# K Answers Toolbox

# Policymaking Good

#### As a policymaker, you should endorse progressive political reforms. The neg’s refusal to engage in institutional reforms is a retreat from activism that fragments pragmatic potential

McClean, 01

(David E., Society for the Advancement of American Philosophy, “The Cultural Left and the Limits of Social Hope,” pg online @ <http://www.american->

philosophy.org/archives/past\_conference\_programs/pc2001/Discussion%20papers/david\_mcclean.htm //ag)

Yet for some reason, at least partially explicated in Richard Rorty's Achieving Our Country, a book that I think is long overdue, leftist critics continue to cite and refer to the eccentric and often a priori ruminations of people like those just mentioned, and a litany of others including Derrida, Deleuze, Lyotard, Jameson, and Lacan, who are to me hugely more irrelevant than Habermas in their narrative attempts to suggest policy prescriptions (when they actually do suggest them) aimed at curing the ills of homelessness, poverty, market greed, national belligerence and racism. I would like to suggest that it is time for American social critics who are enamored with this group, those who actually want to be relevant, to recognize that they have a disease, and a disease regarding which I myself must remember to stay faithful to my own twelve step program of recovery. The disease is the need for elaborate theoretical "remedies" wrapped in neological and multi-syllabic jargon.These elaborate theoretical remedies are more "interesting," to be sure, than the pragmatically settled questions about what shape democracy should take in various contexts, or whether private property should be protected by the state, or regarding our basic human nature (described, if not defined (heaven forbid!), in such statements as "We don't like to starve" and "We like to speak our minds without fear of death" and "We like to keep our children safe from poverty"). As Rorty puts it, "When one of today's academic leftists says that some topic has been 'inadequately theorized,' you can be pretty certain that he or she is going to drag in either philosophy of language, or Lacanian psychoanalysis, or some neo-Marxist version of economic determinism. . . . These futile attempts to philosophize one's way into political relevance are a symptom of what happens when a Left retreats from activism and adopts a spectatorial approach to the problems of its country. Disengagement from practice produces theoretical hallucinations"(italics mine).[(1)](file:///C%3A%5C%5CUsers%5C%5CWINDOWS%5C%5CTemporary%20Internet%20Files%5C%5CContent.IE5%5C%5COTKXU3YH%5C%5Cthe%20city.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22N_1_) Or as John Dewey put it in his The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy, "I believe that philosophy in America will be lost between chewing a historical cud long since reduced to woody fiber, or an apologetics for lost causes, . . . . or a scholastic, schematic formalism, unless it can somehow bring to consciousness America's own needs and its own implicit principle of successful action." Those who suffer or have suffered from this disease Rorty refers to as the Cultural Left, which left is juxtaposed to the Political Left that Rorty prefers and prefers for good reason. Another attribute of the Cultural Left is that its members fancy themselves pure culture critics who view the successes of America and the West, rather than some of the barbarous methods for achieving those successes, as mostly evil, and who view anything like national pride as equally evil even when that pride is tempered with the knowledge and admission of the nation's shortcomings. In other words, the Cultural Left, in this country, too often dismiss American society as beyond reform and redemption. And Rorty correctly argues that this is a disastrous conclusion, i.e. disastrous for the Cultural Left. I think it may also be disastrous for our social hopes, as I will explain. Leftist American culture critics might put their considerable talents to better use if they bury some of their cynicism about America's social and political prospects and help forge public and political possibilities in a spirit of determination to, indeed, achieve our country - the country of Jefferson and King; the country of John Dewey and Malcom X; the country of Franklin Roosevelt and Bayard Rustin, and of the later George Wallace and the later Barry Goldwater. To invoke the words of King, and with reference to the American society, the time is always ripe to seize the opportunity to help create the "beloved community," one woven with the thread of agape into a conceptually single yet diverse tapestry that shoots for nothing less than a true intra-American cosmopolitan ethos, one wherein both same sex unions and faith-based initiatives will be able to be part of the same social reality, one wherein business interests and the university are not seen as belonging to two separate galaxies but as part of the same answer to the threat of social and ethical nihilism. We who fancy ourselves philosophers would do well to create from within ourselves and from within our ranks a new kind of public intellectual who has both a hungry theoretical mind and who is yet capable of seeing the need to move past high theory to other important questions that are less bedazzling and "interesting" but more important to the prospect of our flourishing - questions such as "How is it possible to develop a citizenry that cherishes a certain hexis, one which prizes the character of the Samaritan on the road to Jericho almost more than any other?" or "How can we square the political dogma that undergirds the fantasy of a missile defense system with the need to treat America as but one member in a community of nations under a "law of peoples?" The new public philosopher might seek to understand labor law and military and trade theory and doctrine as much as theories of surplus value; the logic of international markets and trade agreements as much as critiques of commodification, and the politics of complexity as much as the politics of power (all of which can still be done from our arm chairs.) This means going down deep into the guts of our quotidian social institutions, into the grimy pragmatic details where intellectuals are loathe to dwell but where the officers and bureaucrats of those institutions take difficult and often unpleasant, imperfect decisions that affect other peoples' lives, and it means making honest attempts to truly understand how those institutions actually function in the actual world before howling for their overthrow commences. This might help keep us from being slapped down in debates by true policy pros who actually know what they are talking about but who lack awareness of the dogmatic assumptions from which they proceed, and who have not yet found a good reason to listen to jargon-riddled lectures from philosophers and culture critics with their snobish disrespect for the so-called "managerial class."

# Roleplaying

### Roleplaying Good—Empowerment

#### Simulation of different roles through fiat encourages learning and empowerment

Innes and Booher 99

(Judith, Director – Institute of Urban and Regional Development and Professor at UC Berkeley and David, Visiting Scholar at the Institute, Journal of the American Planning Association, Winter, Vol. 65, Iss. 1)

Our observation and practice of consensus building suggests that the analogy to role-playing games will help to illuminate the dynamic of effective consensus processes. Even when the dispute seems intractable, role playing in consensus building allows players to let go of actual or assumed constraints and to develop ideas for creating new conditions and possibilities. Drama and suspension of reality allows competing, even bitterly opposed interests to collaborate, and engages individual players emotionally over many months. Scenario building and storytelling can make collective sense of complexity, of predicting possibilities in an uncertain world, and can allow the playful imagination, which people normally suppress, to go to work. In the course of engaging in various roles, participants develop identities for themselves and others and become more effective participants, representing their stakeholders' interests more clearly. In many of their most productive moments, participants in consensus building engage not only in playing out scenarios, but also in a kind of collective, speculative tinkering, or bricolage, similar in principle to what game participants do. That is, they play with heterogeneous concepts, strategies, and actions with which various individuals in the group have experience, and try combining them until they create a new scenario that they collectively believe will work. This bricolage, discussed further below, is a type of reasoning and collective creativity fundamentally different from the more familiar types, argumentation and tradeoffs.[sup11] The latter modes of problem solving or dispute resolution typically allow zero sum allocation of resources among participants or finding the actions acceptable to everyone. Bricolage, however, produces, rather than a solution to a known problem, a new way of framing the situation and of developing unanticipated combinations of actions that are qualitatively different from the options on the table at the outset. The result of this collective tinkering with new scenarios is, most importantly, learning and change among the players, and growth in their sophistication about each other, about the issues, and about the futures they could seek. Both consensus building and roleplaying games center on learning, innovation, and change, in a process that is entertaining and-when conducted effectively-in some fundamental sense empowers individuals.

### **Roleplaying Good—Democracy**

#### **Role-playing is key to democratic decision-making and empowers individuals**

Rawls 99

(John, Professor Emeritus – Harvard University, The Law of Peoples, p. 54-7)

Developing the Law of Peoples within a liberal conception of justice, we work out the ideals and principles of the foreign policy of a reasonably just liberal people. I distinguish between the public reason of liberal peoples and the public reason of the Society of Peoples. The first is the public reason of equal citizens of domestic society debating the constitutional essentials and matters of basic justice concerning their own government; the second is the public reason of free and equal liberal peoples debating their mutual relations as peoples. The Law of Peoples with its political concepts and principles, ideals and criteria, is the content of this latter public reason. Although these two public reasons do not have the same content, the role of public reason among free and equal peoples is analogous to its role in a constitutional democratic regime among free and equal citizens. Political liberalism proposes that, in a constitutional democratic regime, comprehensive doctrines of truth or of right are to be replaced in public reason by an idea of the politically reasonable addressed to citizens as citizens. Here note the parallel: public reason is invoked by members of the Society of Peoples, and its principles are addressed to peoples as peoples. They are not expressed in terms of comprehensive doctrines of truth or of right, which may hold sway in this or that society, but in terms that can be shared by different peoples. 6.2. Ideal of Public Reason. Distinct from the idea of public reason is the ideal of public reason. In domestic society this ideal is realized, or satisfied, whenever judges, legislators, chief executives, and other government officials, as well as candidates for public office, act from and follow the idea of public reason and explain to other citizens their reasons for supporting fundamental political questions in terms of the political conception of justice that they regard as the most reasonable. In this way they fulfill what I shall call their duty of civility to one another and to other citizens. Hence whether judges, legislators, and chief executives act from and follow public reason is continually shown in their speech and conduct. How is the ideal of public reason realized by citizens who are not government officials? In a representative government, citizens vote for representatives-chief executives, legislators, and the like-not for particular laws (except at a state or local level where they may vote di¬rectly on referenda questions, which are not usually fundamental ques¬tions). To answer this question, we say that, ideally, citizens are to think of themselves as if they were legislators and ask themselves what statutes, supported by what reasons satisfying the criterion of reciprocity, they would think it most reasonable to enact.7l When firm and widespread, the disposition of citizens to view themselves as ideal legislators, and to repudiate government officials and candidates for public office who violate public reason, forms part of the political and social basis of liberal democracy and is vital for its enduring strength and vigor. Thus in domestic society citizens fulfill their duty of civility and support the idea of public reason, while doing what they can to hold government officials to it. This duty, like other political rights and duties, is an intrinsically moral duty. I emphasize that it is not a legal duty, for in that case it would be incompatible with freedom of speech.

### **Roleplaying Good—Personal Politics**

#### **Role-playing solves political apathy and reinvigorates personal politics – turns the K**

Mitchell 2k

(Gordon, Director of Debate and Professor of Communication – U. Pittsburgh, Argumentation & Advocacy, Vol. 36, No. 3, Winter)JFS

When we assume the posture of the other in dramatic performance, we tap into who we are as persons, since our interpretation of others is deeply colored by our own senses of selfhood. By encouraging experimentation in identity construction, role-play "helps students discover divergent viewpoints and overcome stereotypes as they examine subjects from multiple perspectives..." (Moore, p. 190). Kincheloe points to the importance of this sort of reflexive critical awareness as an essential feature of educational practice in postmodern times. "Applying the notion of the postmodern analysis of the self, we come to see that hyperreality invites a heteroglossia of being," Kincheloe explains; "Drawing upon a multiplicity of voices, individuals live out a variety of possibilities, refusing to suppress particular voices. As men and women appropriate the various forms of expression, they are empowered to uncover new dimensions of existence that were previously hidden" (1993, p. 96). This process is particularly crucial in the public argument context, since a key guarantor of inequality and exploitation in contemporary society is the widespread and uncritical acceptance by citizens of politically inert self-identities. The problems of political alienation, apathy and withdrawal have received lavish treatment as perennial topics of scholarly analysis (see e.g. Fishkin 1997; Grossberg 1992; Hart 1998; Loeb 1994). Unfortunately, comparatively less energy has been devoted to the development of pedagogical strategies for countering this alarming political trend. However, some scholars have taken up the task of theorizing emancipatory and critical pedagogies, and argumentation scholars interested in expanding the learning potential of debate would do well to note their work (see e.g. Apple 1995, 1988, 1979; Britzman 1991; Giroux 1997, 1988, 1987; Greene 1978; McLaren 1993, 1989; Simon 1992; Weis and Fine 1993). In this area of educational scholarship, the curriculum theory of currere, a method of teaching pioneered by Pinar and Grumet (1976), speaks directly to many of the issues already discussed in this essay. As the Latin root of the word "curriculum," currere translates roughly as the investigation of public life (see Kincheloe 1993, p. 146). According to Pinar, "the method of currere is one way to work to liberate one from the web of political, cultural, and economic influences that are perhaps buried from conscious view but nonetheless comprise the living web that is a person's biographic situation" (Pinar 1994, p. 108). The objectives of role-play pedagogy resonate with the currere method. By opening discursive spaces for students to explore their identities as public actors, simulated public arguments provide occasions for students to survey and appraise submerged aspects of their political identities. Since many aspects of cultural and political life work currently to reinforce political passivity, critical argumentation pedagogies that highlight this component of students' self-identities carry significant emancipatory potential.

# Perm

### Generic Perm Solvency

#### The permutation solves. The refusal to incorporate critique furthers global violence in the name of academic purity.

**Rasch 4**

William, Ph.D. in Germanic Studies – Indiana, ‘4 (“Sovereignty and its Discontents” p. 3-4)

It is true, of course, that within the leftist tradition, especially as represented by the eschatological strains of Marxism, the political has often been thought of in ways similar to Milbank’s, as, that is, the vehicle by means of which social reality can be so altered as to match utopian expectation; and perhaps this nostalgia for infinite perfectibility accounts for the appeal of the ontological hope offered there and elsewhere in recent political philosophy. When viewed as a path to secularized salvation, the political must at least implicitly be thought of as a self-consuming artifact. Once imperfect reality and perfect expectation are ‘reconciled’, the purpose of this manner of imagining the political has been fulfilled and can cease to exist. On this more traditionally accepted view, then, even if the process of reconciliation is considered to be infinite and never to be completed, the political must be seen as a constitutively non-essential and negative feature of social life, a feature that reflects undesired imperfection. Thus, at the imagined fulfillment of reconciliation, politics, along with other sins of the world, simply vanishes. In a world that sees perfection as its goal, the end of politics is the end of politics. Given the experiences of the 20th century, both the totalitarian abolition of the political, and the more recent liberal legalization and moralization of politics, the non-Heideggerian and non-Deleuzian Left ought to be more than a little leery of the eschatological promise of a ‘completely new politics’ (Agamben, 1998, p 11). Dreams of a truer, more authentic ontology, of a more natural expression of human desire, a more spontaneous efflorescence of human productivity and re-productivity, feed rather than oppose the contemporary compulsive lurch toward universal pacification and total management of global economic and political life. Rather than dream those dreams, we should return to more sober insights about the ineluctability of conflict that not only calls the political into being but also structures it as a contingent, resilient, and necessary form of perpetual disagreement (Rancier 1999). To claim the primacy of ‘guilt’ over ‘innocence’ or disharmony over harmony does not imply a glorification of violence for its own sake. It merely registers a pragmatic insight, namely, that assuming incommensurate conflict as an ineradicable feature of social life leads to more benign human institutions than the impossible attempt to instantiate the shimmering City of God on the rocky hills and sodden valleys that form the environment of the various cities of men and women on this very real and insurmountable terrestrial plain. The political does not exist to usher in the good life by eliminating social antagonism; rather, it exists to serve as the medium for an acceptably limited and therefore productive conflict in the inevitable absence of any final, universally accepted vision of the good life. The political, therefore, can only be defined by a structure that allows for the perpetual production as well as contingent resolution of dissent and opposition. If conflict is its vocation, then maintaining the possibility of conflict and thus the possibility of opposition ought to be our vocation, especially in an age when the managers of our lives carry out their actions in the name of democracy, while the majority of their weary subjects no longer even register what those actions are. The alternative enables total violence. Their criticism of institutional reform unleashes unconditional violence in the name of cleansing those with dirty hands. William Rasch, Germanic Studies – Indiana, ‘4 (Sovereignty and its Discontents p. 3-4) Now, if the triumph of a particular species of liberal pluralism denotes the de-politicization of society; one would think that theoretical opposition to this trend would seek to rehabilitate the political. But rather than asserting the value of the political as an essential structure of social life, the post-Marxist left seems intent on hammering the final nails into the coffin. In the most celebrated works of recent years, Giorgio Agamben’s Homo Sacer (1998) and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s Empire (2000), the political (denoted by the notion of sovereignty) is irretrievably identified with nihilism and marked for extinction. In both instances, the political is the cause of the loss of ‘natural innocence’ (Agamben, -1998, p 28), that flowering of human productivity that the Western metaphysical tradition has suppressed; and the logical paradox of sovereignty is to be overcome by the instantiation of a new ontology. In this way, violence, which is not thought of as part of the state of nature but is introduced into the human, condition by flawed or morally perverse social institutions, is to be averred. That is, the faulty supposition of ineluctable violence that guides political theory from Hobbes to Weber is to be replaced by a Heideggerian, Deleuzean, Spinozan or Christian ontology of original harmony. In the words of John Milbank, a Christian social theorist who currently enjoys a modest following among political thinkers on the Left, there is no ‘original violence’, but rather an originary ‘harmonic peace’ which is the ‘sociality of harmonious difference’. Thus violence ‘is always a secondary willed intrusion upon this possible infinite order’ (Milbank, 1990, p 5). This, then, is the great supposition that links the ascetic pessimism of an Adorno with the cheery Christian optimism of Milbank; the world as it is is as it is because of the moral perversity of (some) human agents who willfully construct flawed social institutions. To seek to remedy the perversity of the world as it is from within the flawed social and political structures as they are only increases the perversity of the world. One must, therefore, totally disengage from the world as it is before one can become truly engaged. Only a thorough, cataclysmic cleansing of the world will allow our activities to be both ‘innocent’ and ‘productive’. Clear, though only partially acknowledged, is the fact that this cleansing, which aims at ridding the world of intrusive violence, is itself an act of fierce and ultimate violence – ultimate in its purported finality, but also, certainly, in its extreme ferocity. What remains equally clear, though not acknowledged, is that whoever has the power to determine the nature of this harmonious sociality is the one who can determine which acts of violence are to be judged as intrusions into the placid domain and which acts of violence are to be condoned as necessary means of re-establishing the promise of perpetual peace. Determining the nature of this desired, nay, required originary peace is itself a sovereign act, not the abolition of such sovereignty. What our ultimate sovereign of harmonious peace will do with the willfully violent intruders can only be guessed, but it is certain that they will not be looked upon as legitimate political dissenters, and the unconditional violence that will be used to eliminate their presence will be justified by invoking the ‘harmonic peace’ or ‘natural innocence’ they have so deliberately and maliciously disturbed.

#### Perm solves best—our best hope is through an internal struggle

**Dean 1**

(Mitchell, Sociology Prof, Macquarie U, States of Imagination, p 61-2, AG)

There is no necessity that means that our most general rationalities of rule such as sovereignty and biopolitics will ineluctably lead to the truly demonic eventualities we have continued to witness right to the beginning of the twenty-first century. Nor, however, is there any guarantee that the appeal of the twenty-first century. Nor, however, is there any guarantee that the appeal to rights within liberal democracies and the international community of states will guard against such eventualities, as the contemporary confinement of illegal immigrants in camps in liberal democracies attests. **Elements within sovereignty and biopolitics will continue to provide resources for political rationality and action in Weber's sense of the attempt to influence the government of organizations. But there can be no system of safeguards that offer us a zone of comfort when we engage in political action. When we do so, Foucault's position here seems to suggests, we enter a zone of uncertainty and danger here because of the governmental resources we have at our disposal. We might add that the price of not engaging in political action is equally great, if not greater. A condition of informed political action remains an analysis of the actors involved, the contexts of their action, the resources at hand, the tactics used, and the ends sought. Though handling this relation between biopolitics and sovereignty remains tricky, we must establish an analysis of the way ana implementation of progrmas of the administration of life opens up fresh areas of contestation, negotiation, and redefinition around citizenship, democracy, and rights. We must also be prepared to admit, nevertheless, that the appeal to rights must link this form of contestation to the powers it contests, particularly when such an appeal concerns the rights of those without any status but their mere existence.**

### A2: Perm Links

**Even if they win the link, it’s still good – builds coalitions and stops violence**

Rawls 99

John Rawls, The Law of Peoples, ‘99, p. 56-57

To answer this question, we say that, ideally, citizens are to think of themselves as if they were legislators and ask themselves what statutes, supported by what reasons satisfying the criterion of reciprocity, they would think it most reasonable to enact. When firm and widespread, the disposition of citizens to view themselves as ideal legislators, and to repudiate government officials and candidates for public office who violate public reason, forms part of the political and social basis of liberal democracy and is vital for its enduring strength and vigor. Thus in domestic society citizens fulfill their duty of civility and support the idea of public reason, while doing what they can to hold government officials to it. This duty, like other political rights and duties, is an intrinsically moral duty. I emphasize that it is not a legal duty, for in that case it would be incompatible with freedom of speech. Similarly, the ideal of the public reason of free and equal peoples is realized, or satisfied, whenever chief executives and legislators, and other government officials, as well as candidates for public office, act from and follow the principles of the Law of Peoples and explain to other peoples their reasons for pursuing or revising a people’s foreign policy and affairs of state that involve other societies. As for private citizens, we say, as before, that ideally citizens are to think of themselves as if they were executives and legislators and ask themselves what foreign policy supported by what considerations they would think it most reasonable to advance. Once again, when firm and widespread, the disposition of citizens to view themselves as ideal executives and legislators, and to repudiate government officials and candidates for public office who violate the public reason of free and equal peoples, is part of the political and social basis of peace and understanding among peoples.

# Cede the Political

### Cede the Political—Turns the K

#### This failure to engage the political process turns the affirmative into spectators who are powerless to produce real change.

Rorty 98

Professor emeritus of comparative literature and philosophy, by courtesy, at Stanford University (Richard, “ACHIEVING OUR COUNTRY: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America”, 1998, Pg. 7-9)

Such people find pride in American citizenship impossi­ble, and vigorous participation in electoral politics pointless. They associate American patriotism with an endorsement of atrocities: the importation of African slaves, the slaughter of Native Americans, the rape of ancient forests, and the Viet­nam War. Many of them think of national pride as appropri­ate only for chauvinists: for the sort of American who re­joices that America can still orchestrate something like the Gulf War, can still bring deadly force to bear whenever and wherever it chooses. When young intellectuals watch John Wayne war movies after reading Heidegger, Foucault, Stephenson, or Silko, they often become convinced that they live in a violent, inhuman, corrupt country. They begin to think of themselves as a saving remnant-as the happy few who have the insight to see through nationalist rhetoric to the ghastly reality of contemporary America. But this insight does not move them to formulate a legislative program, to join a political movement, or to share in a national hope. The contrast between national hope and national self­-mockery and self-disgust becomes vivid when one compares novels like Snow Crash and Almanac of the Dead with socialist novels of the first half of the century-books like The Jungle, An American Tragedy, and The Grapes of Wrath. The latter were written in the belief that the tone of the Gettysburg Address was absolutely right, but that our country would have to transform itself in order to fulfill Lincoln's hopes. Transfor­mation would be needed because the rise of industrial capi­talism had made the individualist rhetoric of America's first century obsolete. The authors of these novels thought that this rhetoric should be replaced by one in which America is destined to become the first cooperative commonwealth, the first class­less society. This America would be one in which income and wealth are equitably distributed, and in which the govern­ment ensures equality of opportunity as well as individual liberty. This new, quasi-communitarian rhetoric was at the heart of the Progressive Movement and the New Deal. It set the tone for the American Left during the first six decades of the twentieth century. Walt Whitman and John Dewey, as we shall see, did a great deal to shape this rhetoric. The difference between early twentieth-century leftist in­tellectuals and the majority of their contemporary counter­parts is the difference between agents and spectators. In the early decades of this century, when an intellectual stepped back from his or her country's history and looked at it through skeptical eyes, the chances were that he or she was about to propose a new political initiative. Henry Adams was, of course, the great exception-the great abstainer from ·politics. But William James thought that Adams' diagnosis of the First Gilded Age as a symptom of irreversible moral and political decline was merely perverse. James's pragmatist theory of truth was in part a reaction against the sort of de­tached spectators hip which Adams affected. For James, disgust with American hypocrisy and self­-deception was pointless unless accompanied by an effort to give America reason to be proud of itself in the future. The kind of proto- Heideggerian cultural pessimism which Adams cultivated seemed, to James, decadent and cowardly. "Democracy," James wrote, "is a kind of religion, and we are bound not to admit its failure. Faiths and utopias are the no­blest exercise of human reason, and no one with a spark of reason in him will sit down fatalistically before the croaker's picture. "2

#### The affirmative’s/negative’s strategy is not political - it is a strategy against politics which undermines the possibility of liberation.

Grossberg 92

(Lawrence, Morris Davis Professor of Communication Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, “We Gotta Get Out of this Place: Popular Conservatism and Postmodern Culture”, page 278-279)

Finally, the frontier itself is transformed. It is still partly defined by an attitude in which we are all implicated. In this sense, the frontier is in everyone—and with it, the possibility of evil. But now its popular/resonance is rearticulated to "activities" that have to be affectively and morally judged and policed. The enemy is not within people but in specific activities that construct the frontier over in the image of the new conservatism. The frontier becomes a seductive machine, seducing people not only into the need to invest, but ultimately into a series of temporary and mobile investments which locate them within a popular conservatism. The frontier's articula­tion by the logic of scandal marks a real break with older conserva­tisms built on some notion of tradition. Here politics is not a solution to problems, but a machine which organizes the population and its practices. What is on the "right" (in both senses) side of the frontier, on the other side of politics, is a purely affective morality (ie., one which leaves no space within which specific actions can be judged as anything other than scandalous). The new conservatism embodies, not a political rebellion but a rebellion against politics. It makes politics into an other, located on the other side of the frontier. Anyone who actually talks about serious problems and their solutions is a dreamer; anyone who celebrates the mood in which the problem is at once terrifying and boring is a realist. It is no longer believing too strongly that is dangerous, but actually thinking that one is supposed to make one's dreams come true. The failure of Earth Day cannot be explained by merely pointing to its status as a feel-good media event, nor by pointing out the increasingly hypocritical appropriation of "green politics" by corporate polluters. It is rather that ecology, like any "politics," has become a question of attitude and investment, as if investing in the "correct" ideological beliefs, even demonstrating it, was an adequate construction of the political. Within the new conservative articula­tion of the frontier, political positions only exist as entirely affective investments, separated from any ability to act.

# Realism

### **Realism Inevitable**

#### **Realism is true and inevitable**

Mearsheimer 01

(John, Professor of political science at University of Chicago, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, pg. 361)

The optimists' claim that security competition and war among the great powers has been burned out of the system is wrong. In fact, all of the major states around the globe still care deeply about the balance of power and are destined to compete for power among themselves for the foreseeable future. Consequently, realism will offer the most powerful explanations of international politics over the next century, and this will be true even if the debates among academic and policy elites are dominated by non-realist theories. In short, the real world remains a realist world. States still fear each other and seek to gain power at each other's expense, because international anarchy-the driving force behind greatpower behavior-did not change with the end of the Cold War, and there are few signs that such change is likely any time soon. States remain the principal actors in world politics and there is still no night watchman standing above them. For sure, the collapse of the Soviet Union caused a major shift in the global distribution of power. But it did not give rise to a change in the anarchic structure of the system, and without that kind of profound change, there is no reason to expect the great powers to behave much differently in the new century than they did in previous centuries.Indeed, considerable evidence from the 1990s indicates that power politics has not disappeared from Europe and Northeast Asia, the regions in which there are two or more great powers, as well as possible great powers such as Germany and Japan. There is no question, however, that the competition for power over the past decade has been low-key. Still, there is potential for intense security competion among the great powers that might lead to a major war. Probably the best evidence of that possibility is the fact that the United States maintains about one hundred thousand troops each in Europe and in Northeast Asia for the explicit purpose of keeping the major states in each region at peace.

#### Those in control of states are more likely to conform to realism’s predictions

Thayer 4

(Bradley, Darwin and International Relations: On the Evolutionary Origins of War and Ethnic Conflict, Ch 2, TH)

In fact, a state's elites—the captains of industry and media, and military and political leaders—are more likely than average to show these traits in abundance since most leaders rise to the top of their respective hierarchies through a very competitive process. This is almost always the case for political leaders. The rise to the top is the result of an often arduous, and perhaps physically dangerous, process; those who triumph, whether Mao or Clinton, are almost certain to be egoistic individuals who are used to dominating the individuals or institutions around them.

#### Realism and securitization are inevitable.

Thayer 04

Thayer has been a Fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and has taught at Dartmouth College and the University of Minnesota [*Darwin and International Relations: On the Evolutionary Origins of War and Ethnic Conflict*, University of Kentucky Press, 2004, pg. 75-76 //adi]

The central issue here is what causes states to behave as offensive realists predict. Mearsheimer advances a powerful argument that anarchy is the fundamental cause of such behavior. The fact that there is no world government compels the leaders of states to take steps to ensure their security, such as striving to have a powerful military, aggressing when forced to do so, and forging and maintaining alliances. This is what neorealists call a self-help system: leaders of states arc forced to take these steps because nothing else can guarantee their security in the anarchic world of international relations. I argue that evolutionary theory also offers a fundamental cause for offensive realist behavior. Evolutionary theory explains why individuals are motivated to act as offensive realism expects, whether an individual is a captain of industry or a conquistador. My argument is that anarchy is even more important than most scholars of international relations recognize. The human environment of evolutionary adaptation was anarchic; our ancestors lived in a state of nature in which resources were poor and dangers from other humans and the environment were great—so great that it is truly remarkable that a mammal standing three feet high—without claws or strong teeth, not particularly strong or swift—survived and evolved to become what we consider human. Humans endured because natural selection gave them the right behaviors to last in those conditions. This environment produced the behaviors examined here: egoism, domination, and the in-group/out-group distinction. These specific traits arc sufficient to explain why leaders will behave, in the proper circumstances, as offensive realists expect them to behave. That is, even if they must hurt other humans or risk injury to themselves, they will strive to maximize their power, defined as either control over others (for example, through wealth or leadership) or control over ecological circumstances (such as meeting their own and their family's or tribes need for food, shelter, or other resources).

### Transition Causes Violence

#### The transition away from realism will cause violence

Murray 97– Professor Politics at the University of Wales

(Alastair J.H., Reconstructing Realism: Between Power Politics and Cosmopolitan Ethics, p. 185-6)

Yet Linklater concedes that ‘it is not at all clear that any strand of social and political thought provides a compelling account of “strategies of transition”’. Indeed, where he has attempted to engage with this issue himself, he as proved manifestly unable to provide such an account. Although he has put forward some ideas of what is needed – a fundamental recognition of political relations, establishing a global legal order to replace the sovereign state, and a fundamental rearrangement of economic relations, establishing an order in which all individuals have the means as well as the formal rights of freedom – his only suggestion as to how such objectives should be achieved seems to be that ‘[s]ocial development entails individuals placing themselves at odds with their societies as they begin to question conventional means of characterizing outsiders and to criticize customary prohibitions upon individual relations with them’. His critical theoretical “transitional strategies amount to little more than the suggestion that individuals must demand recognition for themselves as men as well as citizens, must demand the right to enter into complex interstate relations themselves, and must act in these relations as beings with fundamental obligations to all other members of the species”. More recently, he has proposed a vision in which ‘substantial and transnational citizenships are strengthened and in which mediating between the different loyalties and identities present within modern societies is one central purpose of the post-Westphalian state’. Such an objective is to be reached by a discourse ethics along the lines of that proposed by Habermas. Yet such an ethics amounts to little more than the suggestions that human beings need to be reflective about the ways in which they include and exclude outsiders from dialogue, scarcely going beyond Linklater’s earlier emphasis on individuals acting as men as well as citizens. Realism does at least propose tangible objectives which, whilst perhaps the visionary appeal of Linklater’s proposals, ultimately offer us a path to follow, and it does at least suggest a strategy of realization, emphasising the necessity of a restrained, moderate diplomacy, which, if less daring than Linklater might wish, provides us with some guidance. It is this inability to articulate practical strategies which suggests the central difficulty with such critical theoretical approaches. The progressive urge moves a stage further here, leading them to abandon almost entirely the problems of establishing some form of stable international order at this level in favour of a continuing revolution in search of a genuine cosmopolis. It generates such an emphasis on the pursuit of distant, ultimate objectives that they prove incapable of furnishing us with anything but the most vague and elusive of strategies, such an emphasis on moving towards a post-Westphalian boundary-less world that they are incapable of telling us anything about the problems facing us today. If, for theorists such as Linklater, such a difficulty does not constitue a failure for critical theory within its own terms of reference, this position cannot be accepted uncritically. Without an ability to address contemporary problems, it is unable to provide strategies to overcome even the immediate obstacles in the way of its objective of a genuinely cosmopolitan society. And, without a guarantee that such cosmopolitan society is even feasible, such a critical theoretical perspective simply offers us the perpetual redefinition of old problems in a new context and the persistent creation of new problems to replace old ones, without even the luxury of attempting to address them.

#### Any move away from realism relies on a leap of faith that would lead to more violence.

Murray 97

Alastair, Professor of International Relations. Reconstructing Realism: Between Power Politics and Cosmopolitan Ethics.

This highlights the central difficulty with Wendt’s constructivism. It is not any form of unfounded idealism about the possibility of effective a change in international politics. Wendt accepts that the intersubjective character of international institutions such as self-help render them relatively hard social facts. Rather, what is problematic is his faith that such change, if it could be achieved, implies progress. Wendt’s entire approach is governed by the belief that the problematic elements of international politics can be transcended, that the competitive identities which create these elements can be reconditioned, and that the predatory policies which underlie these identities can be eliminated. Everything, in his account, is up for grabs: there is no core of recalcitrance to human conduct which cannot be reformed, unlearnt, disposed of. This generates a stance that so privileges the possibility of a systemic transformation that it simply puts aside the difficulties which it recognises to be inherent in its achievement. Thus, even though Wendt acknowledges that the intersubjective basis of the self-help system makes it reform difficult, this does not dissuade him. He simply demands that states adopt a strategy of ‘altercasting’, a strategy which ‘tries to induce alter to take on a new identity (and thereby enlist alter in ego’s effort to change itself) by treating alter *as if* it already had that identity’. Wendt’s position effectively culminates in a demand that the state undertake nothing less than a giant leap of faith. The fact that its opponent might not take its overtures seriously, might not be interested in reformulating its own construction of the world, or might simply see such an opening as a weakness to be exploited, are completely discounted. The prospect of achieving a system transformation simply outweighs any adverse consequences which might arise from the effort to achieve it. Wendt ultimately appears, in the final analysis, to have overdosed on ‘Gorbimania’.

# Consequences

### Evaluating Consequences Ethical

#### Our predictions and weighing of consequences is key to ethics

Issac 2

(Jeffrey Issac, Professor of political science at Indiana University, Ph.D Yale, Director of Center for Study of Democracy and Public Life, Spring 2002, “End, Means, and Politics,” Dissent Magazinze, vol. 49, no. 2)

As writers such as Niccolo Machiavelli, Max Weber, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Hannah Arendt have taught, an unyielding concern with moral goodness undercuts political responsibility. The concern may be morally laudable, reflecting a kind of personal integrity, but it suffers from three fatal flaws: (1) It fails to see that the purity of one’s intention does not ensure the achievement of what one intends. Abjuring violence or refusing to make common cause with morally compromised parties may seem like the right thing; but if such tactics entail impotence, then it is hard to view them as serving any moral good beyond the clean conscience of their supporters; (2) it fails to see that in a world of real violence and injustice, moral purity is not simply a form of powerlessness; it is often a form of complicity in injustice. This is why, from the standpoint of politics--as opposed to religion--pacifism is always a potentially immoral stand. In categorically repudiating violence, it refuses in principle to oppose certain violent injustices with any effect; and (3) it fails to see that politics is as much about unintended consequences as it is about intentions; it is the effects of action, rather than the motives of action, that is most significant. Just as the alignment with “good” may engender impotence, it is often the pursuit of “good” that generates evil. This is the lesson of communism in the twentieth century: it is not enough that one’s goals be sincere or idealistic; it is equally important, always, to ask about the effects of pursuing these goals and to judge these effects in pragmatic and historically contextualized ways. Moral absolutism inhibits this judgment. It alienates those who are not true believers. It promotes arrogance. And it undermines political effectiveness.

#### Evaluation of consequences is the utmost ethical act – their ethic allows infinite violence

Williams 5

(Michael, Professor of International Politics at the University of Wales—Aberystwyth, The Realist Tradition and the Limits of International Relations, p. 174-176)

A commitment to an ethic of consequences reflects a deeper ethic of criticism, of ‘self-clarification’, and thus of reflection upon the values adopted by an individual or a collectivity. It is part of an attempt to make critical evaluation an intrinsic element of responsibility. Responsibility to this more fundamental ethic gives the ethic of consequences meaning. Consequentialism and responsibility are here drawn into what Schluchter, in terms that will be familiar to anyone conversant with constructivism in International Relations, has called a ‘reflexive principle’. In the wilful Realist vision, scepticism and consequentialism are linked in an attempt to construct not just a more substantial vision of political responsibility, but also the kinds of actors who might adopt it, and the kinds of social structures that might support it. A consequentialist ethic is not simply a choice adopted by actors: it is a means of trying to foster particular kinds of self-critical individuals and societies, and in so doing to encourage a means by which one can justify and foster a politics of responsibility. The ethic of responsibility in wilful Realism thus involves a commitment to both autonomy and limitation, to freedom and restraint, to an acceptance of limits and the criticism of limits. Responsibility clearly involves prudence and an accounting for current structures and their historical evolution; but it is not limited to this, for it seeks ultimately the creation of responsible subjects within a philosophy of limits. Seen in this light, the Realist commitment to objectivity appears quite differently. Objectivity in terms of consequentialist analysis does not simply take the actor or action as given, it is a political practice — an attempt to foster a responsible self, undertaken by an analyst with a commitment to objectivity which is itself based in a desire to foster a politics of responsibility. Objectivity in the sense of coming to terms with the ‘reality’ of contextual conditions and likely outcomes of action is not only necessary for success, it is vital for self-reflection, for sustained engagement with the practical and ethical adequacy of one’s views. The blithe, self-serving, and uncritical stances of abstract moralism or rationalist objectivism avoid self-criticism by refusing to engage with the intractability of the world ‘as it is’. Reducing the world to an expression of their theoretical models, political platforms, or ideological programmes, they fail to engage with this reality, and thus avoid the process of self-reflection at the heart of responsibility. By contrast, Realist objectivity takes an engagement with this intractable ‘object’ that is not reducible to one’s wishes or will as a necessary condition of ethical engagement, self-reflection, and self-creation.7 Objectivity is not a naïve naturalism in the sense of scientific laws or rationalist calculation; it is a necessary engagement with a world that eludes one’s will. A recognition of the limits imposed by ‘reality’ is a condition for a recognition of one’s own limits — that the world is not simply an extension of one’s own will**.** But it is also a challenge to use that intractability as a source of possibility, as providing a set of openings within which a suitably chastened and yet paradoxically energised will to action can responsibly be pursued. In the wilful Realist tradition, the essential opacity of both the self and the world are taken as limiting principles. Limits upon understanding provide chastening parameters for claims about the world and actions within it. But they also provide challenging and creative openings within which diverse forms of life can be developed: the limited unity of the self and the political order is the precondition for freedom. The ultimate opacity of the world is not to be despaired of: it is a condition of possibility for the wilful, creative construction of selves and social orders which embrace the diverse human potentialities which this lack of essential or intrinsic order makes possible.8 But it is also to be aware of the less salutary possibilities this involves. Indeterminacy is not synonymous with absolute freedom — it is both a condition of, and imperative toward, responsibility.

# Extinction First

### Extinction Outweighs Everything

#### Extinction comes first

Cummiskey ‘96

(David, Associate Philosophy Professor, Bates College, Kantian Consequentialism, p. 129-131)

It does, however, support the consequentialist interpretation. Since the moral demand to respect other persons is based on the equal moral status of all persons, Kant’s argument presupposes the equal value, or dignity, of all persons. Such beings are comparable, and the comparison demonstrates the equal objective value of all. The equal value of all rational being provides a clear basis for a requirement to maximally promote the flourishing of rational agency (chapter 5). Nonetheless, while the extreme interpretation must be rejected, the dignity- price distinction still accurately signifies the priority of rationality. If we refuse to sacrifice a person for the sake of the maximization of happiness or any other market value, then we have shown a “reverence” for such beings. But as we shall see more fully in chapter 9, this reverence is compatible with the sacrifice of some for the sake of other persons with dignity. It is mere dogmatic intuitionism or groundless deontology to insist that all such sacrifices are inconsistent with the equal dignity of all. At times the dignity principle seems to function like an inkblot where each sees whatever conclusions he or she is predisposed to accept. If one believes that a particular way of treating people is morally unacceptable, then such treatment is inconsistent with respect for the dignity of persons. Too often, when a deontologist uses the dignity principle as a normative principle, the cart is put before the horse: This reasoning presupposes that we have a standard of unacceptable conduct that is prior to the dignity principle. The dignity principle cannot then provide the reason why the conduct is unacceptable. The goal of the Kantian deontologist is to (directly) vindicate ordinary commonsense morality; but it is not at all clear how the dignity principle can even support the intuitive view that the negative duty not to kill is more stringent than the positive duty to save lives. How is the common view that we have only slight, if any, duties to aid those in desperate need consistent with the lexical priority of the dignity of persons over the price of the inclinations? Of course, on the one hand, it is commonly maintained that killing some persons to save many others fails to give due regard to the incomparable and absolute dignity of persons. On the other hand, it is maintained that respect for the dignity of persons does not require that one spend one’s discretionary income on saving lives rather than on one’s own personal projects. As long as one has done some minimum and indeterminate amount to help others, then one need not do any more. So the Kantian deontologist wants to use the dignity-price distinction to resolve conflicting grounds of obligation in an intuitively acceptable way, but it is far from obvious why allowing a loss of dignity for the sake of something with price is consistent with the dignity principle. In short, ordinary morality permits one to place the satisfaction of one’s inclinations above a concern for the dignity of all. Consequentialists have produced indirect justifications for many of these common intuitive judgments; it would seem that those appealing to the dignity principle must rely on similar arguments. Finally, even if one grants that saving two persons with dignity cannot outweigh and compensate for killing one—because dignity cannot be added and summed in this way—this point still does not justify deontological constraints. On the extreme interpretation, why would not killing one person be a stronger obligation than saving two persons? If I am concerned with the priceless dignity of each, it would seem that I may still save two; it is just that my reason cannot be that the two compensate for the loss of the one. Consider Hill’s example of a priceless object: If I can save two of three priceless statutes only by destroying one, then I cannot claim that saving two makes up for the loss of the one. But similarly, the loss of the two is not outweighed by the one that was not destroyed. Indeed, even if dignity cannot be simply summed up, how is the extreme interpretation inconsistent with the idea that I should save as many priceless objects as possible? Even if two do not simply outweigh and thus compensate for the loss of the one, each is priceless; thus, I have good reason to save as many as I can. In short, it is not clear how the.extreme interpretation justifies the ordinary killing/letting-die distinction or even how it conflicts with the conclusion that the more persons with dignity who are saved, the better.

#### Extinction outweighs – no coping mechanisms, no experience, no trial-and-error, future generations

Bostrom 2

(Nick Professor of Philosophy and Global Studies at Yale.. www.transhumanist.com/volume9/risks.html.)JFS

Risks in this sixth category are a recent phenomenon. This is part of the reason why it is useful to distinguish them from other risks. We have not evolved mechanisms, either biologically or culturally, for managing such risks. Our intuitions and coping strategies have been shaped by our long experience with risks such as dangerous animals, hostile individuals or tribes, poisonous foods, automobile accidents, Chernobyl, Bhopal, volcano eruptions, earthquakes, draughts, World War I, World War II, epidemics of influenza, smallpox, black plague, and AIDS. These types of disasters have occurred many times and our cultural attitudes towards risk have been shaped by trial-and-error in managing such hazards. But tragic as such events are to the people immediately affected, in the big picture of things – from the perspective of humankind as a whole – even the worst of these catastrophes are mere ripples on the surface of the great sea of life. They haven’t significantly affected the total amount of human suffering or happiness or determined the long-term fate of our species. With the exception of a species-destroying comet or asteroid impact (an extremely rare occurrence), there were probably no significant existential risks in human history until the mid-twentieth century, and certainly none that it was within our power to do something about. The first manmade existential risk was the inaugural detonation of an atomic bomb. At the time, there was some concern that the explosion might start a runaway chain-reaction by “igniting” the atmosphere. Although we now know that such an outcome was physically impossible, it qualifies as an existential risk that was present at the time. For there to be a risk, given the knowledge and understanding available, it suffices that there is some subjective probability of an adverse outcome, even if it later turns out that objectively there was no chance of something bad happening. If we don’t know whether something is objectively risky or not, then it is risky in the subjective sense. The subjective sense is of course what we must base our decisions on.[[2]](%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn2)At any given time we must use our best current subjective estimate of what the objective risk factors are.[[3]](%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn3)A much greater existential risk emerged with the build-up of nuclear arsenals in the US and the USSR. An all-out nuclear war was a possibility with both a substantial probability and with consequences that mighthave been persistent enough to qualify as global and terminal. There was a real worry among those best acquainted with the information available at the time that a nuclear Armageddon would occur and that it might annihilate our species or permanently destroy human civilization.[[4]](%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn4)  Russia and the US retain large nuclear arsenals that could be used in a future confrontation, either accidentally or deliberately. There is also a risk that other states may one day build up large nuclear arsenals. Note however that a smaller nuclear exchange, between India and Pakistan for instance, is not an existential risk, since it would not destroy or thwart humankind’s potential permanently. Such a war might however be a local terminal risk for the cities most likely to be targeted. Unfortunately, we shall see that nuclear Armageddon and comet or asteroid strikes are mere preludes to the existential risks that we will encounter in the 21st century. The special nature of the challenges posed by existential risks is illustrated by the following points: Our approach to existential risks cannot be one of trial-and-error. There is no opportunity to learn from errors. The reactive approach – see what happens, limit damages, and learn from experience – is unworkable. Rather, we must take a proactive approach. This requires foresight to anticipate new types of threats and a willingness to take decisive preventive action and to bear the costs (moral and economic) of such actions. We cannot necessarily rely on the institutions, moral norms, social attitudes or national security policies that developed from our experience with managing other sorts of risks. Existential risks are a different kind of beast. We might find it hard to take them as seriously as we should simply because we have never yet witnessed such disasters.[[5]](%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn5) Our collective fear-response is likely ill calibrated to the magnitude of threat. Reductions in existential risks are global public goods [13] and may therefore be undersupplied by the market [14]. Existential risks are a menace for everybody and may require acting on the international plane. Respect for national sovereignty is not a legitimate excuse for failing to take countermeasures against a major existential risk. If we take into account the welfare of future generations, the harm done by existential risks is multiplied by another factor, the size of which depends on whether and how much we discount future benefits [15,16]. In view of its undeniable importance, it is surprising how little systematic work has been done in this area. Part of the explanation may be that many of the gravest risks stem (as we shall see) from anticipated future technologies that we have only recently begun to understand. Another part of the explanation may be the unavoidably interdisciplinary and speculative nature of the subject. And in part the neglect may also be attributable to an aversion against thinking seriously about a depressing topic. The point, however, is not to wallow in gloom and doom but simply to take a sober look at what could go wrong so we can create responsible strategies for improving our chances of survival. In order to do that, we need to know where to focus our efforts.

### Extinction Outweighs Ontology

#### Extinction precedes ontology – existence is a prerequisite for the self

Wapner 3

[Paul Wapner is associate professor and director of the Global Environmental Policy Program at American University, DISSENT / Winter 2003]JFS

All attempts to listen to nature are, indeed, social constructions, except one. Even the most radical postmodernist acknowledges the distinction between physical existence and nonexistence. As mentioned, postmodernists assume that there is a physical substratum to the phenomenal world, even if they argue about its different meanings. This substratum is essential for allowing entities to speak or express themselves. That which doesn't exist, doesn't speak. That which doesn't exist, manifests no character. Put differently, yes, the postmodernist should rightly worry about interpreting nature's expressions. And everyone should be wary about those who claim to speak on nature's behalf (including when environmentalists and students of global environmental politics do so). But we should not doubt the simple-minded notion that a prerequisite of expression is existence. That which doesn't exist can never express itself. And this in turn suggests that preserving the nonhuman world-in all its diverse embodiments-must be seen by eco-critics as a fundamental good. Eco-critics must be supporters, in some fashion, of environmental preservation.

# Predictions Good

### Predictions Good—Generic

#### Just because we can’t predict the future with total certainty does not mean that we cannot make educated guesses. We are obligated to take care of the planet if we have a significant role to play.

Kurasawa 04

(Professor of Sociology, York University of Toronto, Fuyuki, Constellations Volume 11, No 4, 2004).

**A radically postmodern line of thinking,** for instance, **would lead us to believe that it is pointless, perhaps even harmful, to strive for farsightedness in light of the** aforementioned **crisis of conventional paradigms of historical analysis**. If, contra teleological models, history has no intrinsic meaning, direction, or endpoint to be discovered through human reason, and if, contra scientistic futurism, prospective trends cannot be predicted without error, then the abyss of chronological inscrutability supposedly opens up at our feet. **The future appears to be unknowable,** an outcome of chance. Therefore, rather than embarking upon grandiose speculation about what may occur, we should adopt a pragmatism that abandons itself to the twists and turns of history; let us be content to formulate ad hoc responses to emergencies as they arise. While **this argument** has the merit of underscoring the fallibilistic nature of all predictive schemes, it **conflates the necessary recognition of the contingency of history with unwarranted assertions about the latter’s total** opacity and **indeterminacy. Acknowledging the fact that the future cannot be known with absolute certainty does not imply abandoning the task of trying to understand what is brewing on the horizon and to prepare for crises** already coming into their own. **In fact, the incorporation of the principle of fallibility into the work of prevention means that we must be ever more vigilant for warning signs of disaster and for responses that provoke unintended or unexpected consequences** (a point to which I will return in the final section of this paper). **In addition, from a normative point of view, the acceptance of historical contingency and of the self-limiting character of farsightedness places the duty of preventing catastrophe squarely on the shoulders of present generations. The future no longer appears to be a** metaphysical **creature of destiny** or of the cunning of reason, **nor can it be sloughed off to pure randomness. It becomes, instead, a result of human action shaped by decisions in the present** – including, of course, trying to anticipate and prepare for possible and avoidable sources of harm to our successors. **Combining a sense of analytical contingency toward the future and ethical responsibility for it, the idea of early warning is making its way into preventive action on the global stage.**

### Predictions Key to Agency

#### Predictions avoid a state of permanent emergency. They allow us to reclaim our agency from passivity.

Bindé ’00

(Jérôme, Dir. Analysis and Forecasting Office – UNESCO, Public Culture, “Toward an Ethics of the Future”, 12:1, Project Muse)

An ethics of the future is not an ethics in the future. If tomorrow is always too late, then today is often already very late. The disparities between North and South, and increasingly between North and North and between South and South, the growing rift within the very heart of societies, population growth, the threat of an ecological crisis on a planetary scale, and the way societies have lost control and surrendered to the hands of "anonymous masters" all call for a new paradoxical form of emergency, the emergency of the long term. To adopt, as quickly as possible, a constructive and preventive attitude means preserving future generations from the fever of immediacy, from reactive passivity, from refuge in artificial or virtual illusory paradises, and from omnipotent emergency. Through a forward-looking approach, we can be in a position to offer generations to come what we are deprived of today--a future. Institutions have the power to forecast or not to forecast. This is an awesome responsibility. By choosing not to forecast, they choose to postpone indefinitely their much needed long-term action for the sake of short-term emergency: They condemn themselves, literally, to passivity, dependency, and, ultimately, to obsolescence and nonexistence. By choosing to forecast and by refusing to become purely reactive agents, they will not only preserve their institutional independence but also send a strong message to other policymakers and decisionmakers worldwide that the first object of policy, and its first responsibility, is the future. Max Weber justly warned that "the proper business of the politician is the future and his responsibility before the future." The failure to use foresight, in other words, is not just a benign failure of intelligence: It is a culpable neglect of future generations. Is it not therefore surprising that, once foresight has been applied, once an issue has been recognised as a policy priority by all parties concerned, once international instruments have been signed that declare the commitment to act on this [End Page 56] foresight, we should fail so miserably to take the appropriate measures? Take development aid: In 1974, developed countries solemnly agreed to dedicate 0.7 percent of their GDP to development aid; nearly a quarter of a century later, in 1997, they contribute 0.22 percent of their GDP to development aid, and one superpower dedicates only 0.09 percent to it. 5 Take the issue of the global environment: Seven years after the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, Agenda 21 remains, for the greater part, a dead letter, and the promising but timid advances made at the Kyoto Summit have since been all but forgotten. In both instances, foresight was exerted and solemn oaths taken to act on this foresight, in order to remedy pressing problems. In both instances, action has been delayed, and problems have been allowed to become more pressing. How long can we afford the luxury of inactivity? An ethics of the future, if it remains an ethics in the future, is an injustice committed against all generations, present and future. To paraphrase a common saying, the future delayed is the future denied.

# A2: Generic Root Cause

### **No Single Cause**

#### **Wars don’t have single causes – consensus of experts**

Cashman 00

Greg, Professor of Political Science at Salisbury State University “What Causes war?: An introduction to theories of international conflict” pg. 9

Two warnings need to be issued at this point. First, while we have been using a single variable explanation of war merely for the sake of simplicity, multivariate explanations of war are likely to be much more powerful. Since social and political behaviors are extremely complex, they are almost never explainable through a single factor. Decades of research have led most analysts to reject monocausal explanations of war. For instance, international relations theorist J. David Singer suggests that we ought to move away from the concept of “causality” since it has become associated with the search for a single cause of war; we should instead redirect our activities toward discovering “explanations”—a term that implies multiple causes of war, but also a certain element of randomness or chance in their occurrence.

#### **Monocausal explanations impoverish scholarship**

Martin 90

Brian Martin, Department of Science and Technology Studies, University of Wollongong, Australia, Uprooting War, 1990 edition http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/90uw/uw13.html

In this chapter and in the six preceding chapters I have examined a number of structures and factors which have some connection with the war system. There is much more that could be said about any one of these structures, and other factors which could be examined. Here I wish to note one important point: attention should not be focussed on one single factor to the exclusion of others. This is often done for example by some Marxists who look only at capitalism as a root of war and other social problems, and by some feminists who attribute most problems to patriarchy. The danger of monocausal explanations is that they may lead to an inadequate political practice. The ‘revolution’ may be followed by the persistence or even expansion of many problems which were not addressed by the single-factor perspective. The one connecting feature which I perceive in the structures underlying war is an unequal distribution of power. This unequal distribution is socially organised in many different ways, such as in the large-scale structures for state administration, in capitalist ownership, in male domination within families and elsewhere, in control over knowledge by experts, and in the use of force by the military. Furthermore, these different systems of power are interconnected. They often support each other, and sometimes conflict. This means that the struggle against war can and must be undertaken at many different levels. It ranges from struggles to undermine state power to struggles to undermine racism, sexism and other forms of domination at the level of the individual and the local community. Furthermore, the different struggles need to be linked together. That is the motivation for analysing the roots of war and developing strategies for grassroots movements to uproot them

# A2: Reps First

### Reps Don’t Shape Politis

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

Tuathail 96

 Professor of Geography at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 96 (Gearoid, Political Geography, Vol 15 No 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 leadership 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.

#### Focus on representations is insufficient

Taft-Kaufman 95

(Jill, Professor, Department of Speech Communication And Dramatic Arts @ Central Michigan University, “Other ways: Postmodernism and performance praxis,” [The Southern Communication Journal](http://proquest.umi.com/pqdlink?RQT=318&pmid=17630&TS=1184952735&clientId=17822&VType=PQD&VName=PQD&VInst=PROD), Vol.60, Iss. 3;  pg. 222 AD: 6/26/09)

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.

# A2: Method First

#### The fact that international relations are constructed doesn’t deny the accuracy of our impact claims.

Jarvis 2k

Darryl Jarvis, Senior Lecturer in International Relations, University of Sydney. International Relations and the Challenge of Postmodernism. P.130

If the relevance of Ashley's project is questionable, so too is its logic and cogency. First, we might ask to what extent the postmodern "emphasis on the textual, constructed nature of the world" represents "an unwarranted extension of approaches appropriate for literature to other areas of human practice that arc more constrained by an objective reality."39 All theory is socially constructed and realities like the nation-state, domestic and international politics, regimes, or transnational agencies are obviously social fabrications. But to what extent is this observation of any real use? Just because we acknowledge that the state is a socially fabricated entity, or that the division between domestic and international society is arbitrarily inscribed does not make the reality of the state disappear or render invisible international politics. Whether socially constructed or objectively given, the argument over the ontological status of the state is of no particular moment. Does this change our experience of the state or somehow diminish the political-economic-juridical-military functions of the state? To recognize that states arc not naturally inscribed but dynamic entities continually in the process of being made and reimposed and are therefore culturally dissimilar, economically different, and politically atypical, while perspicacious to our historical and theoretical understanding of the state, in no way detracts from its reality, practices, and consequences. Similarly, few would object to Ashley's hermeneutic interpretivist understanding of the international sphere as an artificially inscribed demarcation. But, to paraphrase Holsti again, so what? This does not make its effects any less real, diminish its importance in our lives, or excuse us from paying serious attention to it. That international politics and states would not exist without subjectivities is a banal tautology. The point, surely, is to move beyond this and study these processes. Thus, while intellectually interesting, constructivist theory is not an end point as Ashley seems to think, where we all throw up our hands and announce there are no foundations and all reality is an arbitrary social construction. Rather, it should be a means of recognizing the structurated nature of our being and the reciprocity between subjects and structures through history. Ashley, however, seems not to want to do this, but only to deconstruct the state, international politics, and international theory on the basis that none of these is objectively given but fictitious entities that arise out of modernist practices of representation. While an interesting theoretical enterprise, it is of no great consequence to the study of international politics. Indeed, structuration theory has long taken care of these ontological dilemmas that otherwise seem to preoccupy Ashley.40

#### Methodologies are always imperfect. Endorsing multiple epistemological frameworks can correct the blindspots of each – especially in the IR context.

Stern and Druckman ‘2k

Paul C. Stern, National Research Council, and Daniel Druckman, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University. “Evaluating Interventions in History: The Case of International Conflict Resolution”. International Studies Review, Spring 2000, p. 62-63. Academic Search Premiere.

Using several distinct research approaches or sources of information in conjunction is a valuable strategy for developing generic knowledge. This strategy is particularly useful for meeting the challenges of measurement and inference. The nature of historical phenomena makes controlled experimentation—the analytic technique best suited to making strong inferences about causes and effects—practically impossible with real-life situations. Making inferences requires using experimentation in simulated conditions and various other methods, each of which has its own advantages and limitations, but none of which can alone provide the level of certainty desired about what works and under what conditions. We conclude that debates between advocates of different research methods (for example, the quantitative-qualitative debate) are unproductive except in the context of a search for ways in which different methods can complement each other. Because there is no single best way to develop knowledge, the search for generic knowledge about international conflict resolution should adopt an epistemological strategy of triangulation, sometimes called “critical multiplism.”53 That is, it should use multiple perspectives, sources of data, constructs, interpretive frameworks, and modes of analysis to address specific questions on the presumption that research approaches that rely on certain perspectives can act as partial correctives for the limitations of approaches that rely on different ones. An underlying assumption is that robust findings (those that hold across studies that vary along several dimensions) engender more confidence than replicated findings (a traditional scientific ideal, but not practicable in international relations research outside the laboratory). When different data sources or methods converge on a single answer, one can have increased confidence in the result. When they do not converge, one can interpret and take into account the known biases in each research approach. A continuing critical dialogue among analysts using different perspectives, methods, and data could lead to an understanding that better approximates international relations than the results coming from any single study, method, or data source.

# A2: Epistemology/Ontology First

#### Emphasis on the metaphysical destroys prospective political formulations

Owen 2

(David Owen, Reader of Political Theory at the Univ. of Southampton, Millennium Vol 31 No 3 2002 p. 655-7)

Commenting on the ‘philosophical turn’ in IR, Wæver remarks that ‘[a] frenzy for words like “epistemology” and “ontology” often signals this philosophical turn’, although he goes on to comment that these terms are often used loosely.4 However, loosely deployed or not, it is clear that debates concerning ontology and epistemology play a central role in the contemporary IR theory wars. In one respect, this is unsurprising since it is a characteristic feature of the social sciences that periods of disciplinary disorientation involve recourse to reflection on the philosophical commitments of different theoretical approaches, and there is no doubt that such reflection can play a valuable role in making explicit the commitments that characterise (and help individuate) diverse theoretical positions. Yet, such a philosophical turn is not without its dangers and I will briefly mention three before turning to consider a confusion that has, I will suggest, helped to promote the IR theory wars by motivating this philosophical turn. The first danger with the philosophical turn is that it has an inbuilt tendency to prioritise issues of ontology and epistemology over explanatory and/or interpretive power as if the latter two were merely a simple function of the former. But while the explanatory and/or interpretive power of a theoretical account is not wholly independent of its ontological and/or epistemological commitments (otherwise criticism of these features would not be a criticism that had any value), it is by no means clear that it is, in contrast, wholly dependent on these philosophical commitments. Thus, for example, one need not be sympathetic to rational choice theory to recognise that it can provide powerful accounts of certain kinds of problems, such as the tragedy of the commons in which dilemmas of collective action are foregrounded. It may, of course, be the case that the advocates of rational choice theory cannot give a good account of why this type of theory is powerful in accounting for this class of problems (i.e., how it is that the relevant actors come to exhibit features in these circumstances that approximate the assumptions of rational choice theory) and, if this is the case, it is a philosophical weakness—but this does not undermine the point that, for a certain class of problems, rational choice theory may provide the best account available to us. In other words, while the critical judgement of theoretical accounts in terms of their ontological and/or epistemological sophistication is one kind of critical judgement, it is not the only or even necessarily the most important kind. The second danger run by the philosophical turn is that because prioritisation of ontology and epistemology promotes theory-construction from philosophical first principles,it cultivates a theory-driven rather than problem-driven approach to IR. Paraphrasing Ian Shapiro, the point can be put like this: since it is the case that there is always a plurality of possible true descriptions of a given action, event or phenomenon, the challenge is to decide which is the most apt in terms of getting a perspicuous **grip on** the **action,** event or phenomenon in question given the purposes of the inquiry; yet, from this standpoint, ‘theory-driven work is part of a reductionist program’ in that it ‘dictates always opting for the description that calls for the explanation that flows from the preferred model or theory’.5 The justification offered for this strategy rests on the mistaken belief that it is necessary for social science because general explanations are required to characterise the classes of phenomena studied in similar terms. However, as Shapiro points out,this is to misunderstand the enterprise of science since ‘whether there are general explanations for classes of phenomena is a question for social-scientific inquiry, not to be prejudgedbefore conducting that inquiry’.6 Moreover, this strategy easily slips into the promotion of the pursuit of generality over that of empirical validity. The third danger is that the preceding two combine to encourage the formation of a particular image of disciplinary debate in IR—what might be called (only slightly tongue in cheek) ‘the Highlander view’—namely, an image of warring theoretical approaches with each, despite occasional temporary tactical alliances, dedicated to the strategic achievement of sovereignty over the disciplinary field. It encourages this view because the turn to, and prioritisation of, ontology and epistemology stimulates the idea that there can only be one theoretical approach which gets things right, namely, the theoretical approach that gets its ontology and epistemology right. This image feeds back into IR exacerbating the first and second dangers, and so a potentially vicious circle arises.

# A2: Ontology First

#### Questions of ontology shut down pragmatic political action – we never move past ontological “priming” to practiced material struggle

Barnett 08

Geography Prof at Open, http://oro.open.ac.uk/10527/1/Political\_affects\_in\_public\_space\_(2).pdf

Second, the tendency for ontologies of affect to answer the demand for politics through recourse to the trope of manipulation is explored, with reference to two key theorists of this approach: the work of Nigel Thrift on the spatial politics of affect and William Connolly’s theorisation of the cultural politics of neurologically transmitted media affects. Thrift’s work has explicitly set out to invent a field of ‘nonrepresentational theory’ in which affect is ascribed considerable significance as both an object of analysis and as a theoretical orientation. Connolly’s work has provided resources for articulating an ontology of affect with a programme of political analysis that directly addresses issues in normative democratic theory. The third and fourth sections of the paper focus on these two related fields of social science, in which ontologies of affect have been presented as carrying political weight by virtue of the light they throw on the ways in which power circulates in public space. Thrift’s spatial politics of affect and Connolly’s neuropolitics of affect converge around a particular construal of affect as a means of manipulating political subjects without them knowing it. The trope of manipulation occurs in the critical account of the politics of affect that one finds in these ontologies. Understanding affect is a pressing political task, it is argued, because ‘the systematic manipulation of “motivational propensities” has become a key political technology’ (Thrift 2007, 26). The same trope of manipulation troubles the efforts of Thrift and Connolly to outline an affirmative account of the politics of affect, in which progressive politics is presented as various tactical experiments on the dispositions of dispersed publics. Third, the combination of a rhetoric of manipulation with a strong ontological claim about the conceptual priority of affective registers over deliberative ones is seen to generate a normative blind spot in these political ontologies of affect. This is discussed in the fifth section. In trying to square an affirmative account of the politics of affect with a critical account of the politics of affect, political ontologies of affect implicitly avow normative values that the theoretical resources they mobilise appear to undermine. This is most evident in the oblique reference to the value of democracy in these accounts. By identifying how the ontology of affect is translated into a genre of democratic ethos which is presented as preferable to alternative theories of democratic pluralism, the enactment of this ontology is thrown into new perspective as being offered as a reason for certain commitments. And in so far as it stands as the reason for such commitments, adherents to this ontology are exposed to being called on to give further reasons to justify these commitments. The conclusion spells out two sets of questions around which turn judgements of claims about ‘the politics of affect’. The ascendancy of an ontological register of theoretical argument in contemporary human geography is indicated by the abstract delimitation of the ‘the cultural’ from ‘the economic’, the ‘discursive’ from the ‘material’, ‘being’ from ‘becoming’, ‘the human’ from ‘the non-human’, the ‘representational’ from the ‘non-representational’, the ‘rational’ from the ‘more-than-rational’. Getting your ontology right, which usually means avowing that one holds to a ‘relational ontology’, has become the benchmark of theoretical probity. The ascendancy of this sort of ontological register reflects a move to philosophise social science (Kivinen and Piiroinen 2006). It is supposed that inquiry can and must be preceded by clearly delimiting the general metaphysical properties possessed by objects of analysis. The ontologisation of theory in human geography marks a distinctive inflection of a broad array of post-foundationalist philosophies. Post-foundational philosophies hold that the world of human affairs is not only held together by relationships of knowledge, and where it is, knowledge is not a matter of certainty (e.g. Cavell 1979; Taylor 1995). They promise to deflate approaches that prioritise the epistemological aspects of action, and which assume that non-cognitive grounds of action and belief are suspect. The resurgent theme of affect in the social sciences and the humanities is illustrative of this post-foundational deflation of overly cognitivist models of action. The ontologisation of theory has been associated with a strong preference for models of ethical and political agency that focus attention upon embodied, affective dispositions of subjects. This reflects the influence of various theoretical and philosophical traditions that share a deep suspicion of ‘cognitivist’, ‘intellectualist’ or ‘mentalist’ construals of human action. This follows from a widely shared intuition that propositional ‘knowing-that’ is a function of embodied ‘knowing-how’. Once it is acknowledged that ‘knowing-how’ involves all sorts of learned, embodied dispositions that are inscribed in various types of ‘unconscious’ disposition of anticipation and response, then theoretical traditions that are too partial to a picture of a social world governed by rules, principles and practices of reason seem constricted or even wrong-headed. Consistent with the ontological drift of certain strands of cultural theory and ‘Continental philosophy’ (Hemmings 2005; White 2000), in human geography affect has become the sort of thing one can have ‘a theory of’, where this amounts to the correct delimitation of the ontological status of affective forces (e.g. Anderson B 2006; Anderson and Harrison 2006; McCormack 2007). Thrift (2004a, 464; 2007, 223 –35) identifies a family of research fields concerned with affect: cultural-theoretic work on performance; Sylvan Tomkins’ seminal work on affect; Deleuze’s reading of Spinoza; and Darwinian accounts. Psychoanalysis is also acknowledged as a source, somewhat reluctantly. So-called ‘non-representational theory’ (Thrift 2007) derives a highly abstract definition of affect from this range of work. Affect is presented as an ontological layer of embodied existence, delimited by reference to the purely formal relationship of the capacity to be affected and to affect. In this presentation, affect is doubly located: in the relational in-between of fields of interaction; and layered below the level of minded, intentional consciousness. This vocabulary of the ‘layering’ of thinking, feeling and judgement is fundamental to the political resonances claimed on behalf of ontologies of affect. In principle, post-foundational philosophies which acknowledge that practical reasoning goes on against a background of affective dispositions and desires could be expected to reconfigure what, following Ryle (1949, 10), we might call ‘the logical geography’ of action. However, when the postfoundationalist avowal of the importance of embodied ‘knowing-how’ is interpreted in terms of ‘layer-cake’ ontologies of practice, there is a tendency to simply assert the conceptual priority of previously denigrated terms – affect over reason, practice over representation. Disputes over the significance for social science of post-foundationalist philosophy turn on the types of priority-claim that are assumed to follow from ontological assertions that ready-at-handedness, background or affective attunement stand as the background to embodied action. The ontologisation of affect in recent cultural theory is associated with the explicit adoption of a layer-cake interpretation of the relationship between practice and expression. Layer-cake interpretations present propositional intentionality as resting upon a more basic level of pre-conceptual, practical intentionality in such a way as to present propositional intentionality as derivative of this layer of practical attunement (Brandom 2002, 328). On this view, the practical presupposition of the available, ready at-hand qualities of environments in embodied actions that treat these environments as merely occurrent, or present-at-hand, is interpreted as implying an order of conceptual priority of the practical (Brandom 2002, 332). This model of conceptual priority puts in place a view of practical attunement as a stratum that is autonomous of propositional intentionality. It is treated as a layer that ‘could be in place before, or otherwise in the absence of the particular linguistic practices that permit anything to show up or be represented as merely there’ (Brandom 2002, 80). This view of practice as an autonomous layer therefore reproduces a representationalist view of representational practices in order to assert the superiority of an avowedly ‘non-representational’ stance. In contrast to this view, we might instead suppose that the priority of practice only holds in the order of explanation (Brandom 2002, 332). This implies that we cannot understand propositional intentionality without first understanding its dependence on practice, without supposing that this requires an understanding of practice as an intentional layer that kicks-in before others. It means presuming that the capacity to represent things as being a certain way is the result of applying an assertional-inferential filter to things available to us in the first instance as exhibiting various sorts of practical significance. (Brandom 2002, 80) This alternative interpretation does not assert the priority of one ‘layer’ over another. Rather, it reconfigures our understanding of what we are doing when representational discourse breaks out, when we say ‘that things are thus-and-so’ (Brandom 2002, 80). Rejecting the layer-cake interpretation of the type of priority that practice is said to have over propositional intentionality leads to a reconfiguration of the pragmatics of expressive rationality. Rather than supposing that acts of expression are ways of transforming an inner content into an outer expression, in a representational way, we instead think in terms of acts of making explicit what is implicit, in an inferential way (Brandom 2001, 8). An interpretation in terms of the explanatory priority of practice therefore allows us to understand in inferential terms the embodied capacity for making explicit something one can do as something one can say. This is a capacity to translate ‘knowing how’ into a ‘knowing that’ which is expressed in terms of commitments and entitlements, ‘as putting it in a form in which it can both serve as and stand in need of reasons’ (Brandom 2001, 11). The sense of ‘implicit’ in this holistic-inferential account does not presume that the reasons that can be made explicit were present as the maxims behind the actions to which they are retroactively attributed. It just means there is no sharp line between unarticulated know-how and explicit knowledge (Taylor 2000); and that the latter should be thought of as providing a step towards acknowledging the responsibilities entailed in actions. This interpretation of the order of priority that holds between different sorts of intentionality opens up the possibility of reconfiguring the logical geography of action. It supposes that different modalities of action enact their own ‘validity conditions’ that can, in principle, be made explicit in public practices of giving and asking for reasons (e.g. Bridge 2007; Flyvbjerg 2001; Lovibond 2002). This reconsideration of the pragmatics of expressive rationality reconfigures understandings of deliberation that underlie theories of democracy, justice and legitimacy (see Habermas 2000; Brandom 2000). This overlaps with attempts to develop thoroughgoing accounts of affective deliberation in contemporary democratic theory (e.g. Krause 2007; Hoggett and Thompson 2002). This work makes explicit the relevance of affective aspects of life for deliberative models of democracy that work up from the principle of affected interest, according to which those affected by actions and outcomes should have some say in defining the parameters of those actions and outcomes. The upsurge of interest in the theme of affect speaks in compelling ways to a recurrent problem in democratic theory: how to respect citizens as competent moral agents whilst acknowledging the web of dependent, conditioned relationships into which they are thrown. There is an extensive literature in political science on the role that non-rational sentiments, feelings and emotions play in the political decisionmaking processes. This is a literature which is empirically grounded (e.g. Marcus 2002), and explicitly reconfigures understandings of the relationships between rationality, reason and action (e.g. McDermott 2004). The degree to which affective capabilities can be articulated with public procedures of democratic legitimacy is a central problem in post-Habermasian critical theory’s project of describing the conditions of radical democratic, pluralistic constitutionalism (e.g. Habermas 2006; Honneth 2007; Markell 2000). Berlant’s (2005a) historiography of affective publics in American culture establishes that any and all political public spheres are shaped by affective energies, while Sedgwick (2003) and Riley (2005) have explored the affective dynamics of textual practices. In moral philosophy, affect is embraced as a means of rethinking the role of partiality in deliberative practices, for example in Baier’s (1994) feminist ethics of moral prejudice which roots reason in affects, or in Blackburn’s (1998) Humean reconstruction of practical reason. The key thought guiding these reconfigurations of affect-with-reason is the idea that rationality emerges out of situated encounters with others. This same theme underwrites the work of political theorists reconfiguring democratic theory around an appreciation of the affective registers of justice and injustice, expressed in an emphasis on the arts of receptivity, of listening and acknowledging and responding (e.g. Young 1997; Coles 2005). Thrift’s spatial politics of affect and Connolly’s neuropolitics of media affects sits, therefore, in a much broader range of work that is concerned with affective aspects of political life. But the examples noted above all focus on the affective aspects of life without adopting a vocabulary of ontological layers, levels and priority. This is in contrast to the characteristic ontologisation of affect in human geography. The ontologisation of affect as a layer of preconscious ‘priming to act’ reduces embodied action simply to the dimension of being attuned to and coping with the world. This elides the aspect of embodied knowing that involves the capacity to take part in ‘games of giving and asking for reasons’. While the ontologisation of theory in human geography has been accompanied by claims to transform and reconfigure understandings of what counts as ‘the political’, this project has been articulated in a register which eschews the conventions of justification, that is, the giving and asking for reasons. This is particularly evident when it comes to accounting for why the contemporary deployment of affective energy in the public realm is bad for democracy. The contemporary deployment of anxious, obsessive and compulsive affect in the political realm is presented as having ‘deleterious consequences’ on the grounds that it works against democratic expression (Thrift 2007, 253); contributes to a style of democracy that is consumed but not practised (2007, 248); promotes forms of sporadic engagement that can be switched on and off (2007, 240); and generally leads to certain dispositions being placed beyond question. There is certainly a vision of democracy as a particular type of engaged ethical practice at work in these occasional judgements (2007, 14), but the precise normative force of this view is not justified in any detail. The eschewing of justification arises in part because the content of these ontologies, which emphasise various layers of knowing that kick-in prior to representation, is projected directly onto the form of exposition. There is a particular type of authority put into play in this move. The avowedly antiintentionalist materialism associated with contemporary cultural-theoretic ontologies of affect closes down the conceptual space in which argument and disagreement can even get off the ground (see Leys 2007). In contrast, and as outlined above, the argument pursued here follows an avowedly ‘nonrepresentationalist’ perspective according to which assertions of knowledge, including the types of knowledge asserted by ontologies of affect, always stand in need of reasons, precisely because they emerge as reasons for certain sorts of commitments and entitlements (Brandom 1996, 167). On this understanding ontological assertions act as justifications, and are subject to the demand for justification. If ‘placing things in the space of reasons’ (McDowell 1994, 5) in this sense is not acknowledged as one aspect of practice, then recourse to the ontological register closes down the inconclusive conversations upon which democratic cultural politics depends (Rorty 2006

#### Pragmatic political action to prevent nuclear war is a prerequisite to ontological investigations

Santoni 85

Maria Theresa Barney Chair Emeritus of Philosophy at Denison University (Ronald, “Nuclear War: Philosophical Perspectives” p 156-157)

To be sure, Fox sees the need for our undergoing “certain fundamental changes” in our “thinking, beliefs, attitudes, values” and Zimmerman calls for a “paradigm shift” in our thinking about ourselves, other, and the Earth.  But it is not clear that what either offers as suggestions for what we can, must, or should do in the face of a runaway arms race are sufficient to “wind down” the arms race before it leads to omnicide.  In spite of the importance of Fox’s analysis and reminders it is not clear that “admitting our (nuclear) fear and anxiety” to ourselves and “identifying the mechanisms that dull or mask our emotional and other responses” represent much more than examples of basic, often. stated principles of psychotherapy. Being aware of the psychological maneuvers that keep us numb to nuclear reality may well be the road to transcending them but it must only be a “first step” (as Fox acknowledges), during which we Simultaneously act to eliminate nuclear threats, break our complicity with the ams race, get rid of arsenals of genocidal weaponry, and create conditions for international goodwill, mutual trust, and creative interdependence.  Similarly, in respect to Zimmerman: in spite of the challenging Heideggerian insights he brings out regarding what motivates the arms race, many questions may be raised about his prescribed “solutions.”  Given our need for a paradigm shift in our (distorted) understanding of ourselves and the rest of being, are we merely left “to prepare for a possible shift in our self-understanding? (italics mine)?  Is this all we can do?  Is it necessarily the case that such a shift “cannot come as a result of our own will?” – and work – but only from “a destiny outside our control?”  Does this mean we leave to God the matter of bringing about a paradigm shift?  Granted our fears and the importance of not being controlled by fears, as well as our “anthropocentric leanings,” should we be as cautious as Zimmerman suggests about out disposition “to want to do something” or “to act decisively in the face of the current threat?”  In spite of the importance of our taking on the anxiety of our finitude and our present limitation, does it follow that “we should be willing for the worst (i.e. an all-out nuclear war) to occur”?  Zimmerman wrongly, I contend, equates “resistance” with “denial” when he says that “as long as we resist and deny the possibility of nuclear war, that possibility will persist and grow stronger.”  He also wrongly perceives “resistance” as presupposing a clinging to the “order of things that now prevails.” Resistance connotes opposing, and striving to defeat a prevailing state of affairs that would allow or encourage the “worst to occur.”  I submit, against Zimmerman, that we should not, in any sense, be willing for nuclear war or omnicide to occur.  (This is not to suggest that we should be numb to the possibility of its occurrence.)  Despite Zimmerman’s elaborations and refinements his Heideggerian notion of “letting beings be” continues to be too permissive in this regard.  In my judgment, an individual’s decision not to act against and resist his or her government’s preparations for nuclear holocaust is, as I have argued elsewhere, to be an early accomplice to the most horrendous crime against life imaginable – its annihilation.  The Nuremburg tradition calls not only for a new way of thinking, a “new internationalism” in which we all become co-nurturers of the whole planet, but for resolute actions that will sever our complicity with nuclear criminality and the genocidal arms race, and work to achieve a future which we can no longer assume. We must not only “come face to face with the unthinkable in image and thought” (Fox) but must act now - with a “new consciousness” and conscience - to prevent the unthinkable, by cleansing the earth of nuclear weaponry. Only when that is achieved will ultimate violence be removed as the final arbiter of our planet’s fate.

# A2: Epistemology

### **Empiricism Good**

#### Empiricism is the most useful form of knowledge for policymakers—useful in making theories to shape policy

Walt 5

Prof, Kennedy School of Government @ Harvard (Stephen M., Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci. 2005. 8:23–48, pg. 25-26, “The Relationship Between Theory and Policy in International Relations,” http://www.iheid.ch/webdav/site/political\_science/shared/political\_science/3452/walt.pdf)

Policy decisions can be influenced by several types of knowledge. First, policy makers invariably rely on purely factual knowledge (e.g., how large are the opponent’s forces? What is the current balance of payments?). Second, decision makers sometimes employ “rules of thumb”: simple decision rules acquired through experience rather than via systematic study (Mearsheimer 1989).3 A third type of knowledge consists of typologies, which classify phenomena based on sets of specific traits. Policy makers can also rely on empirical laws. An empirical law is an observed correspondence between two or more phenomena that systematic inquiry has shown to be reliable. Such laws (e.g., “democracies do not fight each other” or “human beings are more risk averse with respect to losses than to gains”) can be useful guides even if we do not know why they occur, or if our explanations for them are incorrect. Finally, policy makers can also use theories. A theory is a causal explanation— it identifies recurring relations between two or more phenomena and explains why that relationship obtains. By providing us with a picture of the central forces that determine real-world behavior, theories invariably simplify reality in order to render it comprehensible. At the most general level, theoretical IR work consists of “efforts by social scientists. . .to account for interstate and trans-state processes, issues, and outcomes in general causal terms” (Lepgold & Nincic 2001, p. 5; Viotti & Kauppi 1993). IR theories offer explanations for the level of security competition between states (including both the likelihood of war among particular states and the warproneness of specific countries); the level and forms of international cooperation (e.g., alliances, regimes, openness to trade and investment); the spread of ideas, norms, and institutions; and the transformation of particular international systems, among other topics. In constructing these theories, IR scholars employ an equally diverse set of explanatory variables. Some of these theories operate at the level of the international system, using variables such as the distribution of power among states (Waltz 1979, Copeland 2000, Mearsheimer 2001), the volume of trade, financial flows, and interstate communications (Deutsch 1969, Ruggie 1983, Rosecrance 1986); or the degree of institutionalization among states (Keohane 1984, Keohane & Martin 2003). Other theories emphasize different national characteristics, such as regime type (Andreski 1980, Doyle 1986, Fearon 1994, Russett 1995), bureaucratic and organizational politics (Allison & Halperin 1972, Halperin 1972), or domestic cohesion (Levy 1989); or the content of particular ideas or doctrines (Van Evera 1984, Hall 1989, Goldstein & Keohane 1993, Snyder 1993). Yet another family of theories operates at the individual level, focusing on individual or group psychology, gender differences, and other human traits (De Rivera 1968, Jervis 1976, Mercer 1996, Byman&Pollock 2001, Goldgeier&Tetlock 2001, Tickner 2001, Goldstein 2003), while a fourth body of theory focuses on collective ideas, identities, and social discourse (e.g., Finnemore 1996, Ruggie 1998, Wendt 1999). To develop these ideas, IR theorists employ the full range of social science methods: comparative case studies, formal theory, large-N statistical analysis, and hermeneutical or interpretivist approaches.

#### Our args are grounded in empiricism – accurate way of viewing the world

Walt 05

annu rev polit sci 8 23-48 (“the relationship between theory and policy in international relations”)

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### No Impact to Epistemology

#### Epistemic grounding is irrelevant. We don’t need absolute truth.

Nussbaum 92

(Martha, Ernst Freund Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Ethics – U. Chicago, Political Theory, “HUMAN FUNCTIONING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE In Defense of Aristotelian Essentialism'”, 20:2, May, JSTOR)

Let me say very directly where I stand on the objections to essentialism. I believe that Kantian and related contemporary arguments (by Quine, Davidson, Putnam, and Goodman in particular) have indeed successfully established the untenability of extreme metaphysical realism. I cannot argue this here, but I hope it can at least be agreed that it would be extremely unwise for a political proposal to rely on the truth of metaphysical realism, given our current argumentative situation. On the other hand, it does not seem to me that such a result shows anything like what the relativist objectors think it shows. When we get rid of the hope of a transcendent metaphysical grounding for our evaluative judgments -about the human being as about anything else -we are not left with the abyss. We have everything that we always had all along: the exchange of reasons and arguments by human beings within history, in which, for reasons that are historical and human but not the worse for that, we hold some things to be good and others bad, some arguments to be sound and others not sound. Why, indeed, should the relativist conclude that the absence of a transcendent basis for judgment - a basis that, according to them, was never there anyway -should make us despair of doing as we have done all along, distinguishing persuasion from manipulation? In fact, the collapse into extreme relativism or subjectivism seems to me to betray a deep attachment to metaphysical realism itself. For it is only to one who has pinned everything to that hope that its collapse will seem to entail the collapse of all evaluation -just as it is only to a deeply believing religious person, as Nietzsche saw, that the news of the death of God brings the threat of nihilism. What we see here, I think, is a reaction of shame -a turning away of the eyes from our poor humanity, which looks so mean and bare -by contrast to a dream of another sort. What do we have here, these critics seem to say? Only our poor old human conversations, our human bodies that interpret things so imperfectly? Well, if that is all there is, we do not really want to study it too closely, to look into the distinctions it exhibits. We will just say that they are all alike, for, really, they do look pretty similar when compared to the heavenly standard we were seeking. It is like the moment reported by Aristotle when some students arrived at the home of Heraclitus, eager to see the great sage and cosmologist. They found him -not on a hilltop gazing at the heavens but sitting in his kitchen or, perhaps, on the toilet (for there is a philological dispute at this point!). He looked at their disappointed faces, saw that they were about to turn away their eyes, and said, "Come in, don't be afraid. There are gods here too." Aristotle uses this story to nudge his reluctant students out of the shame that is preventing them from looking closely at the parts of animals. When you get rid of your shame, he says, you will notice that there is order and structure in the animal world.3" So too, I think, with realism: the failure to take an interest in studying our practices of analyzing and reasoning, human and historical as they are, the insistence that we would have good arguments only if they came from heaven - all this betrays a shame before the human. On the other hand, if we really think of the hope of a transcendent ground for value as uninteresting and irrelevant, as we should, then the news of its collapse will not change the way we do things: it will just let us get on with the business of reasoning in which we were already engaged.

# A2: Value to Life

### Always Value to Life

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

Bernstein ‘2

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

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

#### Always an inherent value to life

Coontz 1

Phyllis Coontz, 01, Associate Professor in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh. 2001(*Journey of Community Health Nursing*, 18(4). “Transcending the Suffering of AIDS.” JSTOR) In the 1950s, psychiatrist and theorist Viktor Frankl ( 1963) described an existential theory of purpose and meaning in life. Frankl, a long-time prisoner i n a concentration camp, related several instances of transcendent states that he experienced in the midst of that terrible suffering using his own experiences and observations. He believed that these experiences allowed him and others to maintain their sense of dignity and self-worth. Frankl (1969) claimed that transcendence occurs by giving to others, being open to others and the environment, and coming to accept the reality that some situations are unchangeable. He hypothesized that life always has meaning for the individual; a person can always decide how to face adversity. Therefore, self-transcendence provides meaning and enables the discovery of meaning for a person (Frankl, 1963). Expanding Frankl's work, Reed (1991b) linked self-transcendence with mental health. Through a developmental process individuals gain an increasing understanding of who they are and are able to move out beyond themselves despite the fact that they are experiencing physical and mental pain. This expansion beyond the self occurs through introspection, concern about others and their well-being, and integration of the past and future to strengthen one's present life (Reed, 1991 b).

#### Value to life is intrinsic

Schwarz 2

Schwartz, Lecturer in Philosophy of Medicine at the Department of General Practice at the University of Glasgow ‘2 (Lisa, “Medical Ethic: A case-based approach, Chapter 6: A Value to Life: Who Decides and How?”)

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.