulation and project, contempo rary postmodernists and post-structuralists feel that it is a sense of transience which will happily free us from accumulation and project. They assume that a sense of our essential mortality will free us to withdraw our vital energies from systems that would invest these energies in projects that falsely claim to give us immortal life; we are then free to squander these energies in a sovereign manner. For postmodernists and post-structuralists, the fleeting nature of time and the inevitability of death show linear time to be unreal. We would do well therefore to drop those unreal projects that are built on linear time. But captains of industry also affirm the fleeting nature of time and the inevitability of death. They encourage us to capitalize on the unreal nature of time in order to bring unreal projects into being. Postmodernists and post-structuralists simply offer the teleology of final death in place of the teleology of project. It is not possible to free that rich duration which is coercively funnelled into projects via a sense of transience that is just as violent towards rich duration. My critique focuses on the contemporary philosophical affirmation of transience rather than on any wider cultural affirmation of transience. Continental philosophy has been dominated by pro-transience thinking throughout the 20th century and up to the present day, led by pro-transience thinkers such as Heidegger and Bataille, who have influenced the work of postmodernist/poststructuralist thinkers including Barthes, Deleuze, Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard and Baudrillard. I concentrate on the work of Bataille, since his work represents the most extreme example of pro-transience thought.

## Ecstatic transcendence and embracing death are life-denying—death is the negation of affirmation—turns their MPX

Johnson, York University English and Related Literature PhD, ‘3

( David, MA in Continental Philosophy “Why view time from the perspective of times end? : A Bergsonian attack on Bataillean Transience” *Time* Society2003 vol. 12, no 2-3 pg. 218 via sage journals accessed: 10-24-12 mlb)

Bataille affirms the living moment, but as a moment that creates transience (the moment is ruinous) and which is itself transient (it cannot prevail in a dualist universe). The ecstatic moment, which should be a celebration of a kind of irrepressible flow of duration, is over in a flash, and either tends towards death or leads directly to death. Often, Bataille states that the wild expenditure of life’s forces can be described as life affirmed up to the point of death and not beyond, in order perhaps to avoid the accusation of morbidity. It is even possible that Bataille sensed that his view of time was too teleological as it stood. He writes: ‘I believe eroticism to be the approval of life, up until death’ (Bataille, 1957b/1990b: 16). What Bataille is perhaps saying here is that beings caught up in the midst of the most extreme pleasure do not care whether they survive or not, thereby illustrating his equation of pleasure and ruin. However, the extreme indifference of beings in the midst of ecstasy to the whole question of survival suggests that death is of little importance to them compared to the experience of pleasurable duration enjoyed in the time up to death. On close inspection we can see that for Bataille ‘the approval of life up until death’ represents a very specific kind of behaviour that is almost totally death orientated, a foolhardy spirit of ruination that will end in death more or less directly. It can be seen that the exuberant devil-may-care spirit of affirming life up to the point of death can be accessed by individuals only if they open themselves up to death first. The vision of life affirmed up to the point of death is still a vision of life dominated by death. Although Bataille’s work shows him savouring, as it were, the taste of death in a sensual, poetic fashion, he concedes that an individual cannot physically experience the event of his or her own death in a concrete, knowing fashion, since in death the knower and known are wiped out at a single stroke. Only a living being can affirm death, through the ecstatic abandonment of toilsome life-conservation and care which a sense of mortality allows. Such a view could be seen to link up with Bataille’s partial admission that life affirmed up to the point of death is more important than a mere leap from life into death.

## The ecstatic moment of pure expenditure fails—it reinscribes a teleology by conditioning the moment on being-toward-death and defers self-expression—this is a link turn to all their offense. Prefer our methodology as an affirmation that spontaneity can be extended in time.

Johnson, York University English and Related Literature PhD, ‘3

( David, MA in Continental Philosophy “Why view time from the perspective of times end? : A Bergsonian attack on Bataillean Transience” *Time* Society2003 vol. 12, no 2-3 pg. 218 via sage journals accessed: 10-24-12 mlb)

For Bataille, accumulation is a process that can only come about through a deferment of the moment of expenditure, and it is the deferment of the moment of expenditure which in a sense gives birth to duration in the form of ordered linear time. He views the deferment of expenditure as illegitimate, since energy must eventually be spent in any case in a universe dominated by expenditure. Deferment is also inglorious, a costive holding back of the sun. The investment of energies otherwise destined for spontaneous expenditure into the production of the means for future survival could theoretically ensure expenditure in the future, which would be a senseless exchange given that this future expenditure would be identical to that expenditure which could be simply enjoyed in the current moment. In fact the investment of energies in survival becomes even more senseless; investment becomes an empty chronic habit, tending to merely ensure the survival of investment itself as a system. However, through refusing to defer the urge to expend energies ecstatically and ruinously, this sterile circle of continuous investment can be broken, at least for a while (Bataille, 1973/1992: 101–2). I have a certain sympathy with Bataille’s demand that we unleash our desires spontaneously, since life must be enjoyed and the moment has as much right to assert itself as the future (and more of a right in fact; the holding back of energies is literally repressive). But Bataille ties this spontaneity with a ruinous ecstatic moment, whereas there is no reason why a spontaneous burst of energies cannot have extended duration. It might seem that Bataille is affirming a non-teleological form of time by demanding that we refuse to defer enjoyment of the moment in favour of any future goal. But Bataille’s affirmation of the moment nevertheless represents a definite affirmation of a form of teleology (and a morbid form of teleology at that) in that for him the moment leads physically towards death or ruin rapidly and with teleological inevitability. And since, for Bataille, the moment symbolically draws its authenticity from its affirmation of death, it derives all its meaning from the future. The substance of time thereby slips quickly away, into its future fate, or is paralysed by its future-orientated obsession. By making pleasure feed on the death that is to come, Bataille has in effect deferred its spontaneous self-expression. I suggest that the brief ‘moment’ of pleasure which Bataille celebrates has no objective reality, given that one can imagine a pleasurable moment to be ‘dilated’. That is, one can imagine an entire wild weekend as representing a single ‘moment’ for the couple that enjoy it. Or one can alternatively imagine this same couple enjoying a succession of pleasures, therefore a succession of ecstatic moments, none of which turns out to be ruinously final. Dualism and Transgression For Bataille, the order of expenditure must antagonistically break with the equally natural (though less intimate) order of conservativism. The transgression of the conservative temporal order by the wild temporal order of expenditure is a kind of defilement, and so the pleasures of expenditure are tied up with the criminal defilement of taboos. The moment of expenditure is thus inherently criminal and therefore perversely destructive in a way that goes beyond the mere squandering of energies. Moreover, the urge to expend leads to destruction when given free reign because this urge has been previously stifled under the rule of the conservative order of time. A being’s desire to expend becomes frustrated under the yoke of conservativism, and so when given the chance, this being’s pent-up energies break loose violently. Expenditure therefore takes on an explosive, wilfully destructive, momentary form.

## Rejection of law and embracing violent sovereignty are the building blocks of fascism.

Wolin, History Professor at CUNY Graduate Center, ’96

(Richard, former professor at Rice University “Left Fascism: Georges Bataille and the German Ideology” Constellations: An International Journal of Critical & Democratic Theory 1-1-96 pg. 397-428 accessed: 10-24-12 mlb)

Here, the analysis must begin with an examination of Bataille's essay. "The Psychological Structure of Fascism," often rightly hailed as a theoretical breakthrough in our understanding of the mass psychological appeal of modem authoritarian rule. Yet, the essay also contains a barely veiled admiration for the vitality and energy of the existing fascist states, especially when contrasted with the decadence and inertia of the con- temporary European democracies. Bataille purveys a critique of parliamentarianism that is as zealous as anything one finds in the work of Carl Schmitt. Parliamentary decision- making, he claims, partakes wholly of the order of the homogeneous. It aims solely at co~optation, the elimination of difference. As such, it is purely instrumental and serves primarily to suppress the breakthrough of heterogeneous elements that threaten to explode the normative bases of the given economic and political order. As Bataille observes, in a striking anticipation of Jean-Francois Lyotard's association of "consensus" and "terror": "The reduction of differences in parliamentary practice indicates all the possible complexity of the internal activity of adaptation required by homogeneiry."Â°Â° Bataille can perceive no fundamental differences between the conduct of political and economic life in modern democratic societies, insofar as both are examples par excellence of homogeneity - this despite the fact that discussion aims at mutual understanding, whereas economic activity is goal-oriented and utilitarian." Given this curt dismissal of the institutional bases of democracy, it comes as little surprise that Bataille glorifies the role played by fascism in modem political life as a type of breakthrough of the heterogeneous. For Bataille, "the fascist leaders are incontestably part of heterogeneous existence. Opposed to democratic politicians, who represent in different countries the platitude inherent to homogeneous society, Mussolini and Hitler immediately stand out as something other.""2 What he admires about these men and the movement they represent is that they embody "a force that situates them above other men," which accounts for their "sovereignty." Yet, he also esteems greatly their thoroughgoing antagonism to law: "the fact that laws are broken is only the most obvious sign of the transcendent, heterogeneous nature of fascist action."Â°3 Here, the parallels with Schmitt's critique of bourgeois legal positivism are of course profound. Both Schmitt and Bataille view the institution of law as the consummate embodiment of the spirit of bourgeois rationalism. It symbolizes everything they detest about the reigning social order: its prosaic longing for security. its unrevolutionary nature. its abhorrence of "transccndence," its anathematization of the vitality and intensity one finds in the "exception" (Schmitt) or "transgression" (Bataille). Moreover, for Bataille the system of law merits especially harsh treatment insofar as it signifies a type of consecration of the profane order of things; as such, it stands as an impediment to contact with the heterogeneous or the sacred. Bataille concludes his endorsement of fascist politics with the following encomium: "Heterogeneous fascist action belongs to the entire set of higher forms. It makes an appeal to sentiments traditionally defined as exalted and noble and tends to constitute authority as un unconditional principle, situated above any utilitarian judgment," As opposed to the bourgeois order of life, which with its utilitarianism and its legalism, merely sanctifies \*the prose of the world,” fascism offers a new political aesthetic, the return, as it were, of an aesthetic politics: a type of politics that reintroduces the long lost elements of charismatic leadership (in Bataille’s terms, "sovereignty"), violence, and martial glory. lt is, moreover, a politics that facilitates a great emotional cathexis between leaders and masses, a point which Bataille emphasizes repeatedly. For one of fascism's great attributes is that it "clearly demonstrates what can be expected from a timely recourse to reawakened affective forces" - forces capable of guaranteeing a measure of collective solidarity, which have been banished from a society in which the division of labor and rationalization reign supreme. In sum, fascism serves to reintroduce a type of ecstatic politics into the forlorn and disenchanted landscape of political modernity, a politics that aims at the creation of a quasi-Nietzschean ecstatic community.

## Rejecting facism is key to stop massive violence and extinction

Small, former Americorps VISTA for the Human Services Coalition, ’5

(Jonathan, "Moving Forward," Mesa Community College 4-8-5 http://www.mesacc.edu/other/engagement/Journal/Issue7/Small.pdf accessed: 10-24-12 mlb)

What will be the challenges of the new millennium? And how should we equip young people to face these challenges? While we cannot be sure of the exact nature of the challenges, we can say unequivocally that humankind will face them together. If the end of the twentieth century marked the triumph of the capitalists, individualism, and personal responsibility, the new century will present challenges that require collective action, unity, and enlightened self-interest. Confronting global warming, depleted natural resources, global super viruses, global crime syndicates, and multinational corporations with no conscience and no accountability will require cooperation, openness, honesty, compromise, and most of all solidarity – ideals not exactly cultivated in the twentieth century. We can no longer suffer to see life through the tiny lens of our own existence. Never in the history of the world has our collective fate been so intricately interwoven. Our very existence depends upon our ability to adapt to this new paradigm, to envision a more cohesive society. With humankind’s next great challenge comes also great opportunity. Ironically, modern individualism backed us into a corner. We have two choices, work together in solidarity or perish together in alienation. Unlike any other crisis before, the noose is truly around the neck of the whole world at once. Global super viruses will ravage rich and poor alike, developed and developing nations, white and black, woman, man, and child. Global warming and damage to the environment will affect climate change and destroy ecosystems across the globe. Air pollution will force gas masks on our faces, our depleted atmosphere will make a predator of the sun, and chemicals will invade and corrupt our water supplies. Every single day we are presented the opportunity to change our current course, to survive modernity in a manner befitting our better nature. Through zealous

cooperation and radical solidarity we can alter the course of human events. Regarding the practical matter of equipping young people to face the challenges of a global, interconnected world, we need to teach cooperation, community, solidarity, balance and tolerance in schools. We need to take a holistic approach to education. Standardized test scores alone will not begin to prepare young people for the world they will inherit. The three staples of traditional education (reading, writing, and arithmetic) need to be supplemented by three cornerstones of a modern education, exposure, exposure, and more exposure. How can we teach solidarity? How can we teach community in the age of rugged individualism? How can we counterbalance crass commercialism and materialism? How can we impart the true meaning of power? These are the educational challenges we face in the new century. It will require a radical transformation of our conception of education. We’ll need to trust a bit more, control a bit less, and put our faith in the potential of youth to make sense of their world. In addition to a declaration of the gauntlet set before educators in the twenty-first century, this paper is a proposal and a case study of sorts toward a new paradigm of social justice and civic engagement education. Unfortunately, the current pedagogical climate of public K-12 education does not lend itself well to an exploratory study and trial of holistic education. Consequently, this proposal and case study targets a higher education model. Specifically, we will look at some possibilities for a large community college in an urban setting with a diverse student body. Our guides through this process are specifically identified by the journal Equity and Excellence in Education. The dynamic interplay between ideas of social justice, civic engagement, and service learning in education will be the lantern in the dark cave of uncertainty. As such, a simple and straightforward explanation of the three terms is helpful to direct this inquiry. Before we look at a proposal and case study and the possible consequences contained therein, this paper will draw out a clear understanding of how we should characterize these ubiquitous terms and how their relationship to each other affects our study. Social Justice, Civic Engagement, Service Learning and Other Commie Crap Social justice is often ascribed long, complicated, and convoluted definitions. In fact, one could fill a good-sized library with treatises on this subject alone. Here we do not wish to belabor the issue or argue over fine points. For our purposes, it will suffice to have a general characterization of the term, focusing instead on the dynamics of its interaction with civic engagement and service learning. Social justice refers quite simply to a community vision and a community conscience that values inclusion, fairness, tolerance, and equality. The idea of social justice in America has been around since the Revolution and is intimately linked to the idea of a social contract. The Declaration of Independence is the best example of the prominence of social contract theory in the US. It states quite emphatically that the government has a contract with its citizens, from which we get the famous lines about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Social contract theory and specifically the Declaration of Independence are concrete expressions of the spirit of social justice. Similar clamor has been made over the appropriate definitions of civic engagement and service learning, respectively. Once again, let’s not get bogged down on subtleties. Civic engagement is a measure or degree of the interest and/or involvement an individual and a community demonstrate around community issues. There is a longstanding dispute over how to properly quantify civic engagement. Some will say that today’s youth are less involved politically and hence demonstrate a lower degree of civic engagement. Others cite high volunteer rates among the youth and claim it demonstrates a high exhibition of civic engagement. And there are about a hundred other theories put forward on the subject of civic engagement and today’s youth. But one thing is for sure; today’s youth no longer see government and politics as an effective or valuable tool for affecting positive change in the world. Instead of criticizing this judgment, perhaps we should come to sympathize and even admire it. Author Kurt Vonnegut said, “There is a tragic flaw in our precious Constitution, and I don’t know what can be done to fix it. This is it: only nut cases want to be president.” Maybe the youth’s rejection of American politics isn’t a shortcoming but rather a rational and appropriate response to their experience. Consequently, the term civic engagement takes on new meaning for us today. In order to foster fundamental change on the systemic level, which we have already said is necessary for our survival in the twenty-first century, we need to fundamentally change our systems. Therefore, part of our challenge becomes convincing the youth that these systems, and by systems we mean government and commerce, have the potential for positive change. Civic engagement consequently takes on a more specific and political meaning in this context.

## The aff fails—sacrificial consumption is voided by being used as intellectual currency, transgression is impossible, and theory is dead, leaving only pragmatic action.

Mann, 99

(Paul, Ph. D. and Professor at Pomona College, “Masocriticism,” p. 67-69, 1999, Accessed 10/5/12, CJB)

I would like at one and the same time to affirm this model and to dismiss it as the most desperate alibi of all. For “sacrificial consumption” can never become an explicit critical motive.13 At the moment it presents itself as a proper element of some critical method, it degenerates into another useful trope, another bit of intellectual currency, another paper-thin abyss, another proxy transgression; and the force of transgression moves elsewhere, beneath a blinder spot in the critical eye.14 Questions of motive or understanding, the fact that one might be self-critical or at least aware of recuperation, are immaterial: what is at stake here is not self-consciousness but economics, material relations of appropriation and exclusion, assimilation and positive loss. Whatever transgression occurs in writing on Bataille does so only through the stupid recuperation and hence evacuation of the whole rhetoric and dream of transgression, only insofar as the false profundity of philosophy or theory evacuates the false profundities it apes. To justify this as the sublime loss of loss is merely to indulge a paradoxical figure. Excess is not a project but a by-product of any discourse; the interest of Bataillean discourse lies chiefly in the compulsive and symptomatic way it plays with its feces. The spectacle of critics making fools of themselves does not reveal the sovereign truth of death: it is only masocritical humiliation, a pathological attempt to disavow the specter of death. As for the present essay, it makes no claims to any redeeming sacrifice. Far from presenting you with a truer Bataille, far from speaking in his voice more clearly than his other readers, this essay pleads guilty to the indictment against every appropriation. Until philosophy and theory squeal like a pig before Bataille’s work, as he claims to have done before Dali’s canvases, there will be no knowledge of Bataille. In the end, one might have to take and even stricter view: there is no discourse of transgression, either on or by Bataille. None at all. It would be necessary to write a “Postscript to Transgression” were it not for the fact that Foucault already wrote it in his “Preface,” were it not for the fact that Bataille himself wrote it the moment before he first picked up his pen. It makes no difference whether one betrays Bataille, because one lip syncs Bataille’s rhetoric or drones on in the most tedious exposition. All of these satellite texts are not heliotropic in relation to the solar anus of Bataille’s writing, of the executioners he hoped (really?) would meet him in the Bois de Boulogne, or depensives in spite of themselves. It would be sentimental to assign them such privileges. They merely fail to fail. They are symptoms of a discourse in which everyone is happily transgressing everyone else and nothing ever happens, traces of a certain narcissistic pathos that never achieves the magnificent loss Bataille’s text conveniently claims to desire, and under whose cover it can continue to account for itself, hoarding its precious debits in a masocriticism that is anything but sovereign and gloriously indifferent. What is given to us, what is ruinously and profitably exchanged, is a lie. Heterology gives the lie to meaning and discourse gives the lie to transgression, in a potlatch that reveals both in their most essential and constitutive relation. Nothing is gained by this communication except profit-taking from lies. We must indict Bataille as the alibi that allows all of this writing to go on and on, pretending it is nothing it is not, and then turn away from Bataille as from a sun long since gone nova, in order to witness the slow freezing to death of every satellite text. The sacrificial consumption of Bataille has played itself out; the rotten carcass has been consumed: no more alibis. What is at stake is no longer ecstatic sexuality or violent upheavals or bloody sacrifices under the unblinking eye of the sun; nor was it ever, from the very beginning of Bataille’s career. These are merely figures in the melodramatic theater of what is after all a “soft expenditure” (Hollier 1989, xv), a much more modest death, a death much closer to home. It has never been more than a question of the death of the theory and of theory itself as death. Of theory-death. A double fatality.

## Unproductive expenditure fails—it is coopted back into the system of production and consumption as a necessary component—the aff never breaks free from the system.

Shaviro, Professor of English at Wayne State, 08

(Steven, Professor of English at Wayne State, “Capitalism, Consumerism, and Waste,” <http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?m=200807>, Accessed 10/4/12, CJB)

Finally, this crazed consumerism is the way that the capitalist mode of production manages a loss that it incessantly disavows, but that it cannot actually escape. Unproductive expenditure may well be the very point of the conjunctive synthesis of consumption. For this synthesis continually exempts or extracts something from the otherwise infinite processes of production and circulation. It provides a terminus for the otherwise aimless and limitless movement of the valorization of capital. For the conjunctive synthesis marks the point at which the circuits of money and commodities (C-M-C and M-C-M’) are broken, so that exchange comes to a momentary end. In the residual subject’s jouissance, the commodity is withdrawn from circulation, in order to be used up or destroyed. The conjunctive synthesis thereby deducts something from capital accumulation. And yet, without this synthesis and its deductions, the capitalist economy could not function at all. As Marx and Engels tell us, even in the ‘normal’ situation of bourgeois society, “a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed.” Or, as David Harvey puts it, since capital is always in danger of being choked by overproduction and overaccumulation, it must continually resort to “violent paroxysms” of “the devaluation, depreciation, and destruction of capital.” Specifically, this is what happens on a major scale in moments of economic crisis. But on a minor or “molecular” level, the conjunctive subject or consumer is itself always in crisis — and it can only alleviate this situation by indulging in another round of shopping, purchasing, and consuming.

## Turn—the aff reproduces sovereign knowledge—it appropriates non-systematic concepts and deploys them in dogmatic formulations as calls for the ballot.

DeBoer, 99

(Jason, Literary and Philosophical writer, “Bataille Versus Theory,” [http://www.sauer-thompson.com/essays/Bataille%20Versus%20Theory,%20an%20essay%20by%20Jason%20DeBoer.doc](http://www.sauer-thompson.com/essays/Bataille%20Versus%20Theory%2C%20an%20essay%20by%20Jason%20DeBoer.doc), Accessed 10/5/12, CJB)

Georges Bataille organizes his writings around many core concepts or ideas, many of which remain diffuse and somewhat underdeveloped in their definitions or meanings. Communication, sovereignty, heterology, inner experience, the sacred, dépense or expenditure, transgression, excess, etc.; each concept appears in his texts as a momentary connotation, a brief enunciation that creates an impact in the reader, then disappears before becoming fully ensnared within the parameters of conceptualization. Perhaps it is this vagueness or ambiguity inherent in all of Bataille’s concepts that prevents them from being appropriated by the theoretical mainstream and being put to work in a dogmatic system. In order for an idea to be put to work, for it to be able to perform a function, perhaps it must first have a proper definition... which many of Bataille’s concepts lack. The broadness of his terms (indeed, Bataille’s move from a restrictive to a general economy shows a digression from the specific, from specialization) may keep them from being utilized by others; this subversion of utility arises from the difficulty of pinpointing where or when a Bataillean concept begins or ends. This sacrifice of clarity certainly is an intentional strategy, Bataille’s own “employment” of unworkable concepts. It is within this arena of thought that I wish to examine the contemporary state of theory.