# \*\*\*Levinas Aff Updates\*\*\*

# Fasching 12

**Competing notions of the sacred threaten apocalyptic violence; hospitality is necessary to decenter them in a manner that allows coexistence**

**Fasching 7/4/12** The Sacred, the Secular and the Holy: The Significance of Jacques Ellul's Post-Christian Theology for Global Ethics copyright 2012 By Darrell J. Fasching, Professor Emeritus, University of South Florida, Tampa <http://www.wheaton.edu/Academics/Departments/Theology/Conferences-and-Lectures/Ellul/~/media/Files/Academics/Departments/BTS/Ellul%20papers/Darrell%20Fasching.pdf>

Technique, Globalization and Apocalypse In the beginning was the word, and the word gave birth to technique, for through language humans are able to imagine new worlds and devise the means create them. Among the earliest techniques to be invented were the techniques of agriculture which gave birth to the city through the domestication of plants and animals. Technique gave birth to the city, and then, in turn, the city became the midwife of all further techniques of the human, making possible over the centuries the emergence of the technological phenomenon, the comparative selection of the most efficient techniques in every area of human development. And with the self augmenting autonomy of technique came globalization -- a global totalism that, according to Ellul, threatens the disappearance of our very humanity. What drives this totalism is the sacralization of technique which domesticates us to its necessities by promising us utopia. Seduced by the 2 utopian ideology of the technical society that promises to fulfill our every hope and dream we have surrendered our freedom and autonomy. So Ellul tells us: "The stains of human passion will be lost amid the chromium gleam" and we will have the luxury of a "useless revolt and of an acquiescent smile (The Technological Society, Vintage Books, Random House, 1964, pp.426- 427)." Globalization is the product of the growing interdependence of cultures through emerging global techno-economic and socio-cultural networks that the technological phenomenon requires. This process generates a generalized apocalyptic anxiety -- an uneasy sense that the world as we have known it is coming to an end. In a world of instant global communication and jet travel, time and space shrink and force a new awareness upon all the inhabitants of the earth. For these networks transcend local and national boundaries, and in the process they decenter and so challenge all previous forms of authority and identity, both religious and non-religious. Turning and turning in the widening gyre The falcon cannot hear the falconer; Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere The ceremony of innocence is drowned; The best lack all conviction, while the worst Are full of passionate intensity.3 (“The Second Coming” p. 91, in The Selected Poems and Two Plays of William Butler Yeats, edited by M.L. Rosenthal (New York: Collier Books, 1962). William Butler Yeats, in his poem The Second Coming, written in just after WWI, aptly captures the apocalyptic postmodern mood created by an emerging global civilization. Yeats' description became even more apt after WWII, for the appearance of the atomic bomb united the world in a common dread -- the dread of an apocalyptic global nuclear annihilation. After two world wars, the apocalyptic anxieties of decentered civilizations, each seeking to shore up its sacred way of life against the further invasion by other sacred ways of life via global media, global corporations and global travel, gave birth to new age of global terrorism. The global terror of nuclear annihilation of the late 20th century driven by the standoff between the USA and the USSR gave way to new terrorist permutations. The most notorious of the new terrorists, Osama bin Laden, who sought to explain his 9-11 attack on the twin towers of New York city in terms of the sacred and the profane, arguing that his goal was a global campaign to put a stop to the violation of the sacred lands of Islam by the profane West. Western colonialism and two world wars forced globalization on human consciousness. In his 1979 book The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge (University of Minnesota Press, translation 1984, French 1979) Jean-Francois Lyotard provided a vocabulary by which we could explain to ourselves what was happening. Decentering, he said was a mark of the collapse of the world's great metanarratives. Even before we humans knew we lived on a globe we sought a global understanding of our humanity. As with the ancient philosophy of Stoicism's attempt to foster a global cosmopolitanism by asserting that to be human was to share a universal "logos" or "reason," the great religions also aspired to universality suggesting that what all humans have in common is 4 God, or Brahman or Tao or Buddha nature (cosmic interdependent co-arising) etc. These religions offered what Lyotard called metanarratives (cosmic myths) that formed transcultural civilizations: Hindu civilization, Buddhist civilization, Jewish, Christian and Islamic civilizations. And then there is the most recent metanarrative – the utopian myth of scientific progress (whether in its Capitalist and Marxist versions) which came in the wake of the Enlightenment and secularization. Each of these civilizational metanarratives provided a normative center defining what it means to be human. Globalization forces the clash of all such metanarratives and as a result, decenters all of them. Globalization and postmodern culture are two sides of the same coin in which apocalyptic rhetoric aptly catches the mood of the collapse of these metanarratives. The great cities of the world have become microcosms of the religious and cultural diversity of the globe. In the wake of WWII, the borders of civilizations interpenetrated as a result of mass media, global corporations and international travel and provoked and expressed this apocalyptic panic in anti-colonialist reactions to the totalism of dominant metanarratives, often turning poetic apocalyptic angst into literal apocalyptic scenarios in places like Iraq, Afghanistan and New York City (Sept. 11, 2001). Globalization created the postmodern city. Our great cities have become decentered or rather pluri-centered. The collapse of a metanarratives does not mean they disappear but that they function differently. All the great metanarratives still exist but now they are typically found side by side in every great city. They do not provide a center for the life of the culture as a whole but for individuals and their subcultures. Consequently the public order of postmodern cities has no single sacred temple at their center, spinning a grand all-encompassing narrative which holds all things together. Rather, like Disneyworld and Epcot, different historical and cultural worlds 5 exist side by side in postmodern cities without an integrating center. They are held together instead by technological networks operating behind the scenes. Ultra-postmodern cities like Las Vegas reveal most obviously the underlying reality of all great cities in a global civilization. The city has become eclectic and normless. Nietzsche, in his vivid parable in The Gay Science (1882), tells of a madman entering the city square to announce the "death of God," suggesting that this is like the earth being cut loose from its sun: "Whither are we moving now,? Away from all suns? Are we not plunging continually? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there any up or down left? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? (The Gay Science, 1882 in The Portable Nietzsche, pp 95-96, ed. Walter Kaufman, Viking Press, 1954 & 1968) Expressing the sense of a loss of center that came with the emerging global consciousness of the 19th century, nurtured by the invention of the social sciences, especially critical historiography and cross-cultural ethnography (anthropology), all metanarratives seem to him to have collapsed. Each culture had believed its metanarrative described the normative sacred order of the universe. Now, laid out side by side by the techniques of socio-historical consciousness, their very diversity showed each to be a relative human construct. The social sciences did not just report the death of God, they provided the knife with which God was murdered. In such an apocalyptic world, Nietzsche argued, norms would have to be replaced by the will to power and the transvaluation of all values. Nietzsche said his madman/prophet came too soon but the reality he described was on its way. By 1965 that reality became manifest when the first human beings walked in space and for the first time viewed for themselves the truth of the world as a globe -- sending back images from space for all the earth to share. Cut loose from the earth these astronauts experienced 6 Nietzsche's vertigo. Free floating in space, tethered only to their spacecraft, which way was up? Which way was down? The integral links between technique, globalization and apocalypse are summed up in this image. The movement from the Book of Revelation's description of the order of the cosmos collapsing as the sky disappears "like a scroll rolling up" (Rev 6: 12-14) to the loss of horizon by the early spacewalkers breaking free of the earth's gravity and the postmodern sense of loss a center in our great cities around the world sums up the history of civilization in a nut shell. Ellul's Post-Christian Ethics -- Deconstructing the Sacred Ellul's work can be understood as an exercise in postmodern, post-Christian theology. As Lyotard explained, postmodern does not express an historical period so much as a style of thinking. If post-modern represents a decentered style of thought, post-Christian, represents a decentered style of thinking about the role of Christianity in society. Its role is not to dominate from the center, creating a "Holy Roman Empire" but to subvert throughout the diaspora and transform from within through decentering strategies. Globalization tends to make decentered thinking a dominant trait of our time, nevertheless such thinking can be found here and there throughout history and is at least as ancient as the story of Babel. Indeed, biblical thought tends to be decentered from the very beginning of the Torah, in the book of Genesis, which offers us two alternative stories of creation. This decentering is repeated when Christianity offers us four competing gospels. Perhaps Origen was right when he said that it was the Holy Spirit that put contradictions in the stories of the Bible in order to force us beyond the most superficial literal meaning of the Bible to grasp the deepest level of spiritual meaning.7 Tension, contradiction, deconstruction -- these are the fruits of the Christian way of life. In the second century Tatian constructed the Diatessaron, the first attempt to harmonize the four gospels into one story. This attempt was rejected by the early church, preferring tension to synthesis. As in the Christian Gospels so in the Christian life, for Ellul the point is not to resolve the tensions but introduce tension and maladjustment as a limit on the totalism of the technicist way of life. Ellul's style of thinking is decentered through and through. His work as a sociologist and as a theologian seemed at first to be the product of dual personalities unrelated to each other. But gradually the two separate authorships were revealed to be part of a larger strategy not of synthesis but of deliberate tension and contradiction. Ellul describes his total critique of technological civilization as a "science of the city" that occurs at the disjunctive juncture of his sociology and his theology. Like Kierkegaard, his authorship offers a thesis and an antithesis but no synthesis. His "science of the city" interfaces a sociology of the sacred with a theology of the holy. The key distinctions of this science -- the sacred, the secular and the holy -- were developed between 1946 and 1954. They evolved from the Theological Foundation of Law (1946) through The Presence of the Kingdom (1948) to the linking of the sacred and the demonic in Man and Money (1953 - dates for the original French editions). But it is only two decades later, in his 1973 book The New Demons (Les Nouveaux Possedes), that he maps out the terrain of the sacred and the holy in a way that decisively illuminates his strategy of juxtaposing the sacral necessities of technology with the desacralizing or sanctifying power of the scriptural Word of God theologically explicated. I consider The New Demons the Rosetta Stone of Ellul's authorship -- for the first time bringing sociology and theology together in one book. Yet his 8 purpose is not synthesis but the creating of a tension between the two by adding a "Coda for Christians" to his sociological analysis of the religiosity of the technological society. All of this prepares the way for his crowning theological work, Apocalypse: The Book of Revelation (L'Apocalypse:architecture en mouvement, 1976) where he tells us that the Greek word for judgment, krisis, means "to separate" which is the act by which God creates -- separating light from darkness, the heavens from earth, land from water, etc. Separation decenters and deconstructs our worlds, the way God's judgment of Babel decentered and deconstructed the totalism of Babel's one language and singular technological project. The New Demons and Apocalypse: The Book of Revelation show that Ellul's apocalyptic thought grasped the task of postmodern "deconstruction" in a unique brand of religious postmodernism. In Philosophy in a Time of Terror (University of Chicago Press, 2003), Giovanna Borradori published interviews with Jurgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida, followed by her own commentary on each. Borradori summarizes Derrida’s deconstructive project as involving four steps: (1) identify the dualisms operative in the text and in society (the one leads to the other), (2) identify the hierarchy of the dualisms in the text and in society, (3) invert or subvert the dualistic hierarchies by showing what would happen if the negative and positive sides of each dualism were reversed as a way of exposing the ideology of the will to power involved in the dualistic classifications, and finally (4) produce a third term “which complicates the original load-bearing structure beyond recognition” and so deforms and reforms it into a new liberating configuration. This is an apt description of Ellul's science of the city as well. Steps one and two are what Ellul accomplishes when he analyzes the sacralization of technique sociologically, dividing the world into sacred and profane. Steps three and four are accomplished when he responds theologically and ethically and transgresses, and so sanctifies and secularizes the sacred in the name of the 9 holy, introducing apocalyptic hope and the possibility of freedom and justice into the technicist society. Justice is not a word that immediately comes to mind when I think of postmodernism. For years I dismissed deconstruction as irresponsible relativism. In the hands of many of its practitioners it probably is. But I changed my mind on this with respect to Derrida after I began reading some of his later work which is deeply indebted to Immanuel Levinas. Derrida’s later work is dominated by the themes of grace (the gift), hospitality, the messianic – and also the surprising insistence that justice is the one thing that cannot be deconstructed (Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice, edited by Drucilla Cornell, Michel Rosenfeld and David Gray Carlson, (Routledge, 1992), Chp. 1). The law, he said, can be deconstructed but only in the name of the demand for justice. In fact Derrida insists that justice is the driving force of deconstruction – they are, he argues, one and the same. For Derrida, justice, like Ellul’s apocalypse of the holy, comes from the outside, as a gift – a gift that subverts all dualisms and makes new beginnings possible. Ellul is a religious postmodernist. His religious postmodernism is able to deconstruct the endless dialectic of absolutism and relativism (the totalist temptations that feed each other in a technicist civilization) that plagues secular postmodernism and so exorcise the “new demons” of the postmodern world. (See my book, The Ethical Challenge of Auschwitz and Hiroshima: Apocalypse or Utopia? (SUNY, 1993) which argues that this dialectic of absolutism and relativism is the underlying dialectic generating the Janus faced bipolar sacral myth of apocalypse/utopia that feeds our embrace of technical necessities. See also, Religion and Globalization, Oxford University Press, 2008 -- coauthored with John Esposito and Todd Lewis) For Ellul, the sacred makes a virtue out of necessity in which our utopian hopes deliver us into some literal apocalyptic self-destructive destiny. Today, technique replaces nature as that 10 new realm of necessity that surrounds and overwhelms us and on which we depend for our very existence. It takes the place of nature as the realm of the sacred -- the object of our fascination and dread. So a technical society creates a morality that both requires our obedience (always choosing the most efficient solution) and helps us adjust to those requirements by fostering the political illusion of being in control, even as psychological techniques are used to enable us to be "well adjusted" to our society's requirements. The sacred promotes a morality of efficiency under the guise of a rational ethical system which demands our obedience in order to fulfill our wildest hopes and dreams for utopia. Given the totalism of technicism in an age of globalization, we might wonder whether a Christian can (or even should) cooperate with others, religious and non-religious, in creating a global ethic? Ellul's understanding of Christian ethics opens up a clear path for such transcultural and even interreligious cooperation. Decentering goes to the heart of Ellul's view of Chritian ethics. Ellul argues that ethics must never become a rational system to which we conform. Ethics does not require unquestioning obedience but the questioning of unquestioning obedience. For Ellul, there is no such thing as a Christian ethic. Christians, like other human beings on the face of the earth, do have a pragmatic need to create an ethic, but such an ethic is always provisional human invention. Christians have used many such human inventions, borrowing from Plato, Aristotle, Kant, etc. But the Christian life is rooted not in some rational system of calculation but in the spontaneous inventiveness of life in Christ, who works in us to will and to do (Philippians 2:13) That inventiveness is the result of the Spirit that blows were it will, so that when we act, it is "I , yet not I, but Christ in me" who acts (Galatians 2:20). Ellul would agree with Augustine -- love and do what you will -- and also Aquinas, who describes 11 Christian virtue as God working in us without us. The good to be done is God's will as given to me in the moment, in the situation I am confronted with that forces me to invent a response. Nechama Tec, a sociologist, in her book, When Light Pierced the Darkness (Oxford University Press, 1986) studied those who rescued Jews in Poland during the Holocaust. She gives us good insight into ethics as invention in the moment. She tried to find the common denominator among all the rescuers. Did they share a common economic status; perhaps a common educational background, or maybe they were all devout church-goers? As it turned out it was none of these things. In fact going to church was more likely to make one anti-Semitic, since "the Jews" were often portrayed as the "bad guys" in the Gospel stories and the sermons based on them. It turned out the one thing she could find that rescuers held in common was a sense of "alienation" -- of being a stranger among one's own. This was hard to isolate because for one person this alienation might be due to having a physical disability which made one feel different than others. For another it might be growing up feeling as if one were the least favored child in the family. And yet another might say he or she grew up feeling less adept at sports than their peers. -- and so on. What is common to all these experiences is "alienation" -- the experience of not fitting in and so being an outsider or stranger. Consequently, when strangers showed up at their door looking for rescue these rescuers spontaneously identified with them and took them in without agonizing over the decision. Samuel and Pearl Oliner, in their book, The Atruistic Personality: Rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe (Free Press, Macmillan, 1988) conducted some 700 interviews trying to understand holocaust rescuers in comparison to their non-rescuing peers. They noted that 90% of the rescuers rescued one or more complete strangers, 76% said their motive was 12 empathy or compassion, often described as an inner compulsion. They note that 70% acted within minutes of being asked for help, and 80% consulted no one. The rescuers actions reflected the fundamental truth of biblical ethical insight -- remember welcome the stranger and love the stranger for "you know how the stranger feels" for you too were once strangers -- in the land of Egypt (Exodus 23:9, Deuteronomy 10:19). This call to remember what it is like to be a stranger illuminates the ethical insight essential for the invention of a global ethic. In the biblical tradition, the most frequent commandment is to welcome the stranger, for by doing so one welcomes God, or God's messiah, or a messenger (angel) of God without knowing it (Genesis 18:1-5; Matt 25:35; Hebrews 13:2). The core of the command "to remember" creates an empathic analogy. In different ways we all experience being a stranger at some time in our life (often many times) and so we know what it is like to be a stranger. Jesus' restatement of the Pharisaic teaching, that we ought to do unto others as we would have them do to us, is grounded in this narrative tradition. The call to remember that we were once strangers is a call that decenters us and our "religion" so that we can grasp the truth of the story of Babel. We do not find God at the center of our society in some sacred temple we have built to celebrate the idolatry of our own identity. That idolatry is built on the presupposition that all of us who share the same language and world view think we can annex God to bless the worship of our own self-image. Given the centrality of the biblical command to welcome the stranger (repeated more often than any other command in the Torah), the moral of the story of Babel is that we find God not through uniformity of thought, belief and technique but through our encounter with the stranger. God confuses the language of 13 the citizens of Babel not to punish them but to redirect their quest. You find God not by building a tower to heaven but by turning to the stranger who does not speak your language and is not like you. God is not found in sameness but in difference. As Isaiah suggests, God is the ultimate stranger whose thoughts are not our thoughts and ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). If we follow Ellul's sociological analysis, in a sacred society one expects to find God at the center, in the sacred temple that reinforces ethnocentric identity. In such a society, all who are the same are sacred and human, all others who are different are profane and less than human. Since we have moral obligations only to other human beings, the stranger can be excluded and dehumanized. But the biblical tradition of the holy is anti-ethnocentric. It decenters our expectations and insists that God cannot be found at the center of our society, or even at the center of our religion, but only outside of it -- in the stranger, the one who is not like us. That is the message of the story of Babel that is reinforced at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descends upon the nascent church. When strangers from all over the Roman empire gather, each speaks his or her own language and yet each is understood by all (Acts 2:1-13). The Holy Spirit does not require that we all be the same but reveals God in difference and invites us to invent whatever action will honor that reality. Hospitality is the direct embodiment of the holy. Hospitality is the north star of global ethics. Any two or more religious and/or cultural traditions that emphasize hospitality to the stranger are able to work together synergistically to sanctify society, that is subvert and secularize the sacred order that would divide us. By recognizing the humanity of the one who does not share our identity as the one who brings God into our lives, hospitality decenters us. Speaking as a Christian, we only bring Christ to the stranger when we go out seeking to meet Christ in the stranger. Whenever we welcome the stranger, we welcome God or God's messiah 14 and God is all in all. (See my book on hospitality and universal salvation, No One Left Behind: Is Universal Salvation Biblical? (Authors Choice, 2011), an updated version of The Coming of the Millennium: Good News for the Whole Human Race (Trinity International Press, 1996). While the sacred sacralizes society and divides the world into the sacred and profane, the holy desacralizes or secularizes and so sanctifies society, rendering it secular and open to the diversity of the whole human race (1 Timothy 4:10). But contrary to Max Weber, secularization is not a permanent accomplishment. The world can remain secular only through the constant iconoclasm of the holy. Without that constant subversion of the sacred by the holy, the secular itself becomes a new sacred order -- that is the main argument of Ellul's The New Demons. When I wrote my dissertation on Ellul under Gabriel Vahanian's direction in 1978, I sought to do what Schleiermacher said was the task of the exegete -- to understand the author better than he understands himself. I argued that Ellul advocated the rehabilitation of the sacred with respect to "revolution" but seemed inconsistent in regarding "utopianism" as beyond the pale of such rehabilitation. With the aid of Karl Mannheim's book Ideology and Utopia (1936; Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.) I showed that apocalyptic thought can and often has been utopian, and that in fact Ellul's exegesis of the apocalyptic tradition and the ethics of apocalyptic hope can be interpreted, on his own premises, as leading to a rehabilitation of utopianism. For Ellul, the Book of Revelation is a mirror for understanding and acting in the world here and now. It is not about changing worlds but about changing the world.

# Generic Link to Fasching

**Their understanding of difference and classification is the creation of a sacred society. We reject this view to embrace the holy community**

**Ferreri 04** Sports and the American Sacred: What are the Limits of Civil Religion? by Frank Ferreri A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts Department of Religious Studies College of Arts and Sciences University of South Florida Co-Major Professor: Dell deChant, M.A. Co-Major Professor: Danny L. Jorgensen, Ph.D. Darrell J. Fasching, Ph.D. Date of Approval: November 12, 2004 Keywords: civil religion, sports, popular culture, secularization, contemporary America © Copyright 2004, Frank Ferreri http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2031&context=etd

In his analysis of consumer capitalism, deChant concludes that economics is the cosmological religion of contemporary culture. In a somewhat similar manner, Fasching deploys an understanding of modern technological societies that holds, “Human beings realize themselves through a combination of realism about the limits imposed by their ecological condition as finite bodily creatures (the cosmos writ small) and the iconoclastic freedom of transcendence (the human writ large).” 54 Deriving considerations from the work of Ellul, Voegelin, Berger, and a host of others, Fasching maintains that an inborn tendency of many human societies is the classification of all things, including people, along sacred-profane dichotomizations. In such dichotomies, or sacred societies, “the other” typically falls into the profane category is often alienated and dehumanized. However, according to Fasching, in distinction from sacred societies, holy communities witness a dissolution of sacred-profane understandings of others in efforts to welcome the stranger. Quite roughly speaking, the cosmological-transcendental spectrum resembles the sacred society-holy community paradigm. However, for Fasching, these elements are actively present in the modern world and not a function of historical cultural processes. In other words, an understanding of cosmological religiosity yields an illumination of the contemporary world, particularly in terms of how the sacred appears in politics, technology, and the treatment of “others.” Plausibly, assessing other aspects of contemporary culture similarly reveals the function and identity of the culture.

# AT: Actor CP

**The logic of competition for actor CPs is the “bystander effect” – the idea that we should wait for others to act destroys our ethical responsibility – the Holocaust proves**

**Kielburger and Kielburger 07** Craig Kielburger [Education: York University, University of Toronto, University of Trinity College, Schulich School of Business] and Marc Kielburger [Education: Harvard University, University College, Oxford] are founders of Free the Children and co-authors of Me to We. Act now to defy 'bystander effect' Published on Thursday March 29, 2007 Global Voices

That's because most people assume someone else will step up and take responsibility, so they don't have to. And research shows that, in an emergency, most people will wait to see what others do before offering to help. "When an ambiguous event occurs, an individual bystander will be considerably influenced by the ways in which other bystanders are reacting," writes John Darley, a psychology professor at Princeton University and authority on the bystander effect. This causes a kind of "pluralistic ignorance," he says, because everyone waits for someone else to take action yet no one is willing to step forward first. The term "bystander effect" was first coined around the time of the Holocaust, when people all across Europe stood by and watched as Jewish neighbours and friends were being led to their death. While some people were afraid for their own safety, others assumed it was someone else's responsibility to intervene, says Jonathan White, assistant professor of sociology at Bridgewater State College in Massachusetts, and expert on genocide studies. "Some utilized a variety of defence mechanisms such as denial and rationalization to psychologically trick themselves into not having to take any responsibility for what was going on," he explains.

**Studies prove**

**Fredricks and Ramsey 11** Journal of Religion and Business Ethics, Susan Fredricks Penn State University, Michele Ramsey Pennsylvania State University, Volume 2 | Issue 1 Article 2 3-25-2011 Kinship and Bystander Effect: The Role of Others in Ethical Decisions <http://via.library.depaul.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=jrbe>

Simply stated, the “bystander effect” is a phenomenon in which people are less likely to offer help in an emergency situation when other people are present. Interesting to note is that studies have shown that the probability of help is inversely proportional to the number of bystanders. Therefore, the more people around the less likely that a bystander is going to help. 25 Research 26 suggests there is a diffusion of responsibility when a group of people witness an emergency; individuals assume others will do something about it and the burden of responsibility is not theirs. This phenomenon, the “Bystander Effect,” has been extended to describe how individuals, perceived as ethical, may commit unethical acts based upon their awareness of other participants’ actions or inaction. 27 The idea that what others do affects our own decisions was significant in Milgram’s 28 research and helps us to understand why some individuals are capable of causing significant harm to others or allowing harm to occur, as was the case in Milgram’s experiments and for some Nazi soldiers’ participation in the Holocaust. 29 What these initial studies show is that the influence of others can be effective when making decisions. In many cases, it is not a black or white issue, but contains many shades of gray. Zyglidopoulos and Fleming 30 describe the Bystander Effect as a continuum (Figure 1) from innocent bystander to guilty perpetrator. In addition, they argue that the distance between the act and its consequences may also play a role. For example, when faced with reporting a problem caused by a co-worker, we often question our own responsibility for saying or doing anything. Fleming and Schwarz 31 suggest that we should always report the issue in order to eliminate the two innocent unknowing bystanders – the company and the client. Further research indicates that business managers actually behave in accordance with the “bystander effect” and ignore certain acts or opportunities to act because they feel that it is not part of their job.

# AT: Compassion Bad

**Compassion is not bad; your evidence is about pity – they are different**

**Tevenar 07** Gudrun von Tevenar, MA and PhD Birkbeck College, London “NIETZSCHE’S OBJECTIONS TO PITY AND COMPASSION”

When we examine these objections with the pity/compassion distinction as briefly outlined at the beginning in mind, then **we find that Nietzsche’s objections are almost exclusively concerned with** Mitleid understood as **pity and not** as **compassion**. Notice that Mitleid is either contaminated from the beginning with contempt and shame as in the examples of the savages and Zarathustra, or Mitleid seems preoccupied mainly with the mental state of the agent and not with the sufferer. Understanding Mitleid merely as pity seems to me the main reason why Nietzsche’s objections, though very sophisticated and eminently plausible, somehow miss their target as far as Schopenhauer is concerned. Because Schopenhauer, when elevating Mitleid as the highest virtue, speaks throughout of Mitleid as compassion. Thus Schopenhauer claims that compassionate agents can act selflessly and solely for the weal of sufferers precisely because they see in sufferers someone like themselves. In other words, in the eyes of compassionate agents there is, according to Schopenhauer, no gap of distance and otherness between agents and sufferers and hence no associated negative feelings of alienation and shame. Indeed, Schopenhauer takes great pains to distinguish his kind of Mitleid, i.e. compassion, from various deviations and aberrations such as those that Nietzsche concentrates on and grants them no moral value whatsoever. We can conclude therefore that Schopenhauer could, in a way, willingly agree with most of Nietzsche’s objections and yet keep his own theory intact, since he elevates compassion while Nietzsche denigrates pity.

# AT: Consequentialism

**Pure consequentialism is impossible – there are too many reactions that are unforeseeable – as an alternative, we suggest a view of morals. This is because we can understand the virtue of an action but we can never understand the consequences**

**Lenman 00** Univeristy of Glasglow and the United Kingdom Arts and Humanities Research Board.Consequentialism and Cluelessness Author(s): James Lenman Reviewed work(s): Source: Philosophy & Public Affairs, Vol. 29, No. 4 (Autumn, 2000), pp. 342-370 Published by: Blackwell Publishing Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2672830 . Accessed: 24/07/2012 09:53

A typical morally significant action will have a host of consequences that are neither foreseen nor foreseeable. Distant causal ramifications such as the atrocities performed by Angie's distant descendants are of this sort. Let us call these the invisible consequences of an action as op- posed to its visible consequences. The distinction is vague. Some consequences might be visible only to a heroically conscientious agent; others might be visible to the agent but only as more-or-less salient risks. There are some consequences we can confidently expect and others that are merely envisaged as more or less likely. Rather than bogging down in \*this complication, let us count as invisible only consequences that are, in practice, not visible to an ideally conscientious agent, where this is nonetheless a human agent and not some Laplacean fantasy; an agent we will suppose to have weighted all envisaged consequences by prob- ability in some ideally reasonable but humanly manageable way. It remains likely that most of an action's consequences will be invisible, especially for the more intuitively morally significant actions. Here is what I suggest nonconsequentialists may plausibly say an agent should do about the invisible consequences of his or her actions. Rather than act on the profoundly shaky assumption that they cancel each other out, the agent should ordinarily simply not regard them as of moral concern. The agent should not think of himself or herself as maximizing the goodness of the consequences of his or her action by maximizing that of the expected consequences and hoping these manage to be somehow representative. Rather insofar as the agent's concern is with consequences at all, it is with visible consequences that he or she should be, even indi- rectly, concerned. It is not an objection to this claim as I have formulated it that we often plausibly have a duty not to be negligent in exploring and anticipating the consequences of our action. For I have defined "visible" to mean, not de facto foreseen but foreseeable to an ideally conscientious agent. It is certainly plausible that we have duties to be conscientious in this way but that is nothing to do with invisible consequences as defined. If you find consequentialism attractive, you will think this a surpris- ing claim. For a consequentialist the point of maximizing the goodness in the visible consequences of our actions has to be as a means to maximizing the goodness in their overall consequences. But if the foregoing reasoning is sound, we have only the most feeble of grounds to suppose that means-or any feasible other-is a remotely reliable means to this end. It may, however, make far better sense for ethical theories for which the focus is on the character of agents and the qualities of their wills, for theories that are broadly Kantian or Aristotelian in spirit. Such theories would move us away from consequentialism to some radically less impersonal understanding of how best to live whereby we should be morally engaged not by the quite futile project of promoting good long-term results but by more local projects and concerns whereby, recognizing the fact of our epistemic limitations, we seek nonetheless to live virtuously, with dignity and mutual respect. What matters for theories such as these is the virtues of character our actions manifest and/or the forms of respect we show for others in acting; and perhaps in particular (many such theories are not ashamed to say) for certain others, those closest to us in a number of senses of "close," those most concerned in the inten- tions and warranted expectations on which we act. What is common ground to all plausible ethical theories is the moral significance of visible consequences. When we can foresee harm to others in the outcome of our actions, we owe them the respect of taking this properly into account. And we owe it to others also to be adequately conscientious in foreseeing such harm. Of course, the invisible consequences of action very plausibly matter too, but there is no clear reason to suppose this mattering to be a matter of moral significance any more than the consequences, visible or otherwise, of earthquakes or meteor im- pacts (although they may certainly matter enormously) need be matters of, in particular, moral concern. There is nothing particularly implau- sible here. It is simply to say, for example, that the crimes of Hitler, al- though they were a terrible thing, are not something we can sensibly raise in discussion of the moral failings or excellences of Richard's conduct. This could be justified on a number of theoretical perspectives. Thus a Scanlonian contractualist2l might plausibly urge that, on principles that we could not reasonably reject, Richard owes it to Angie not to kill her but does not plausibly owe it to the Poles, Russians, Jews, and others of a distant generation not to perform actions with massive causal ramifica- tions that might result in harm to them. He would have the first obliga- tion because recognizing it is a quite fundamental way in which he shows respect for her; but he would lack the second because it is manifestly unreasonable not to agree to principles that limit the sphere of our re- sponsibility to those harms and goods that are visible to us. A consequentialist might seek to agree to this limiting of moral focus by again taking the line that, in matters of assessing the moral or rational merits of actions, of assigning praise and blame, we should concern ourselves with subjective rightness, for subjective rightness is precisely concerned only with visible consequences. The trouble is that, as I have noted, a consequentialist must understand this concern as motivated by the belief that maximizing value with respect to visible consequences is a reliable means to maximizing value with respect to overall consequences. And this belief does not appear at all secure.22 Given this, we might prefer a theory that tells a different story about what the point is of our concern with visible consequences. And such a story would precisely not be consequentialist.

# AT: Focus on the Self Good

**Focus on the other is key to the self**

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Levinas's account of the shattering of the self in the face of the other refers to "breaking up the limits of identity, breaking up the principle of being in me," but he goes on to explain that this means "the impossibility to come back from all things and concern oneself only with oneself" (1974, 114). **The rejection of** concerning **oneself "only with oneself" does not commit Levinas to the loss of self** so feared by critics. The self that cannot concern itself "only with itself" is the absolved self. When Levinas asserts that "the self is absolved of itself" (1974, 115), we should note that this is not the language of annihilation. If one thinks of the absolution one gains with confession or expiation, one can construe the absolved self as the self at one with itself.11 In fact, Levinas early on discerns in "pardon" "a surplus of happiness, the strange happiness of reconciliation" (1961, 283). With absolution, **the self is unified**. The self loses itself, but thereby gains itself. This latter understanding is stated explicitly by Levinas: "this responsibility against my will ... is the very fact of finding oneself while losing oneself (1974, II).12

# AT: Nietzsche

**Nietzsche’s logic is self-defeating and circular**

**Quodlibet Journal 04,** Quodlibet Journal is a peer-reviewed academic journal of philosophy. The Failure of Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud’s Objection to Thomistic (Objective) “Truth” and “Right” Author: Joseph Steineger Quodlibet Journal: Volume 6 Number 1, January - March 2004 ISSN: 1526-6575 [http://www.quodlibet.net/articles/steineger-aquinas.shtml](http://www.quodlibet.net/articles/steineger-aquinas.shtml" \t "_blank)

The point in contrasting Aquinas’ position for a single standard of truth and right against that of Nietzsche and Freud’s views is to emphasize Aquinas’ belief that there is one correct way of knowing and participating in the world; a claim both Nietzsche and Freud reject in their implicit relativism. Relativism is the argument that truth and knowledge are relative to one’s “point of view,” an era, a location, or a cultural-cognitive limitation. In this view, truth and knowledge are no longer truth and knowledge. Truth, as the correspondence between what one says and “how things are,” an appropriate bearer of the veracity or falsity of statements, sentences, assertions, and beliefs, is here traded in for skepticism, the assertion that nothing is—or more radically, can be—known. Hence, a presupposition of this paper is that relativism is skepticism in disguise. The basis for rejecting both is the same: **if we know nothing, then we do not know that we know nothing. The argument is self-defeating.**Likewise, if my view of how the world is is exactly opposite of another’s view of the world, and both views claim to be the “actual” way the world is, any claim that both are equally true denies the correspondence of “truth” to reality. How do Nietzsche’s arguments lead to relativism? The initial question that begins Nietzsche’s descent becomes why do human beings come to value certain ideas, standards, or objects and not others? He answers in proposing projectivism, the assertion that human beings project value into the world based on their conditionings and sentiments: “Judgments, value judgments concerning life, for or against, can in the last resort never be true: they possess value only as symptoms, they come into consideration only as symptoms—in themselves such judgments are stupidities.”[6] Thus, the traditional virtues may now be discarded and replaced by Nietzsche’s “Will to Power.” This, he posits, is the naturalistic, unconscious force “within,” driving all of human behavior. Ideally, this striving for power should be nurtured in opposition to the sentimental, conditioned values of the “idols.” When this power is released without limitation one may become an individual capable of luxuriating in every decision made during his life (which Nietzsche deems the “Superman”). This leaves Nietzsche’s position only one possible “ethics”: might makes right. For the Superman, moral action does not rest on any objectively defined or justified principle. This amounts to the powerful being able to act as he or she wishes. Man thus becomes the measure of all things, hearkening back to Sophist philosophy such as that put forth by Protagoras, and magnifying the notion that there is no objective truth in virtue of which an individual’s views or actions may be established as more right than another. **This is the very definition of relativism**. Despite Nietzsche’s argument for the Superman as the ideal illustration of man, he contradicts himself in asserting that value may not be assigned by men in the world: “One would have to be situated outside of life…to be permitted to touch on the problem of the value of life at all: sufficient reason for understanding that this problem is for us an inaccessible problem.”[7] It is not possible for Nietzsche to hold this “inaccessibility” view and his notions of the “Will to Power,” the “Superman,” or any assertion that places value on a certain way of life over another. Nietzsche does not recognize his contradiction in asserting there is no possibility of discerning objective value in life, yet stating that Christianity’s emphasis on charity and suffering makes an individual “weak,” thereby agitating that individual’s innate Will to Power and making him “sick.” This inherently assumes that sickness is bad, weakness is bad, and power is good; all of which are value judgments forbidden by relativist presuppositions.

**Extinction first**

**Connolly 91** Professor of Political Science at John Hopkins University, Identity\Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox By William E. Connolly <http://books.google.com/books?id=1F2j604_ByEC&pg=PA187&lpg=PA187&dq=%22The+Nietzschean+conception%22+%E2%80%A6+%22above+this+tendency.%22&source=bl&ots=28Nhhd--CI&sig=xcl30jg-aAEHIVl-ZBXy1OlpxqU&hl=en&sa=X&ei=j2cHUIblKIP49QSP-vCzBA&ved=0CD0Q6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=%22The%20Nietzschean%20conception%22%20%E2%80%A6%20%22above%20this%20tendency.%22&f=false>

The Nietzschean conception of a few who overcome resentment above politics while the rest remain stuck in the muck of resentment in politics is not today viable on its own terms. Today circumstances require that many give the sign of the overman a presence in themselves and in the ethicopolitical orientations they project onto the life of the whole. But this break with the spirit of Nietzsche requires further elucidation. **The shift results** partly **from the** late-modern **possibility of** self-**extinction**. In this new world the failure to "preserve man" could also extinguish the human basis for the struggle Nietzsche named "overman." Preservation and overcoming are now drawn closer together so that each becomes a term in the other: the latter cannot succeed unless it touches the former. But the entanglement of each with the other in sociopolitical relations means, when the logic of this entanglement is worked out, that the "overman"' as a type cannot eliminate from its life some of the modalities definitive of the "human." If the overman was ever projected as a distinct type and this is not certain it now becomes refigured into a struggle within the self between the inclination to existential resentment and an affirmation of life that rises above this tendency.

# AT: Ontology

**Ontology focus causes Nazism**

**Druker 06** [Associate Professor of Italian and Coordinator of the Italian section at Illinois State University where he also teaches Holocaust Literature and Film. He received a B.A. in English from Williams College and a Ph.D. in Italian from the University of California, Berkeley.] Ethics and Ontology in Primo Levi's "Survivial in Auschwitz": A Levinasian Reading Author(s): Jonathan Druker Reviewed work(s): Source: Italica, Vol. 83, No. 3/4 (Fall - Winter, 2006), pp. 529-542 Published by: American Association of Teachers of Italian Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/27669104 . Accessed: 18/07/2012 19:35

For philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, the logic of Nazism was not at odds with humanist ethics; rather, it revealed definitively the flawed foundations of Western thought whose intolerance of difference legitimated the Nazis' genocidal anti-Semitism. In response to the willful destruction of humanity **Levinas rejects the primacy of ontology**, with its subject-centered conceptions of universal knowledge and truth, in favor of a system of ethics that posits an obligation to the other that precedes even the subject's own being. This ethical obligation originates in the sight of the other's face, the most naked, vulnerable part of the body. The paradigmatic Levinasian ethical moment is the face-to face encounter in which the subject accepts the irreducible difference of the other that is beyond knowledge and assimilation. Levinas writes in opposition to Spinoza, Kant, Hegel and Heidegger, and to the whole of Western thought for which ontology is primary. He argues that philosophy has privileged reason and epistemology over ethics, the "Greek" language of being, **which violently absorbs difference into ontological self-identification, over** the "Hebrew" **responsibility for the other**. (His use of these terms is not primarily historical.) The dissimilar stories of two paradigmatic figures, Ulysses and Abraham, illustrate this sharp contrast. With its "horror of the other," philosophy prefers "the autonomy of consciousness, which finds itself again in all its adventures, returning home to itself like Ulysses, who through all his peregrination is only on the way to his native island" ("The Trace of the Other" 346). In his drive for knowledge and self-preservation Ulysses disenchants the strange and infinite world of myth, mapping its new, finite boundaries onto his narrative. However, Levinas promotes an ethics "whose movement into the other is not recuperated in identification, does not return to its point of departure." Thus, to Ulysses' nostos, Levinas "oppose[s] the story of Abraham who leaves his fatherland for ever for a yet unknown land" (348). This direction of travel, toward the other rather than back to the self, is what makes Abraham's story instructive not just to Jews but to those "of all nations." "The heirs of Abraham [are] men to whom their ancestor bequeathed a difficult tradition of duties toward the other man, which one is never done with, an order in which one is never free" (Nine Talmudic Readings 99).3 This heavy obligation is asymmetrical in that our duty to the other is bound less, and we are commanded to act without expectation of symmetrical treatment that is implicit in Kant's categorical imperative. Thus, ethics is "a vocation of an existing-for-the-other stronger than the threat of [one's own] death" (Entre Nous xii). The ethical therefore opposes Spinoza's conatus essendi ["the right to existence"], a central tenet in Western thought that legitimates violence whenever the survival of being appears threat ened by the other. **The West's persistent claim that being is the highest good has had broad social and political implications in that, according to Levinas, "ontology as first philosophy is a philosophy of power"** (Totality and Infinity 46). While he does not elaborate in detail the relationship between his ideas and the Holocaust, Levinas implies time and again that **Nazism exemplifies the violence of being**.4 In practice, as the first principle of Nazi racial science, the "survival instinct" promised the mastery of nature over humanity. As a microcosm of Nazi society, the extermination camps operated by the same principle: to be a survivor of Auschwitz is to have been forced to confirm the validity of the "survival of the fittest" concept in a fashion that mirrors the role the Nazis cast for themselves.

# AT: Other Must Overcome Struggle

**Helping others does not insist the other does not act**

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The fear that a Levinasian ethics is too passive (does not have a responsible "agent") can thus be mitigated by acknowledging the admitted peculiarity in Levinas's usage of the term. Moreover, as I noted earlier, **one can insist on the initiative of the other without thereby suggesting that the one who receives the initiative does nothing**. This is evident in the way that even Ricoeur, who criticizes Levinas's ethics as too passive, uses the same language of a summoned self that Levinas uses, and writes that "a capacity for giving in return [is] freed by the other's very initiative" (Ricoeur 1992, 189). Unless we are out simply to find fault with a given account, we need not assume that the simple reference to the other's initiative implies a nonresponsible passivity.

# AT: Radical K Alt

**The alt is part of the sacred, not the holy – this results in violence**

**Lantigua 07** University of South Florida (USF) Scholar Commons Graduate School Theses and Dissertations USF Graduate School 2007 Natural Law Ethics: A Comparison of the Theravāda and Thomistic Traditions David Lantigua University of South Florida http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5097&context=etd

The criteria that Fasching and deChant use to gauge whether or not a story, institution, belief, or social group is ethical are the tendencies of the holy and the sacred. 25 Although both tendencies may exist simultaneously in a social group or person, they represent radically different ways of responding to otherness. The holy, illustrated by the figure of Socrates and his interior compulsion to question, refers to a personal experience of the infinite and ultimate that promotes dignity and justice for all humans, including the stranger. The sacred tendency within societies and humans enforce homogeneity at the expense of what is different. Sacred societies tend to designate what is different as profane and this can often issue forth in acts of hostility and violence toward the stranger. Whereas **an ethic of the holy provokes questioning and doubt toward the social-moral order, sacred societies protect it by eliminating that which calls it into question.**

# AT: Virilio K

**Turn- speed isn’t inherently bad- patchwork applications of speed like during Katrina cause the accident**

**Tiessen 5** (Matthew, 12/28, Space and Culture, “Speed, Desire, and Inaction,” <http://sac.sagepub.com/content/9/1/35>, mat)

It was pointed out in a recent Globe and Mail article that the flooding of New Orleans fell well within the range of Donald Rumsfeld’s “known knowns” 1 (Roberts, 2005). The disaster that washed away the Big Easy was, we know for a fact, recognized as a potential event for many years. But was it recognized as an actual possibility or a probability? Keith Ansell-Pearson (2002) has observed that our understanding of the possible as that which gives rise to the actually real is inaccurate; rather, the real gives rise to the possible, because our understanding of the possible is achieved by encountering the real prior to arriving at a conception of the possible—that is, when faced with the real, we project backward, only then “realizing” the possible (p. 72). What happened in New Orleans, then, is an acute example of a potential becoming possible and its possibility only becoming truly “known,” affectively and intellectually, following its being made actual. Hurricane Katrina existed within the American subconscious as a sort of disavowed virtual reality. Witness, for example, the following excerpt from the October 2001 issue of Scientific American: “A major hurricane could swamp New Orleans under 20 feet of water, killing thousands. Human activities along the Mississippi River have dramatically increased the risk, and now only massive reengineering of southeastern Louisiana can save the city” And yet it was only when Hurricane Katrina was made material, only after the bodies became bloated in the rivers that were once streets, that the American populace and administration were compelled, belatedly, to act. That the potential for Hurricane Katrina was ignored is not surprising given that the risk it represented was not one that could be, literally, capital-ized on. The risk posed by Katrina threatened (and in turn destroyed) the expendable of American society. In the face of the nameless victims of the disaster, President Bush articulated more concern for his friend Trent Lott’s house (no doubt fully insured) than for the most vulnerable victims of the disaster. Always thinking positively, Bush remarked that “out of the rubbles of Trent Lott’s house—he’s lost his entire house—there’s going to be a fantastic house. And I’m looking forward to sitting on the porch. (Laughter.)” (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2005). The slow response to the foreseeable disaster, the disposability of its victims, the subsequent suggestions by Barbara Bush, the president’s mother, that the mostly poor and African American refugees were better off in their displacement—that their disastrous situation was “working very well for them” 2 —reveal the difficulty of the American administration and its formal and informal representatives to reveal, let alone act on, virtual potentials (risks) that don’t suit its interests. It also demonstrates that the spatial compression of a globalized world described by Paul Virilio (2002), a compression made possible by speed and technology, 3 exists only within a space wherein that speed is desired and applied to accommodate particular interests. The desire for speed is most palpably made manifest when it is an enabler of power. According to Virilio, speed’s relationship to power is one of the greatest threats to contemporary humanity. This power-speed assemblage “liquidates you” (p. 161). And yet it was precisely on the basis of speed’s ability to make the world small that the refugees of New Orleans were expecting a speedy delivery of aid; it was precisely the technologically fortified state, itself a state of speed, on which they were pinning their hopes. Unfortunately, in this instance, those able to apply speed were happy to apply it in different directions: Iraq, Afghanistan, tax cuts. Speed did not desire Katrina’s victims. And so speed waited as hundreds of Katrina’s most fragile victims suffered a slow death. The inaction exhibited in New Orleans both before and after the disaster was its own sort of action, acted out in the face of “known knowns.” That action—the decision to not fortify the levee system, to invest instead (in the face of real risks) in tax cuts and illegal wars—was not a result of a lack of willpower or desire; rather, this decision—remade repetitively for years, no doubt—resulted from a very real desire to redirect resources, speed, and technology to sites that would provide more immediate returns on investment. Deleuze (2004) tells us that any form of desire “produces” (pp. 232-233). Tragically, the production of the desire that was enacted before and at the moment Katrina hit New Orleans produced death and desolation; the subsequent desire to respond to the disaster with too little urgency produced more death. As speed continues to be operationalized in some areas but not in others, the “generalized accident” predicted by Virilio (2002)—any major catastrophe brought about by a combination of speed, technology, and their tendency to connect discrete units into dependent networks—becomes not so much a result of speed itself but of its strategic application in some discrete zones but not in others. The horrors exhibited in a contemporary generalized accident such as the liquification of New Orleans becomes a result of both the fast and the slow: It seems that **it is not only speed that kills.** But the desire not to apply speed in given situations functions, in this technoworld, like the proverbial stick in the spokes, quickly bringing to a halt the speed that had heretofore

been taken for granted.

**Patchwork speed enables disposability – plan solves the Accident**

**Steinberg 8** (Philip E., 2008, “What is a City? Rethinking the Urban after Hurricane Katrina,” http://books.google.com/books?id=v1x2cbHvULAC&dq=What+Is+a+City%3F:+Rethinking+the+Urban+After+Hurricane+Katrina&source=gbs\_navlinks\_s, mat)

The flooding that washed away much of New Orleans was recognized as a potential event for many years. But in the face of this threat the powers that be failed to fortify the levee system and failed to develop a transportation plan that would be able to render mobile New Orleans' most immobile residents. It seems as though the potential urban disaster threatening New Orleans was not sufficient to compel the authorities to prepare adequately for what became a disavowed possibility. Keith Ansell-Pearson (following philosophers Henri Bergson 11998], and Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari 11987]) has observed that we err when we observe that the “possible” gives rise to the "actually real"; rather, he observes that our comprehension of the full extent of what might be possible is enabled by our encounter with the actually real. Only when faced with actually real events do we project backward, only then "realizing" that the potential was actually (rather than virtually) possible (2002. 72). In everyday language we refer to these “actually possible" events as “risk" and calculate them probabilistically. What happened in New Orleans, then, is an acute example. Whether or not those with the means to act to secure the levies believed (or wanted to believe) in the risks confronting New Orleans, their choice —not to act — was a decision from those in power that, once again, didn't exhibit much speed or mobility at all.' Kew would dispute that Hurricane Katrina existed within an American subconscious as a sort of disavowed virtual reality. Prior hurricanes had threatened New Orleans; witness the following excerpt from the October 2001 issue of Scientific American: A major hurricane could swamp New Orleans under 20 feet of water, killing thousands. Human activities along the Mississippi River have dramatically increased the risk, and now only massive re-engineering of southeastern Louisiana can save the city. (Fischelti 2001) And yet it was only when Hurricane Katrina actually appeared physically, only after the bodies became bloated in the rivers that were once streets, that the American populace and administration were compelled, belatedly, to act and to reflect upon the significance of mobility not only for cities at the best of times, but also for cities facing disaster. From an economic point of view, we might remark that the fact that the potential for Hurricane Katrina was ignored is not surprising, given that the risk it represented was not one that could be, literally, capitalized upon by those at the upper echelons of Virilio’s pyramid. The risk posed by Katrina threatened (and in turn destroyed) those who were perceived as the expendable of American society, and so there was little urgency to mobilize with speed the powers necessary to prevent the destruction of the city. The slow response to the foreseeable disaster that was Hurricane Katrina, the apparent disposability of its victims (illustrated by the suggestions by Barbara Bush, the president’s mother, that the mostly poor and African American refugees were belter oft in their displacement —that their disastrous situation was “working very well for them”)5 reveal the difficulty the American administration and its formal and informal representatives had when confronted with the challenge of trying to comprehend and address circumstances that did not suit their interests. In the context of the official response to the Katrina victims, we can see also that the speed, mobility, and spatial compression of our globalized, technologized world, as described by Paul Virilio at least, typically exists only within a space in which that speed is desired by those in power to perform or enable it and applied to accommodate particular interests and agendas. Speed or hypermobility, when exercised by humans, is speed that is motivated in particular directions and a product of a particular desire. And, as Virilio described above, speed is most pervasively and efficiently (or productively and destructively) deployed by those in positions of power for the sake of the maintenance of this power. In Virilios view, the interconnected relationship between speed and power is one of the greatest threats to contemporary humanity. This power-speed assemblage, he suggests, “liquidates you" (2002, 161). If television images of the event arc to be believed, Hurricane Katrina s victims were counting on their state and federal aid agencies to provide timely —that is, speedy —help in the wake of the storm. The immobilized folks, pinned down by the storm, swimming in the streets, and suffering inside and outside the Superdome, were expecting to be taken to safety by the mechanisms of mobility they knew were available to their federal government (having, no doubt, watched with awe on television the uber -machines deployed by their own military in Gulf Wars I and II). It was precisely on the basis of speed’s ability to make the world small that the refugees of New Orleans were expecting a speedy deliver) of aid; it was precisely the technologically fortified state, itself a state of speed, on which they were pinning their hopes. Following Hurricane Katrina television news reports showed hundreds of mostly African Americans chanting, "We need help! We need help!" outside the Superdome. What was, perhaps, most poignant about these cries was the implied message — the naive expectation — that there would be, as President Bush suggested, “a lot of help coming" (BBC News 2005). These Americans were initially hopeful that they would be well taken care of by their government —the government of the most powerful nation on earth. But this hope soon turned to dismay and anger when "a lot of food, ... water,... boats and choppers” (BBC News 2005) did not arrive —were not mobilized — in a timely fashion. Unfortunately, in this instance those able to exercise speed —those at the top of Virilios pyramid —were happy to apply it in different directions. The powerful did not desire New Orleans’ or Katrina’s victims; the mobile was not interested in the immobile. And so speed waited and mobility was left immobile as hundreds of Katrina’s most fragile victims suffered a slow death and others underwent unnecessary trauma. The inaction —the immobility —exhibited during and after Hurricane Katrina was its own sort of action, played out in the face of what Donald Rumsfeld has described as “known knowns.” That action — the decision not to fortify the levee system, to invest instead (in the face of real risks) in tax cuts and allegedly illegal wars (BBC News 2004) —was not a result of a lack of willpower or desire; rather, this decision — remade repetitively for years —resulted from a very real desire to redirect resources, speed, and technology to sites that would provide more immediate returns on investment. Philosopher Gilles Deleuze tells us that any form of desire “produces" (2004. 232-233). Tragically, the desire that was enacted before and at the moment Katrina hit New Orleans produced death and desolation; the subsequent desire to respond to the disaster with too little urgency produced more death. As speed continues to be operationalized in some areas but not in others, the “generalized accident” predicted by Virilio — any major catastrophe brought about by a combination of speed and technology, and the tendency of each to connect what were once separate units into interconnected networks — appears to be a result not so much of speed itself, but of its strategic application in some areas and not in others. The horrors exhibited in a contemporary generalized accident like the liquification of New Orleans become a result of both the fast and the slow: it seems it is not only speed that kills. But the desire to not apply speed in given situations functions like the proverbial stick in the spokes, to quickly bring to a halt speed and mobility that had been taken for granted.

# Solvency

**Building transportation infrastructure helps rectify the psychological trauma of Katrina**

**Steinberg 8** (Philip E., 2008, “What is a City? Rethinking the Urban after Hurricane Katrina,” http://books.google.com/books?id=v1x2cbHvULAC&dq=What+Is+a+City%3F:+Rethinking+the+Urban+After+Hurricane+Katrina&source=gbs\_navlinks\_s, mat)

The ensuing sense of alienation and depression, often inexplicable to the sufferer, can further lead to self-destructive and antisocial behaviors. At one level, trauma is experienced individually, as by the protagonist in Fernando Lara’s essay that appears in the introduction to part 2. However, trauma is also a social and symbolic condition. New Orleans is a “traumatic landscape” that has become a symbol for a range of injuries and losses (Kir maver 1996, Crang and Travlou 2001). Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath have been a source of “urban trauma.” In the eighteen months following the hurricane. New Orleans became an exemplar for a debate on "racialized trauma” among psychologists and social work professionals (Carter 2007, Bryant-Oavis 2007). As previous chapters have made clear, the trauma of Katrina and of subsequent decisions regarding where (and where not) to rebuild has fallen disproportionately on the city ’s African American residents. Some lost belongings, others lost loved ones, others their homes, and still others lost entire communities. The impact on an already disadvantaged community raises sociological questions that go beyond the different psychologies of trauma experienced by individuals. Charges to racism have been common in the months since Katrina. Clinically, “racialized trauma" refers to measurable posttraumatic stress among those who experience discrimination or lack of cultural recognition (Loo et al. 2001). Located at the intersection of ethnicity; race, and psychology, racialized trauma alerts us to longer-term psychosocial issues that are expressed in the behavior and performance of affected populations. The reconstruction of postdisaster cities thus entails addressing not only direct losses to material objects and economic opportunities, but inequalities and perceptions of comparative injustices in those losses. Inasmuch as these perceptions are based in racial communities or neighborhoods, the response also needs to be at the level ot collectives— not so much individual therapy as public rituals of healing; not so much individual repair as the rebuilding of neighborhoods. Some examples might be found in New Orleans’ own traditions, such as jazz funeral marches and second lines that orchestrate a collective mourning, or in sod-turning or ribbon-cutting rituals tor new buildings and projects that materially demonstrate the return of “normality," the reestablishment of community. or the resolution of conflict or social failures that had contributed to the disaster.

# Racism/Disposability Narrative

**A recognition of the Other constructed by Katrina is critical to combat institutionalized racism and the logic of disposability**

**Scheper-Hughes 5**- prof of anthropology (Nancy, December, Anthropology Today, “Katrina: The disaster and its doubles,” [www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/3694939](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/3694939), mat)

At times of crisis and catastrophe, people seek an explanation for what happened. Even a bad explanation can seem better than none at all. As Geertz pointed out many years ago, the one thing many humans seem unable to live with is the idea that the world may be deficient in meaning and that human existence might be absurd. The Bush administration’s spin doctors, especially Karl Rove, 2 rushed to attribute the swathe of deaths and destruction on the Gulf Coast – some 1200 lives lost – to an act of nature, to God, to inept local Democratic officials who failed to act despite multiple pleas for help, and, finally, to the stubbornness of those (mostly Black and poor) New Orleanians who were too slow and too late getting themselves and their families out of harm’s way. 3 Ultimately, then, the ‘stragglers’ had only themselves to blame for being turned into a population of pitiful ‘refugees’, a term briefly used by news media and by some public officials before it was quickly picked up and criticized for its unconscious racism, its failure to recognize the dispossessed fleeing in rubber dinghies and rickety rowing boats as bona fide citizens of the USA. Politically correct TV commentators intervened to scold and to instruct viewers that the people fleeing were not to be called refugees: ‘These are Americans! Not Bosnians, not Kosovars, not Bangladeshis!’ I’ll return to this collective slip of the tongue at the end of this editorial. Of course, individuals’ exit plans were largely determined by race and class. The poor, heavily concentrated in low-lying districts, were more exposed to high water and had few opportunities to escape. Many did not own roadworthy cars, or any cars at all. Lacking personal computers, they were dependent on TV reports (until the electricity failed) and on radio (until the batteries ran out). Both media were slower than the internet and email in sounding the alarm. Consequently, many poor residents were stranded in their one-storey homes and on their roofs waiting to be rescued. 4 New Orleans newscaster Dave Cohen captured the poor people’s dilemma: ‘We got amazing phone calls: a woman in her house with a two-year-old on one shoulder, a five-year-old at her side, no formula, no food. “What do I do?” What can I tell her? I’m just a guy on the radio!’ The wealthy residents of New Orleans live in sturdy twostorey homes in higher-lying districts. A front-page story in the Wall Street Journal 5 the day after Katrina hit captured the difference immediately: ‘Ashton O’Dwyer stepped out of his home on this city’s grandest street and made a beeline for his neighbor’s pool. Wearing nothing but a pair of blue swim trunks and carrying two milk jugs, he drew enough pool water to flush the toilet in his home.’ The affluent had access to early warnings via fax and internet. They could jump into their tank-like 4-wheel-drives and well-stocked recreation vehicles. They had access to fast cash with their high-end credit and debit cards, and they could mobilize extensive and well-equipped personal and public support systems. Finally, the wealthy residents of New Orleans hold insurance policies that will allow them to return and to rebuild if they so wish.

Once the more ‘beloved communities’ 6 were safely evacuated, leaving behind the riff-raff thousands who took shelter in the Superdome, the rumours of mass death – the mayor of New Orleans predicted 10,000 deaths; the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had ordered 25,000 body bags – of riots, rape and anarchy circulated wildly in the media. The National Guard was deployed to control what was left of New Orleans by military means and to protect private property. Abandoned people who tried to organize among themselves to obtain and distribute water, food, medications and shelter were dispersed at gunpoint by the Guard, who were under orders not to distribute their own water to the desperate. Four days after the hurricane hit, and with basic government aid still delayed, President Bush advised the stranded to seek help from private charities such as the Salvation Army. Two San Francisco paramedics, Larry Bradshaw and Lorrie Slonsky, who were trapped in New Orleans with the abandoned poor of the city, wrote a chilling report published in the leftist press, 7 describing police and the National Guard blocking desperate evacuees as they tried to cross the Greater New Orleans Bridge to safety. It evoked a scene reminiscent of Alabama police attacking the Selma to Montgomery Freedom Marchers as they tried to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge in 1965. Here is what the Katrina evacuees, including some with babies in pushchairs, injured people on crutches, elderly people clasping walkers, others in wheelchairs, met as they approached the bridge they had been told was a route to safety: Armed sheriffs formed a line across the foot of the bridge. Before we were close enough to speak, they began firing their weapons over our heads. This sent the crowd fleeing in various directions. As the crowd scattered and dissipated, a few of us inched forward and managed to engage some of the sheriffs in conversation. We told them of our conversation with the police commander and the commander’s assurances. The sheriffs informed us that there were no buses waiting. The commander had lied to us to get us to move. We questioned why we couldn’t cross the bridge anyway, especially as there was little traffic on the six-lane highway. They responded that the West Bank was not going to become New Orleans, and there would be no Superdomes in their city. The police and National Guard made sure that hundreds of abandoned New Orleanians were prevented from fleeing the city on foot. Contrast this violent scene with the evacuation of thousands of ordinary people from Lower Manhattan in the wake of 9/11, when Mayor Giuliani dispatched his top assistant, Rosie, clad in a florescent jacket and holding a megaphone, to lead panicked people across a bridge and into the safety of Queens – a beautiful and historic moment.

Self-blame and national shame In the wake of a disaster people tend to ask the question: Why me? Why us, oh God, of all people? Victims collude with those who are all too willing to blame them for their misfortune. Making sense of suffering is a dicey game, a two-edged sword. In his essay on Holocaust survivors, ‘Useless suffering’, Immanuel Levinas goes so far as to see the search for meaning in catastrophic human suffering as a potent source of evil in the world. Conversely, those who escape a catastrophe experienced by others (especially their own loved ones) tend to ask the opposite question: Why was I spared? Why did I live? – an equally devastating experience of self-blame. My particular perspective on the Katrina disaster derives from the 18 months (1967-1968) that I spent living and working in Selma, Alabama and its rural environs as a civil rights worker investigating hunger and malnutrition among Black sharecroppers. The reports I wrote for the Southern Rural Research Project (SRRP) – ‘Black farm families: Hunger and malnutrition in rural Alabama’ and ‘The extinction of Black farm families’ (both of them scathing attacks on the perverse relations between Black farm families and local agents of the US Department of Agriculture) – were based on a survey of 243 households in several Blackbelt counties of Southwest Alabama. The reports were used in a class action suit : ‘Peoples v. the US Department of Agriculture’ (US District Court, 23 March 23 1967). We brought three busloads of undernourished adults and children – 130 Black Alabamans ranging from 7 weeks to 75 years old – into that Washington, DC court room, along with a team of doctors (including Robert Coles and Charles Wheeler) to verify the shocking nutritional disorders, ranging from paediatric marasmus and kwashiorkor to the pellagra suffered by many of the adults. SRRP lost its case against the US Department of Agriculture in the courts but won in the media as newscasters from ABC, CBS and NBC, and reporters from the Washington Post to the New York Times expressed alarm at the possibility of widespread hunger among the rural Black poor of the American South. Dr Wheeler continued to work with us in documenting the effects of chronic malnutrition on Alabama’s sharecroppers. A CBS team came to Selma, Alabama in 1968 to film a segment of the 90minute documentary ‘Hunger in America’. I accompanied the team to the home of a large family of sharecropperswhere Dr Wheeler interviewed a 14-year-old boy named Charles. Of all the images of hunger in America, this one tore at the collective conscience of the American public. Wheeler asked the 14-year-old sitting across him on a bed covered with a tattered bundle of rags, the only seat in the shack: ‘Do you eat breakfast before school?’ ‘Sometimes, sir. Sometimes I have peas.’ ‘And when you get to school, do you eat?’ ‘No, sir.’ ‘Isn’t there any cafeteria food there?’ ‘Yas, sir.’ ‘Why don’t you have it?’ ‘I don’t have the 25 cents.’ ‘What do you do while the other children eat lunch?’ ‘I just sits there on the side.’ [Here Charles turns his face away from the cameras] But Dr Wheeler continues: ‘How do you feel when you see the other children eating?’ ‘I feels ashamed’. [Charles’ voice breaks] Raymond Wheeler asks incredulously: ‘You feel ashamed?’ ‘Yas, sir.’ After the CBS documentary was aired hundreds of letters bearing small cheques arrived at our ‘Freedom House’ in Selma, Alabama. I answered them all. No American child, these concerned citizens argued, should feel ashamed because they had nothing to eat. And no child should sit by empty-handed while his or her schoolmates ate lunch. This one CBS documentary had enormous impact, leading, ultimately, to Congressional action. Consequently, Charles got his school lunch free, as did thousands of other rural Southern kids like him. Many years later, when Governor Cuomo made his memorable nominating keynote speech at the l988 Democratic Convention, he recalled that scene from ‘Hunger in America’. Though he did not recall his name, over 20 years later Cuomo evoked the burning sense of misplaced shame in that one hungry American child. For shame, America! was Cuomo’s message. Since that time the US has agreed to put an end to welfare (as we knew it), thereby putting an end to childhood (as we knew it). A raw deal replaced the New Deal, contributing to the dangerous material decline of poor urban (mostly African-American) communities, including the quality of transport, public housing and public schools in New Orleans and its environs, anticipating the shameful scenes of public neglect of victims and survivors of Hurricane Katrina. As Illinois senator Barack Obama put it : ‘The people of New Orleans weren’t just abandoned during the hurricane, they were abandoned long ago.’ Vulnerability of the poor As Eric Kleinenberg demonstrated in his masterful study of the Chicago heatwave of 1995, 8 the poor are vulnerable to ‘natural’ disasters and other catastrophes not because of geography and climate changes (although these set the stage) but because of political lassitude, racism and entrenched poverty, all of these exacerbated by the dismantling of social welfare by both Democratic and Republican administrations that have left them stranded. In marked contrast to the public response to Katrina, the response to the 9/11 World Trade Center attack was immediate: private companies and public agencies swooped down and into action. Necessary supplies and equipment were put into place with or without contracts. A sense of solidarity united bureaucracies, NGOs and political units. True, there was that long pause, the endless 90 seconds or so that it took George W. Bush to get what had just happened, his deer-in-the-headlights paralysis that was captured so painfully in Michael Moore’s film. But this time the presidential paralysis was days and weeks long. No one in the government seemed ready to push a panic button, despite advance warning from the National Weather Service, which declared Katrina a major hurricane likely to make the targeted area ‘uninhabitable for weeks, perhaps longer’ (quoted in the New York Times, 2005). The amazement with which people around the world greeted the stark images of dead bodies in the lethal sewage of post-Katrina New Orleans contrasted sharply with the ‘What do you expect from sub-citizens who refuse to follow orders, who are looting and shooting and raping and killing?’ attitude of Fox TV and its associates. Could it be that while white bodies count, black bodies are merely counted? What explains the absurd miscalculations of 20,000, then 40,000 presumed deaths in the wake of the killer hurricane? The body counts, like the exaggerated reports of mayhem, circulated like an urban legend, based on what? A subconscious wish that it be so, a genocidal fantasy? Today, the attention of the country and the press is focused on reconstruction and on the ‘golden opportunity’ afforded to developers by the destruction of New Orleans. Congressman Richard Baker of Baton Rouge greeted the devastation with evident glee: ‘We finally cleaned up public housing in new Orleans… We couldn’t do it, but God did for us.’ Today the media are preoccupied with debates about architectural preservation vs economic development. 9 There is talk of allowing certain low-lying sections of Black New Orleans to be ‘let go’ permanently. In one of his columns conservative pundit David Brooks opined that ‘people who lack middle-class skills’ should not be allowed to resettle in the city. ‘If we put up new buildings and allow the same people to move back into their old neighborhoods, then urban New Orleans will become just as run down as before.’ Will New Orleans be rebuilt with higher levees and fewer African Americans? Will the French Quarter be transformed into a permanent watery theme park for college students on holiday? Will African Americans, Creoles, Cajuns and other Louisiana cultural minorities ever again account for two-thirds of New Orleans’ population and for nearly 100% of the city’s distinctive culture and social history? \* \* \* Katrina may have tapped into the collective unconscious, pointing to something that Americans need to confront about themselves and their nation. The ‘refugee’ Freudian slip might be seen as a feeble step toward acknowledging what Michael Harrington recognized decades ago in his book, The other America – that is, the reality of two Americas, one bona fide, the other a stepchild nation, the un-American America, refugee America, apartheid America. The term ‘refugees’ implies that there are American-born Americans without a symbolic passport, without a president, without protection, who live and die outside the political circle of trust and care. Perhaps this is why anthropologist Susanna Hoffman 10 suggested that humanitarian efforts for the victims of Katrina might be understood as ‘aid’, a term most often associated with people living in other countries (as in USAID). Perhaps the designation ‘refugees’ is an unformed way of suggesting that ‘normative’ America (Amerika?) owes something to the displaced victims of American apartheid, something akin to Jacques Derrida’s call for a cosmo-politics based on open cities of refuge and a politics of hospitality based on human rights, since the Black and poor population’s civil rights seem to have so utterly failed them.