# More K Answers – GSM@MGW 11

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# AT: Representation First/Discourse Key

## 2AC – Reps Not First

### Changing representational practices won’t alter policy—looking to structures and politics is more vital

Tuathail, ‘96 (Gearoid, Department of Georgraphy at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Political Geography, 15(6-7), p. 664, science direct)

While theoretical debates at academic conferences are important to academics, the discourse and concerns of foreign-policy decision- makers are quite different, so different that they constitute a distinctive problem- solving, theory-averse, policy-making subculture. There is a danger that academics assume that the discourses they engage are more significant in the practice of foreign policy and the exercise of power than they really are. This is not, however, to minimize the obvious importance of academia as a general institutional structure among many that sustain certain epistemic communities in particular states. In general, I do not disagree with Dalby’s fourth point about politics and discourse except to note that his statement-‘Precisely because reality could be represented in particular ways political decisions could be taken, troops and material moved and war fought’-evades the important question of agency that I noted in my review essay. The assumption that it is representations that make action possible is **inadequate** by itself. Political, military and economic structures, institutions, discursive networks and eadership are all crucial in explaining social action and should be theorized together with representational practices. Both here and earlier, Dalby’s reasoning inclines towards a form of idealism. In response to Dalby’s fifth point (with its three subpoints), it is worth noting, first, that his book is about the CPD, not the Reagan administration. He analyzes certain CPD discourses, root the geographical reasoning practices of the Reagan administration nor its public-policy reasoning on national security. Dalby’s book is narrowly textual; the general contextuality of the Reagan administration is not dealt with. Second, let me simply note that I find that the distinction between critical theorists and post- structuralists is a little too rigidly and heroically drawn by Dalby and others. Third, Dalby’s interpretation of the reconceptualization of national security in Moscow as heavily influenced by dissident peace researchers in Europe is highly idealist, an interpretation that ignores the structural and ideological crises facing the Soviet elite at that time. Gorbachev’s reforms and his new security discourse were also strongly self- interested, an ultimately futile attempt to save the Communist Party and a discredited regime of power from disintegration. The issues raised by Simon Dalby in his comment are important ones for all those interested in the practice of critical geopolitics. While I agree with Dalby that questions of discourse are extremely important ones for political geographers to engage, there is a danger of fetishizing this concern with discourse so that we neglect the institutional and the sociological, the materialist and the cultural, the political and the geographical contexts within which particular discursive strategies become significant. Critical geopolitics, in other words, should not be a prisoner of the sweeping ahistorical cant that sometimes accompanies ‘poststructuralism nor convenient reading strategies like the identity politics narrative; it needs to always be open to the patterned mess that is human history.

## 1AR – Reps Not First

### Privileging representations locks in violence --- policy analysis is the best way to challenge power

Taft-Kaufman, ’95 (Prof of Speech – CMU, *Southern Communication Journal*, 60:3, Spring)

The postmodern passwords of "polyvocality," "Otherness," and "difference," unsupported by substantial analysis of the concrete contexts of subjects, creates a solipsistic quagmire. The political sympathies of the new cultural critics, with their ostensible concern for the lack of power experienced by marginalized people, aligns them with the political left. Yet, despite their adversarial posture and talk of opposition, their discourses on intertextuality and inter-referentiality isolate them from and ignore the conditions that have produced leftist politics--conflict, racism, poverty, and injustice. In short, as Clarke (1991) asserts, postmodern emphasis on new subjects conceals the old subjects, those who have limited access to good jobs, food, housing, health care, and transportation, as well as to the media that depict them. Merod (1987) decries this situation as one which leaves no vision, will, or commitment to activism. He notes that academic lip service to the oppositional is underscored by the absence of focused collective or politically active intellectual communities. Provoked by the academic manifestations of this problem Di Leonardo (1990) echoes Merod and laments: Has there ever been a historical era characterized by as little radical analysis or activism and as much radical-chic writing as ours? Maundering on about Otherness: phallocentrism or Eurocentric tropes has become a lazy academic substitute for actual engagement with the detailed histories and contemporary realities of Western racial minorities, white women, or any Third World population. (p. 530) Clarke's assessment of the postmodern elevation of language to the "sine qua non" of critical discussion is an even stronger indictment against the trend. Clarke examines Lyotard's (1984) The Postmodern Condition in which Lyotard maintains that virtually all social relations are linguistic, and, therefore, it is through the coercion that threatens speech that we enter the "realm of terror" and society falls apart. To this assertion, Clarke replies: I can think of few more striking indicators of the political and intellectual impoverishment of a view of society that can only recognize the discursive. If the worst terror we can envisage is the threat not to be allowed to speak, we are appallingly ignorant of terror in its elaborate contemporary forms. It may be the intellectual's conception of terror (what else do we do but speak?), but its projection onto the rest of the world would be calamitous....(pp. 2-27) The realm of the discursive is derived from the requisites for human life, which are in the physical world, rather than in a world of ideas or symbols.(4) Nutrition, shelter, and protection are basic human needs that require collective activity for their fulfillment. Postmodern emphasis on the discursive without an accompanying analysis of how the discursive emerges from material circumstances hides the complex task of envisioning and working towards concrete social goals (Merod, 1987). Although the material conditions that create the situation of marginality escape the purview of the postmodernist, the situation and its consequences are not overlooked by scholars from marginalized groups. Robinson (1990) for example, argues that "the justice that working people deserve is economic, not just textual" (p. 571). Lopez (1992) states that "the starting point for organizing the program content of education or political action must be the present existential, concrete situation" (p. 299). West (1988) asserts that borrowing French post-structuralist discourses about "Otherness" blinds us to realities of American difference going on in front of us (p. 170). Unlike postmodern "textual radicals" who Rabinow (1986) acknowledges are "fuzzy about power and the realities of socioeconomic constraints" (p. 255), most writers from marginalized groups are clear about how discourse interweaves with the concrete circumstances that create lived experience. People whose lives form the material for postmodern counter-hegemonic discourse do not share the optimism over the new recognition of their discursive subjectivities, because such an acknowledgment does not address sufficiently their collective historical and current struggles against racism, sexism, homophobia, and economic injustice. They do not appreciate being told they are living in a world in which there are no more real subjects. Ideas have consequences. Emphasizing the discursive self when a person is hungry and homeless represents both a cultural and humane failure. The need to look beyond texts to the perception and attainment of concrete social goals keeps writers from marginalized groups ever-mindful of the specifics of how power works through political agendas, institutions, agencies, and the budgets that fuel them.

# \*\*\*K Impact Defense\*\*\*

## Imperialism Defense

**Blaming imperialism for all oppression masks more violent forms of oppression – prefer our evidence, its comparative**

Fred **Halliday** (Middle East Report) **1999** “The Middle East at the Millennial Turn” http://www.merip.org/mer/mer213/213\_hallliday.html

Recent developments in the Middle East and the onset of new global trends and uncertainties pose a challenge not only to those who live in the region but also to those who engage it from outside. Here, too, previously-established patterns of thought and commitment are now open to question. The context of the l960s, in which journals such as MERIP Reports (the precursor of this publication) and the Journal of the North American Committee on Latin America (NACLA) were founded, was one of solidarity with the struggles of Third World peoples and opposition to external, imperialist intervention. That agenda remains valid: Gross inequalities of wealth, power and access to rights–a.k.a. imperialism–persist. This agenda has been enhanced by political and ethical developments in subsequent decades. Those who struggle include not only the national groups (Palestinians and Kurds) oppressed by chauvinist regimes and the workers and peasants (remember them?) whose labor sustains these states, but now also includes analyses of gender oppression, press and academic suppression and the denial of ecological security. The agenda has also elaborated a more explicit stress on individual rights in tandem with the defense of collective rights. History itself and the changing intellectual context of the West have, however, challenged this emancipatory agenda in some key respects. On the one hand, oppression, denial of rights and military intervention are not the prerogative of external states alone: An anti-imperialism that cannot recognize–and denounce–indigenous forms of dictatorship and aggression, or that seeks, with varying degrees of exaggeration, to blame all oppression and injustice on imperialism, is deficient. The Iranian Revolution, Ba‘thist Iraq, confessional militias in Lebanon, armed guerrilla groups in a range of countries, not to mention the Taliban in Afghanistan, often represent a much greater immediate threat to human rights and the principles in whose name solidarity was originally formulated than does Western imperialism. Islamist movements from below meet repressive states from above in their conduct. What many people in the region want is not less external involvement but a greater commitment by the outside world, official and non-governmental, to protecting and realizing rights that are universally proclaimed but seldom respected. At the same time, in a congruence between relativist renunciation from the region and critiques of "foundationalist" and Enlightenment thinking in the West, doubt has been cast on the very ethical foundation of solidarity: a belief in universal human rights and the possibility of a solidarity based on such rights. Critical engagement with the region is now often caught between a denunciation of the West's failure actively to pursue the democratic and human rights principles it proclaims and a rejection of the validity of these principles as well as the possibility of any external encouragement of them. This brings the argument back to the critique of Western policy, and of the relation of that critique to the policy process itself. On human rights and democratization, official Washington and its European friends continue to speak in euphemism and evasion. But the issue here is not to see all US involvement as inherently negative, let alone to denounce all international standards of rights as imperialist or ethnocentric, but rather, to hold the US and its European allies accountable to the universal principles they proclaim elsewhere. An anti-imperialism of disengagement serves only to reinforce the hold of authoritarian regimes and oppressive social practices within the Middle East.

**Imperialism doesn’t foster violent interventions**

Martin **Shaw** (Professor of International Relations and Politics at the University of Sussex) April **2001** “The Problem of the Quasi-Imperial State” http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/CGPE/Failed%20States/shaw.pdf

Furthermore, Western leaders have consistently sought to shore up failed and failing (semi-) authoritarian state structures, rather than supporting their break-ups. The West has supported central Russian power throughout all the vicissitudes of the Gorbachev, Yeltsin and Putin regimes. The West has maintained a 'constructive' relationship with Chinese Communism through Tiananmen Square and all subsequent phases of repression. The eastern advances of NATO and the European Union have responded largely to the demands of local elites and populations - as well as to the fear of further state breakdown in regions close to Western Europe. Even after the West had defeated the Saddam regime in the Gulf War, and even as the latter waged genocidal war on Shi'ites and Kurds, it was reluctant to countenance the break-up of the Iraqi state. Likewise, the West's early response to the Yugoslav crisis was to try to shore up a federal state that was ceasing to exist, condoning the early atrocities of the Yugoslav National Army; after several years of war, it still backed Milosevic's Serbia as a force for stability. Only long after it became clear that the latter was leading to new wars, in Kosovo and (threatened) in Montenegro, did Western leaders move reluctantly to confront Serbia. Thus it was not only in East Timor, where the historically pro-Western Indonesian regime was the oppressor, that the West supported the existing centre and was late in coming to the rescue of the victims of genocide. Generally, therefore, Western power generally supports the maintenance of state structures even where these are dominated by regimes that are anti-Western as well as repressive. More extreme cases of 'state collapse' have tended to occur in countries like Somalia, Liberia and Sierra Leone that have been of minimal or declining strategic and economic significance. In these cases, even more than in Iraq or Yugoslavia, Western elites have generally been extremely reluctant to intervene. The more credible charge against the West is not that it intervenes widely in support of its own interests, but that: it avoids intervention and tolerates even genocidal repression, where its own interests are not strongly engaged; its interventions are therefore consistently late in responding to state and human crises;Page 18 18 its interventions are often half-baked, appeasing local elites and failing to anticipate events; its national elites are unwilling to risk even small numbers of 'their' soldiers, even when the lives of large numbers of non-Western civilians are at risk; it is disinterested in the strong development of global institutions, preferring ad hoc structures that it can manipulate to genuine global democratic governance. In what sense, then, can contemporary Western power be said to represent an advance on historic European empires and Cold War American power? The above is hardly a positive appraisal. Indeed, the main positive advantages of Western power lie in its internal characteristics (internationalisation and democratisation) rather than in the development of a positive post- imperial relationship with the non-Western world. The principal challenges to empire, authoritarianism and repression come today from civil society and social movements, rather than from the Western state.

## Value to Life Defense

**Life has intrinsic value – it’s inevitable no matter what we do**

**Levinson, ’04** [Jerrold, University of Maryland Department of Philosophy, “Intrinsic Value and the Notion of a Life” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 62.4, p. 319]

Why, though, should we care about intrinsic value, either what it means, or what has it, or whether there is any at all? I remind you of some reasons. First, almost everyone is interested in having a good life, in being happy, in having compelling reasons to live, and there seems to be an intimate relationship between those things and something having intrinsic value. On the view defended here, that intrinsic value has something fundamentally to do with lives, and the sorts of lives that humans enjoy in particular, this is not at all surprising. Second, intrinsic value looks to be required as a foundation for value generally. That is to say, it seems reasonable to think that all nonintrinsic value has its valuableness on loan, or with a promissory note attached, so that if nothing were intrinsically valuable, nothing would be valuable at all.3 Some have attempted to evade this conclusion, proposing that value might not ultimately rest on what is intrinsically valuable, values instead forming a kind of web of mutual support, with no sort of value serving as foundation of the value of the whole. Although this picture has its attractions, as does a similar one concerning the structure of knowledge, it is a picture that, like an Impressionist painting, only looks good at a distance. Viewed close up, I suggest, its attractiveness dissolves. If we ask ourselves why we value something, we try to identify what we value it for, and then we ask why we value that, and so on, until we get to something regarding which the question no longer makes sense, that is, something we evidently regard as intrinsically valuable. We are not satisfied, in other words, when we query our valuing, until we arrive at something that strikes us as valuable *tout court*, something we simply regard the world as better for containing, something pursuit of which seems self-justifying. Where values are concerned, we need what Wittgenstein called bedrock, something against which our spade turns. And that seems to mean intrinsic value.4 Third, most ethical theories seem to presuppose a conception of that which is intrinsically valuable, valuable in itself, or valuable for its own sake. Moral good is often explained in terms of nonmoral good, for example, as the disposition or propensity to produce such nonmoral good. Thus utilitarianism clearly regards pleasure as intrinsically good, and attempts to construe moral value in terms of its maximization. Kantian ethics, for its part, views willing in accord with duty, or treating others as ends, as the foundation of morality, because that, by its lights, is the only thing that is intrinsically good. And virtue ethics holds that being a certain kind of person, or having certain kinds of motivations, is the basis of moral worth, presumably because those, too, are regarded as intrinsically good. So ethical theory appears not to be complete without an adequate conception of intrinsic value and how it might be assessed.

**Value to life is subjective – we shouldn't decide it for others**

**Schwartz et al**, ‘**2** [Lisa, Lecturer in Philosophy of Medicine, Department of General Practice, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK; Paul Preece, Theme Coordinator of Medical Ethics, Dundee Medical School, Ninewells, Dundee, UK; and Rob Hendry, Medical Advisor, Medical & Dental Defense Union of Scotland, Mackintosh House, Glasgow, UK, Medical Ethics: A Case-Based Approach, p. 112, November]

The second assertion made by supporters of the quality of life as a criterion for decisionmaking is closely related to the first, but with an added dimension. This assertion suggests that the determination of the value of the quality of a given life is a subjective determination to be made by the person experiencing that life. The important addition here is that the decision is a personal one that, ideally, ought not to be made externally by another person but internally by the individual involved. Katherine Lewis made this decision for herself based on a comparison between two stages of her life. So did James Brady. Without this element, decisions based on quality of life criteria lack salient information and the patients concerned cannot give informed consent. Patients must be given the opportunity to decide for themselves whether they think their lives are worth living or not. To ignore or overlook patients' judgement in this matter is to violate their autonomy and their freedom to decide for themselves on the basis of relevant information about their future, and comparative consideration of their past. As the deontological position puts it so well, to do so is to violate the imperative that we must treat persons as rational and as ends in themselves.

# \*\*\*Util Good\*\*\*

**Inherent equality of all beings requires utilitiarianism**

**Cumminsky, 1996** (David, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Bates College and Ph.D. from UM, “Kantian Consequentialism”, p. 145-146)

In the next section, I will defend this interpretation of the duty of beneficence. For the sake of argument, however, let us first simply assume that beneficence does not require significant self-sacrifice and see what follows. Although Kant is unclear on this point, we will assume that significant self-sacrifices are supererogatory.[**11**](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/oso/private/content/philosophy/0195094530/p046.html?en=acprof-0195094530-note-183#acprof-0195094530-note-183) Thus, if I must harm one in order to save many, the individual whom I will harm by my action is not morally required to affirm the action. On the other hand, I have a duty to do all that I can for those in need. As a consequence I am faced with a dilemma: If I act, I harm a person in a way that a rational being need not consent to; if I fail to act, then I do not do my duty to those in need and thereby fail to promote an objective end. Faced with such a choice, which horn of the dilemma is more consistent with the formula of the end-in-itself? We must not obscure the issue by characterizing this type of case as the sacrifice of individuals for some abstract "social entity." It is not a question of some persons having to bear the cost for some elusive "overall social good." Instead, the question is whether some persons must bear the inescapable cost for the sake of other persons. Robert Nozick, for example, argues that "to use a person in this way does not sufficiently respect and take account of the fact that he is a separate person, that his is the only life he has."[**12**](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/oso/private/content/philosophy/0195094530/p047.html?en=acprof-0195094530-note-184#acprof-0195094530-note-184) But why is this not equally true of all those whom we do not save through our failure to act? By emphasizing solely the one who must bear the cost if we act, we fail to sufficiently respect and take account of the many other separate persons, each with only one life, who will bear the cost of our inaction. In such a situation, what would a conscientious Kantian agent, an agent motivated by the unconditional value of rational beings, choose? A morally good agent recognizes that the basis of all particular duties is the principle that "rational nature exists as an end in itself" (GMM 429). Rational nature as such is the supreme objective end of all conduct. If one truly believes that all rational beings have an equal value, then the rational solution to such a dilemma involves maximally promoting the lives and liberties of as many rational beings as possible (chapter [5](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/oso/private/content/philosophy/0195094530/p033.html#acprof-0195094530-chapter-5)). In order to avoid this conclusion, the non-consequentialist Kantian needs to justify agent-centered constraints. As we saw in chapter [1](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/oso/private/content/philosophy/0195094530/p017.html#acprof-0195094530-chapter-1), however, even most Kantian deontologists recognize that agent-centered constraints require a non-value-based rationale. But we have seen that Kant's normative theory is based on an unconditionally valuable end. How can a concern for the value of rational beings lead to a refusal to sacrifice rational beings even when this would prevent other more extensive losses of rational beings? If the moral law is based on the value of rational beings and their ends, then what is the rationale for prohibiting a moral agent from maximally promoting these two tiers of value? If I sacrifice some for the sake of others, I do not use them arbitrarily, and I do not deny the unconditional value of rational beings. Persons may have "dignity, that is, an unconditional and incomparable worth" that transcends any market value (GMM 436), but persons also have a fundamental equality that dictates that some must sometimes give way for the sake of others (chapters [5](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/oso/private/content/philosophy/0195094530/p033.html#acprof-0195094530-chapter-5) and [7](http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/oso/private/content/philosophy/0195094530/p041.html#acprof-0195094530-chapter-7)). The concept of the end-in-itself does not support the view that we may never force another to bear some cost in order to benefit others. If one focuses on the equal value of all rational beings, then equal consideration suggests that one may have to sacrifice some to save many.