## 1NC T—FW

#### Interpretation: The affirmative should defend a topical plan text under — Resolved: The member nations of the World Trade Organization ought to reduce intellectual property protections for medicine.

#### Violation: The affirmative changes the entire system in which medicine operates

#### Standards

#### Predictable limits—The resolution proposes the question the negative is prepared to answer and creates a bounded list of potential affs. This is also vital to rigorous modes of contestation that allow for skill development by navigating the complex field of public policy within a bounded area. De-limiting the topic decimates dialogue – research asymmetry creates a procedural hierarchy which makes dialogical communication impossible – that shuts out ideological flux and reinstates the logic of mastery. Failing to do so creates a colonization of methods and inadequate debates about methodology.

Lewis **Gordon 14**—professor of philosophy, African and Judiac Studies at the University of Connecticut—2014 (“Disciplinary Decadence and the Decolonization of Knowledge,” Africa Development 39.1: 81-92, 88).  
The first is regarding the political significance of this critique. For politics to exist, there must be discursive opposition over relations of power. Such activity involves communicative possibilities that rely on the suspension of violent or repressive forces. In effect, that makes politics also a condition of appearance. To be political is to emerge, to appear, to exist. Colonisation involves the elimination of discursive opposition between the dominant group and the subordinated group. A consequence of this is the attempted elimination of speech (a fundamental activity of political life) with a trail of concomitant conditions of its possibility. It is not that colonised groups fail to speak. It is that their speaking lacks appearance or mediation; it is not transformed into speech. The erasure of speech calls for the elimination of such conditions of its appearance such as gestural sites and the constellation of muscles that facilitates speech – namely, the face. As faceless, problem people are derailed from the dialectics of recognition, of self and other, with the consequence of neither self nor other. Since ethical life requires others, a challenge is here raised against models of decolonial practice that centre ethics. The additional challenge, then, is to cultivate the options necessary for both political and ethical life. To present that call as an ethical one would lead to a similar problem of coloniality as did, say, the problem of method raised by Fanon. European modernity has, in other words, subverted ethics. As with the critique of epistemology as first philosophy, ethics, too, as first philosophy must be called into question. It is not that ethics must be rejected. It simply faces its teleological suspension, especially where, if maintained, it presupposes instead of challenging colonial relations. Even conceptions of the ethical that demand deference to the Other run into trouble here since some groups, such as blacks and Indians/Native Americans, are often not even the Other. This means, then, that the ethical proviso faces irrelevance without the political conditions of its possibility. This is a major challenge to liberal hegemony, which calls for ethical foundations of political life, in European modernity. It turns it upside down. But in doing so, it also means that ethics-centred approaches, even in the name of liberation, face a similar fate.

#### Fallibility– unlimited topics make assessing the validity of the 1ac’s truth claims impossible AND cause concessionary ground which creates incentives for avoidance. Our method of refinement via contestation challenges hegemonic structures which I/L turns their method – it’s also key to advocacy skills

#### Reforms are possible and desirable---tangible change outweighs the risk of cooption and is still a better strategy than the aff Omi 13:

Omi, Michael (Berkeley ethnic studies professor). “Resistance is futile?: a response to Feagin and Elias”, Ethnic and Racial Studies, 36.6, Taylor and Francis

In Feagin and Elias's account, white racist rule in the USA appears unalterable and permanent. There is little sense that the ‘white racial frame’ evoked by systemic racism theory changes in significant ways over historical time. **They dismiss important rearrangements and reforms as merely ‘a distraction from more ingrained structural oppressions and deep lying inequalities that continue to define US society’** (Feagin and Elias 2012, p. 21). Feagin and Elias use a concept they call ‘surface flexibility’ to argue that white elites frame racial realities in ways that suggest change, but are merely engineered to reinforce the underlying structure of racial oppression. Feagin and Elias say the phrase ‘racial democracy’ is an oxymoron – a word defined in the dictionary as a figure of speech that combines contradictory terms. If they mean the USA is a contradictory and incomplete democracy in respect to race and racism issues, we agree**. If they mean that people of colour have no democratic rights or political power in the USA, we disagree**. The USA is a racially despotic country in many ways, but in our view **it is also in many respects a racial democracy, capable of being influenced towards more or less inclusive and redistributive economic policies, social policies, or for that matter, imperial policies**. What is distinctive about our own epoch in the USA (post-Second World War to the present) with respect to race and racism? Over the past decades there has been a steady drumbeat of efforts to contain and neutralize civil rights, to restrict racial democracy, and to maintain or even increase racial inequality. Racial disparities in different institutional sites – employment, health, education – persist and in many cases have increased. Indeed**, the post-2008 period has seen a dramatic increase in racial inequality. The subprime home mortgage crisis, for example, was a major racial event. Black and brown people were disproportionately affected** by predatory lending practices; many lost their homes as a result; race-based wealth disparities widened tremendously. **It would be easy to conclude, as Feagin and Elias do, that white racial dominance has been continuous and unchanging throughout US history.** But such **a perspective misses the** dramatic twists and turns **in racial politics that have occurred since the Second World War and the civil rights era**. Feagin and Elias claim that we overly inflate the significance of the changes wrought by the civil rights movement, and that we ‘overlook the serious reversals of racial justice and persistence of huge racial inequalities’ (Feagin and Elias 2012, p. 21) that followed in its wake. We do not. In Racial Formation we wrote about ‘racial reaction’ in a chapter of that name, and elsewhere in the book as well. Feagin and Elias devote little attention to our arguments there; perhaps because they are in substantial agreement with us. **While we argue that the right wing was able to ‘rearticulate’ race and racism issues to roll back some of the gains of the civil rights movement, we also believe that there are limits to what the right could achieve in the post-civil rights political landscape**. So we agree that the present prospects for racial justice are demoralizing at best. But we do not think that is the whole story. US racial conditions have changed over the post-Second World War period, in ways that Feagin and Elias tend to downplay or neglect. Some of **the major reforms of the 1960s have proved irreversible; they have set powerful democratic forces in motion. These racial (trans)formations were the results of unprecedented political mobilizations, led by the black movement, but not confined to blacks alone**. Consider the desegregation of the armed forces, as well as key civil rights movement victories of the 1960s: the Voting Rights Act, the Immigration and Naturalization Act (Hart- Celler), as well as important court decisions like Loving v. Virginia that declared anti-miscegenation laws unconstitutional. While we have the greatest respect for the late Derrick Bell, we do not believe that his ‘interest convergence hypothesis’ effectively explains all these developments. How does Lyndon Johnson's famous (and possibly apocryphal) lament upon signing the Civil Rights Act on 2 July 1964 – ‘We have lost the South for a generation’ – count as ‘convergence’? **The US racial regime has been transformed in significant ways. As Antonio Gramsci argues, hegemony proceeds through the incorporation of opposition (Gramsci 1971, p. 182). The civil rights reforms can be seen as a classic example of this process; here the US racial regime – under movement pressure – was exercising its hegemony.** But Gramsci insists that such reforms – which he calls ‘passive revolutions’ – cannot be merely symbolic if they are to be effective: oppositions must win real gains in the process. Once again, we are in the realm of politics, not absolute rule. So yes, **we think there were important if partial victories that shifted the racial state and transformed the significance of race in everyday life**. And yes, we think that **further victories can take place both on the broad terrain of the state and on the more immediate level of social interaction: in daily interaction, in the human psyche and across civil society.**Indeed we have argued that in many ways **the most important accomplishment of the anti-racist movement of the 1960s in the USA was the politicization of the social**. In the USA and indeed around the globe, race-based movements demanded not only the inclusion of racially defined ‘others’ and the democratization of structurally racist societies, but also the recognition and validation by both the state and civil society of racially-defined experience and identity**. These demands broadened and deepened democracy itself. They facilitated not only the democratic gains made in the USA by the black movement and its allies, but also the political advances towards equality, social justice and inclusion accomplished by other ‘new social movements’: second-wave feminism, gay liberation, and the environmentalist and anti-war movements among others.** By no means do we think that the post-war movement upsurcge was an unmitigated success. Far from it: all the new social movements were subject to the same ‘rearticulation’ (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, p. xii) that produced the racial ideology of ‘colourblindness’ and its variants; indeed all these movements confronted their mirror images in the mobilizations that arose from the political right to counter them. Yet even their incorporation and containment, even their confrontations with the various ‘backlash’ phenomena of the past few decades, even the need to develop the highly contradictory ideology of ‘colourblindness’, reveal the transformative character of the ‘politicization of the social’. While it is not possible here to explore so extensive a subject, it is worth noting that **it was the long-delayed eruption of racial subjectivity and self-awareness into the mainstream political arena that set off this transformation, shaping both the democratic and anti-democratic social movements that are evident in US politics today.**

#### Switch side debate - Nobody really likes the topic, but defending the resolution is good for everyone. Tailoring arguments to the format of switch-side deliberation promotes self-reflexive openness—that’s the best way to cause wide-scale opinion shifts over time. Absent normative meta-consensus on procedural terms for debate that guarantee switch-side deliberative testing within mutually-understood constraints, we encourage dogmatism and group polarization, which turn the aff

#### TVA –  Defend a plan to take down Capitalism through taking down IPR.

#### Reading the affirmative’s thesis on the neg solves educational benefits of the aff.  The ballot isn't key for the aff, so vote neg if the form of debate is irrelevant.

#### Vote for Procedural Fairness and Education – allowing the aff to arbitrarily manipulate the debate’s content with self-serving interpretations creates a *moral hazard*. Vote neg because debate is a competitive activity which loses meaning without substantive constraints.

## K

**Aff relies on European theoretical tradition of abstraction and despiritualization is the foundation of genocidal exploitation**

**Means 80 (**Russell, an American Oglala Lakota activist, the following speech was given by Russell Means in July 1980, before several thousand people who had assembled from all over the world for the Black Hills International Survival Gathering, in the Black Hills of South Dakota. It is Russell Means’s most famous speech, 1980 “For America to Live, Europe Must Die”)

(You notice I use the term American Indian rather than Native American or Native indigenous people or Amerindian when referring to my people. There has been some controversy about such terms, and frankly, at this point, I find it absurd. Primarily it seems that American Indian is being rejected as European in origin–which is true. But all the above terms are European in origin; the only non-European way is to speak of Lakota–or, more precisely, of Oglala, Brule, etc.–and of the Dineh, the Miccousukee, and all the rest of the several hundred correct tribal names.(There is also some confusion about the word Indian, a mistaken belief that it refers somehow to the country, India. When Columbus washed up on the beach in the Caribbean, he was not looking for a country called India. Europeans were calling that country Hindustan in 1492. Look it up on the old maps. Columbus called the tribal people he met “Indio,” from the Italian in dio, meaning “in God.”)It takes a strong effort on the part of each American Indian not to become Europeanized. The strength for this effort can only come from the traditional ways, the traditional values that our elders retain. It must come from the hoop, the four directions, the relations: it cannot come from the pages of a book or a thousand books. No European can ever teach a Lakota to be Lakota, a Hopi to be Hopi. A master’s degree in “Indian Studies” or in “education” or in anything else cannot make a person into a human being or provide knowledge into traditional ways. It can only make you into a mental European, an outsider. I should be clear about something here, because there seems to be some confusion about it. When I speak of Europeans or mental Europeans, I’m not allowing for false distinctions. **I’m not saying that on the one hand there are the by-products of a few thousand years of genocidal, reactionary, European intellectual development which is bad; and on the other hand there is some new revolutionary intellectual development which is good. I’m referring here to the so-called theories of Marxism and anarchism and “leftism” in general. I don’t believe these theories can[not] be separated from the rest of the of the European intellectual tradition.** It’s really just the same old song.The process began much earlier. **Newton, for example, “revolutionized”** physics and the so-called **natural sciences by reducing the physical universe to a linear math**ematical **equation. Descartes** did the same thing with culture. John **Locke** did it with politics, **and** Adam **Smith** did it with economics. Each one of these “thinkers” **took** a piece of **the spirituality of human existence and converted it into code**, an abstraction. **They picked up where Christianity ended: they “secularized” Christian religion, as the “scholars” like to say–and in doing so they made Europe more able and ready to act as an expansionist culture. Each of these intellectual revolutions served to abstract the European mentality even further, to remove the wonderful complexity and spirituality from the universe and replace it with a logical sequence: one, two, three. Answer**! This is what has come to be termed “efficiency” in the European mind. Whatever is mechanical is perfect; whatever seems to work at the moment–that is, proves the mechanical model to be the right one–is considered correct, even when it is clearly untrue. This is why “truth” changes so fast in the European mind; the answers which result from such a process are only stopgaps, only temporary, and must be continuously discarded in favor of new stopgaps which support the mechanical models and keep them (the models) alive. **Hegel and Marx were heirs to the thinking of Newton, Descartes, Locke and Smith. Hegel finished** the process of **secularizing theology–and that is put in his own terms–he secularized the religious thinking through which Europe understood the universe.** Then **Marx put Hegel**’s philosophy in terms **of “materialism**,” which is to say that Marx despiritualized Hegel’s work altogether. Again, this is in Marx’ own terms. And this is now seen as the future revolutionary potential of Europe. Europeans may see this as revolutionary, but **American Indians see it** simply **as** still more of **that same old European conflict between being and gaining. The intellectual roots of a new Marxist form of European imperialism lie in Marx’–and his followers’–links to the tradition of Newton, Hegel and the others.** Being is a spiritual proposition. Gaining is a material act. Traditionally, American Indians have always attempted to be the best people they could**. Part of that spiritual process was and is to give away wealth, to discard wealth in order not to gain.** Material gain is an indicator of false status among traditional people, while it is “proof that the system works” to Europeans. Clearly, there are two completely opposing views at issue here, and Marxism is very far over to the other side from the American Indian view. But let’s look at a major implication of this; it is not merely an intellectual debate. The **European materialist tradition of despiritualizing the universe is very similar to the mental process which goes into dehumanizing another person. And who seems most expert at dehumanizing other people? And why? Soldiers who have seen a lot of combat learn to do this to the enemy before going back into combat. Murderers do it before going out to commit murder. Nazi SS guards did it to concentration camp inmates. Cops do it. Corporation leaders do it to the workers they send into uranium mines and steel mills. Politicians do it to everyone in sight. And what the process has in common for each group doing the dehumanizing is that it makes it all right to kill and otherwise destroy other people. One of the Christian commandments says, “Thou shalt not kill,” at least not humans, so the trick is to mentally convert the victims into nonhumans.** Then you can proclaim violation of your own commandment as a virtue. **In terms of the despiritualization of the universe, the mental process works so that it becomes virtuous to destroy the planet. Terms like progress and development are used as cover words here, the way victory and freedom are used to justify butchery in the dehumanization process**.

**Settlement is not an event, but a structuring ontological logic of elimination constantly manifest in everyday reiteration of the very modes of spatial inhabitance and subjective modes of being – distinct from racial violences**

**Rifkin 14** (Associate Professor of English & WGS @ UNC-Greensboro (Mark, ‘Settler Common Sense: Queerness and Everyday Colonialism in the American Renaissance,’ pp. 7-10)//TN

If nineteenth-century American literary studies tends to focus on the ways Indians enter the narrative frame and the kinds of meanings and associa- tions they bear, recent attempts to theorize settler colonialism have sought to **shift attention from its effects on Indigenous subjects** to its implications for **nonnative political attachments, forms of inhabitance, and modes of being**, illuminating and tracking the **pervasive operation of settlement as a system**. In Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology, Patrick Wolfe argues, “Settler colonies were (are) premised on the elimination of native societies. The split tensing reflects a determinate feature of settler colonization. The colonizers come to stay—**invasion is a structure not an event**” (2).6 He suggests that a “logic of elimination” drives settler governance and sociality, describing “the settler-colonial will” as “a historical force that ultimately derives from the primal drive to expansion that is generally glossed as capitalism” (167), and in “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” he observes that “elimination is an **organizing principle of settler-colonial society** rather than a one-off (and superceded) occurrence” (388). Rather than being superseded after an initial moment/ period of conquest, colonization persists since “the logic of elimination marks a return whereby **the native repressed continues to structure settler- colonial society**” (390). In Aileen Moreton-Robinson’s work, whiteness func- tions as the central way of understanding the domination and displacement of Indigenous peoples by nonnatives.7 In “Writing Off Indigenous Sover- eignty,” she argues, “As a regime of power, patriarchal white sovereignty operates ideologically, materially and discursively to reproduce and main- tain its investment in the nation as a white possession” (88), and in “Writ- ing Off Treaties,” she suggests, “**At an ontological level the structure of subjective possession** occurs through the imposition of one’s will-to-be on the thing which is perceived to lack will, thus it is **open to being possessed**,” such that “possession . . . forms part of **the ontological structure of white subjectivity**” (83–84). For Jodi Byrd, the deployment of Indianness as a mobile figure works as the principal mode of U.S. settler colonialism. She observes that “colonization and racialization . . . have **often been conflated**,” in ways that “tend to be sited along the axis of inclusion/exclusion” and that “**misdirect and cloud attention from the underlying structures of settler colonialism**” (xxiii, xvii). She argues that settlement works through the translation of indigeneity as Indianness, casting place-based political collec- tivities as (racialized) populations subject to U.S. jurisdiction and manage- ment: “the Indian is left nowhere and everywhere within the ontological premises through which U.S. empire orients, imagines, and critiques itself ”; “ideas of Indians and Indianness have served as **the ontological ground through which U.S. settler colonialism enacts itself** ” (xix).

#### Role of the ballot is to vote for the team that best disrupts settler colonialism – the desirability of the Aff should be judged by its effect on non-European peoples. Capitalism is not the root cause, it’s European culture

**Means 80 (**Russell, an American Oglala Lakota activist, the following speech was given by Russell Means in July 1980, before several thousand people who had assembled from all over the world for the Black Hills International Survival Gathering, in the Black Hills of South Dakota. It is Russell Means’s most famous speech, 1980 “For America to Live, Europe Must Die”)

For example, a real-estate speculator may refer to “developing” a parcel of ground by opening a gravel quarry; development here means total, permanent destruction, with the earth itself removed. But European logic has gained a few tons of gravel with which more land can be “developed” through the construction of road beds. Ultimately, the whole universe is open–in the European view–to this sort of insanity. Most important here, perhaps, is the fact that Europeans feel no sense of loss in all this. After all, **their philosophers have despiritualized reality,** so there is no satisfaction (for them) to be gained in simply observing the wonder of a mountain or a lake or a people in being. No, **satisfaction is measured in terms of gaining material. So the mountain becomes gravel, and the lake becomes coolant for a factory, and the people are rounded up for processing through the indoctrination mills Europeans like to call schools.** But each new piece of that “progress” ups the ante out in the real world. Take fuel for the industrial machine as an example. Little more than two centuries ago, nearly everyone used wood–a replenishable, natural item–as fuel for the very human needs of cooking and staying warm. Along came the Industrial Revolution and coal became the dominant fuel, as production became the social imperative for Europe. Pollution began to become a problem in the cities, and the earth was ripped open to provide coal whereas wood had always simply been gathered or harvested at no great expense to the environment. Later, oil became the major fuel, as the technology of production was perfected through a series of scientific “revolutions.” Pollution increased dramatically, and nobody yet knows what the environmental costs of pumping all that oil out of the ground will really be in the long run. Now there’s an “energy crisis,” and uranium is becoming the dominant fuel. **Capitalists,** at least, **can be relied upon to develop** uranium as **fuel only at the rate which they** can **show** a **good profit.** That’s their ethic, and maybe they will buy some time. **Marxists**, on the other hand, **can be relied upon to develop** uranium **fuel as rapidly as possible** simply **because it’s the most “efficient” production fuel available. That’s their ethic, and I fail to see where it’s preferable.** Like I said, Marxism is right smack in the middle of European tradition. It’s the same old song. There’s a rule of thumb which can be applied here. **You cannot judge** the real nature of a **European revolutionary doctrine on** the basis of **the changes it proposes to make within** the **European** power structure and **society. You can only judge it by the effects** it will have **on non-European peoples.** This is **because every revolution in European history has served to reinforce Europe’s tendencies and abilities to export destruction** to other peoples, other cultures and the environment itself. **I defy anyone to point out an example where this is not true**. **So now we, as American Indian people, are asked to believe that a “new” European revolutionary doctrine such as Marxism will reverse the negative effects of European history on us. European power relations are to be adjusted once again, and that’s supposed to make things better for all of us. But what does this really mean?** Right now, today, we who live on the Pine Ridge Reservation are living in what white society has designated a “National Sacrifice Area.” What this means is that we have a lot of uranium deposits here, and white culture (not us) needs this uranium as energy production material. The cheapest, most efficient way for industry to extract and deal with the processing of this uranium is to dump the waste by-products right here at the digging sites. Right here where we live. This waste is radioactive and will make the entire region uninhabitable forever. This is considered by the industry, and by the white society that created this industry, to be an “acceptable” price to pay for energy resource development. Along the way they also plan to drain the water table under this part of South Dakota as part of the industrial process, so the region becomes doubly uninhabitable. The same sort of thing is happening down in the land of the Navajo and Hopi, up in the land of the Northern Cheyenne and Crow, and elsewhere. Thirty percent of the coal in the West and half of the uranium deposits in the United States have been found to lie under reservation land, so there is no way this can be called a minor issue. We are resisting being turned into a National Sacrifice Area. We are resisting being turned into a national sacrifice people. The costs of this industrial process are not acceptable to us. It is genocide to dig uranium here and drain the water table–no more, no less. Now let’s suppose that in our resistance to extermination we begin to seek allies (we have). Let’s suppose further that we were to take revolutionary Marxism at its word: that it intends nothing less than the complete overthrow of the European capitalists order which has presented this threat to our very existence. This would seem to be a natural alliance for American Indian people to enter into. After all, as the Marxists say, it is the capitalists who set us up to be a national sacrifice. This is true as far as it goes. But, as I’ve tried to point out, this “truth” is very deceptive.Revolutionary **Marxism is committed to** even further perpetuation and **perfection of the** very industrial **process** which is **destroying us** all. **It offers** only **to “redistribute” the results–**the money, maybe–**of** this **industrialization** to a wider section of the population. It offers to take wealth from the capitalists and pass it around; **but** in order **to do so, Marxism must maintain the industrial system.** Once again, the power relations within European society will have to be altered, but once again **the effects upon American Indian peoples here and non-Europeans elsewhere will remain the same.** This is much the same as when power was redistributed from the church to private business during the so-called bourgeois revolution. European society changed a bit, at least superficially, but its conduct toward non-Europeans continued as before. You can see what the American Revolution of 1776 did for American Indians. It’s the same old song. **Revolutionary Marxism, like industrial society in other forms, seeks to “rationalize” all people in relation to industry–maximum industry, maximum production. It is a doctrine that despises the American Indian spiritual tradition, our cultures, our lifeways. Marx himself called us “precapitalists” and “primitive.”** Precapitalist simply means that, in his view, we would eventually discover capitalism and become capitalists; we have always been economically retarded in Marxist terms. **The only manner in which American Indian people could participate in a Marxist revolution would be to join the industrial system, to become factory workers, or “proletarians,” as Marx called them. The man was very clear about the fact that his revolution could only occur through the struggle of the proletariat, that the existence of a massive industrial system is a precondition of a successful Marxist society.** I think there’s a problem with language here. Christians, capitalists, Marxists. All of them have been revolutionary in their own minds, but none of them really means revolution. What they really mean is continuation. They do what they do in order that European culture can continue to exist and develop according to its needs. Like germs, **European culture goes through occasional convulsions, even divisions within itself, in order to go on living and growing. This isn’t a revolution we’re talking about, but a means to continue what already exists. An amoeba is still an amoeba after it reproduces. But maybe comparing European culture to an amoeba isn’t really fair to the amoeba. Maybe cancer cells are a more accurate comparison because European culture has historically destroyed everything around it; and it will eventually destroy itself**. **So, in order for us to really join forces with Marxism, we American Indians would have to accept the national sacrifice of our homeland; we would have to commit cultural suicide and become industrialized and Europeanized.**At this point, I’ve got to stop and ask myself whether I’m being too harsh. Marxism has something of a history. Does this history bear out my observations? I look to the process of industrialization in the Soviet Union since 1920 and I see that these Marxists have done **what it took the English Industrial Revolution 300 years** to do; and **the Marxists did it in 60 years.** I see that the territory of **the USSR used to contain a number of tribal peoples and that they have been crushed** to make way **for** the **factories. The Soviets** refer to this as “the National Question,” the question of whether the tribal peoples had the right to exist as peoples; and they decided the **tribal peoples were an acceptable sacrifice to the industrial needs. I look to China and I see the same thing. I look to Vietnam and I see Marxists imposing an industrial order and rooting out the indigenous tribal mountain people.** I hear the leading Soviet scientist saying that when uranium is exhausted, then alternatives will be found. I see the Vietnamese taking over a nuclear power plant abandoned by the U.S. military. Have they dismantled and destroyed it? No, they are using it. **I see China exploding nuclear bombs, developing uranium reactors, and preparing a space program in order to colonize and exploit the planets the same as the Europeans colonized and exploited this hemisphere. It’s the same old song, but maybe with a faster tempo this time.** The statement of the Soviet scientist is very interesting. Does he know what this alternative energy source will be? No, he simply has faith. Science will find a way. I hear revolutionary Marxists saying that the destruction of the environment, pollution, and radiation will all be controlled. And I see them act upon their words. Do they know how these things will be controlled? No, they simply have faith. Science will find a way. Industrialization is fine and necessary. How do they know this? Faith. Science will find a way. Faith of this sort has always been known in Europe as religion. Science has become the new European religion for both capitalists and Marxists; they are truly inseparable; they are part and parcel of the same culture. So, in both theory and practice, Marxism demands that non-European peoples give up their values, their traditions, their cultural existence altogether. We will all be industrialized science addicts in a Marxist society. I do not believe that **capitalism itself is** really **responsible for the situation in which American Indians have been declared a national sacrifice.** No, **it is the European** tradition; European **culture itself is responsible. Marxism is just the latest continuation of this tradition, not a solution to it. To ally with Marxism is to ally with the very same forces that declare us an acceptable cost.** There is another way. There is the traditional Lakota way and the ways of the American Indian peoples. It is the way that knows that humans do not have the right to degrade Mother Earth, that there are forces beyond anything the European mind has conceived, that humans must be in harmony with all relations or the relations will eventually eliminate the disharmony. A lopsided emphasis on humans by humans–the Europeans’ arrogance of acting as though they were beyond the nature of all related things–can only result in a total disharmony and a readjustment which cuts arrogant humans down to size, gives them a taste of that reality beyond their grasp or control and restores the harmony. There is no need for a revolutionary theory to bring this about; it’s beyond human control. The nature peoples of this planet know this and so they do not theorize about it. Theory is an abstract; our knowledge is real. Distilled to its basic terms, European faith–including the new faith in science–equals a belief that man is God. Europe has always sought a Messiah, whether that be the man Jesus Christ or the man Karl Marx or the man Albert Einstein. American Indians know this to be totally absurd. Humans are the weakest of all creatures, so weak that other creatures are willing to give up their flesh that we may live. Humans are able to survive only through the exercise of rationality since they lack the abilities of other creatures to gain food through the use of fang and claw.But rationality is a curse since it can cause humans to forget the natural order of things in ways other creatures do not. A wolf never forgets his or her place in the natural order. American Indians can. Europeans almost always do. We pray our thanks to the deer, our relations, for allowing us their flesh to eat; Europeans simply take the flesh for granted and consider the deer inferior. After all, Europeans consider themselves godlike in their rationalism and science. God is the Supreme Being; all else must be inferior.All European tradition, Marxism included, has conspired to defy the natural order of all things. Mother Earth has been abused, the powers have been abused, and this cannot go on forever. No theory can alter that simple fact. Mother Earth will retaliate, the whole environment will retaliate, and the abusers will be eliminated. Things come full circle, back to where they started. That’s revolution. And that’s a prophecy of my people, of the Hopi people and of other correct peoples.

## Case

#### hegemony isn’t imperialist or self-serving – it’s mutually beneficial and is necessary for peace.

down 15

Nathan Down is a lecturer and researcher in the fields of Politics, History and Communications at Charles Sturt University’s School of Humanities and Social Sciences. He graduated from Macquarie University with a Master of International Relations. “Pax Americana: the United States as Global Hegemon or Imperialist in Disguise?”, http://www.e-ir.info/2015/12/09/pax-americana-the-united-states-as-global-hegemon-or-imperialist-in-disguise/

This essay argues that United States hegemony in the contemporary period does not amount to imperialism – be it deliberate, explicit or in disguise. It is doubtful that the US is capable of carrying out an expansionary and interventionist foreign policy like it could have just ten years earlier. A downward trend in both US prestige (particularly offset by China) and economic power, combined with unfolding modern geopolitical challenges, seems to be forcing the current Obama Administration to realign US foreign policy to better suit domestic priorities. Furthermore, the protracted US military occupation of Afghanistan has weakened US hegemony and undermined multilateral confidence in the US, to a certain degree, among the international community. The failures of these military incursions continue to affect the US within the diplomatic arena, particularly in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), where the rise of China and Russia is continually and deliberately contravening US agenda (as the US periodically does with China and Russia, respectively). With these contemporary challenges in mind, this essay will define key terms and set the time parameters for investigation and examine military, political, cultural and economic forces that attempt to preserve modern US hegemony to varying degrees of success. As will be argued, US power and influence are far more reactive in regard to how it maintains its position as global hegemon in the contemporary period, thus making the potential for imperial ambitions all the more unlikely.¶ Initially, it is useful to both define the key terms of “hegemony” and “imperialism” and clearly contextualize the parameters of the contemporary period that marks the US’ unique position of dominance in the international system. According to Richard Lebow & Robert Kelly (2001), “hegemony” is defined as legitimated leadership (p. 593). Hegemony also represents “political control” and requires a “combination of legitimacy and self-interest; rule based on sheer force …, threat of force”, and the acquiescence of allies and subject states” (Lebow & Kelly, 2001, p. 595). This definition thus asserts that control, coercion and the acquiescence of other nation-states, be it explicit or otherwise, are central facets of US global leadership and power. Accordingly, US Hegemony is legitimized and ultimately defended by military, cultural, political and economic forms of control and influences (Walt, 2006, p.229-232). But does US hegemony necessarily take the form of US imperialism? To be an imperial power is to “exercise extensive formal control over territories and peoples beyond its own borders.” (Watts, 2011) For Paul Schroeder (2009), imperial ambition is inextricably linked with empire-building insofar as “the essence of empire lies in the possession and exercise of political control over a foreign community” (p. 63). It is persuasive that the US does exercise informal control beyond its borders. It would be near impossible for it not to do so given its preeminent position; however, political control and political control with imperial ambitions resulting in the creation of empire remain two different things. It is also important to note that although the US may have exercised imperial authority seen in the annexation of the Philippines and the Hawaiian Islands in the past, the contemporary period can arguably be distinguished from any such legacy. In order to examine the nature of contemporary US dominance, this essay locates the current debate concerning US hegemony and imperialism in the time period following the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s to the present. Arguably, it was in the early 1990s when the US achieved unipolarity and unprecedented power (Lebow & Kelly, 2001, p. 605). In a sense this era of “triumphalism” and “self-delusion” continues to define current US foreign policy throughout the world (Chomsky, 2011). However, as will be argued throughout this essay, US hegemony has been occasioned by a mixture of objectives, not always of an imperialist nature.¶ The end of the Cold War presented the US with a preponderant military standing that could no longer be challenged by the erstwhile security threat of the Soviet Union (Chomsky, 2011). Surprisingly, the following period did not result in the contraction of US military strength. So perhaps the absence of a clear rival to US hegemony provided an opening for the US to exploit coercive “leadership” and control through its military, particularly in resource-rich nations such as Iraq. The Bush Doctrine of pre-emptive war, seen utilized to disastrous effect in Iraq and Afghanistan, was undeniably interventionist, but it is questionable whether or not it was instigated to further US interests for imperial objectives. Arguably, the US pursued primarily ideological and self-interested security objectives within these spheres. Nor were they simply missions of US hubris and altruism aiming to bring democratization, freedom and justice to Afghans and Iraqis as espoused by both the Bush and Obama Administrations (Harris, 2008, p. 47). The protracted occupations represented an exercise of extensive formal control over Iraq and Afghanistan; however, the US did so at great human and economic cost, estimated at $4.4 trillion and counting (Chomsky, 2011). If there were economic or strategic gains to be made in Afghanistan and Iraq then the current volatility witnessed in these countries suggests that any further opportunities have since been extinguished. It is unlikely that the US would risk international embarrassment on an economic or “ideological commitment to neoliberal market solutions” when the risks far outweighed the rewards (Harris, 2008, p. 49). The truth is far less abstract and increasingly ugly. The staged withdrawal from Afghanistan and the potential re-deployment back into Iraq (to potentially combat ISIS) suggests that the US is lost in relation to how it meets challenges to its imagined role as global hegemon. The fiasco in Iraq for the US highlights its downturn relative to the rise in Chinese and Russian global ambitions and influence in other spheres. It is unlikely that the US will be able to salvage international credibility in the region as primary objectives in Iraq and Afghanistan revolving around nation-building and an exit strategy remain improbable (Harris, 2008, p. 49).¶ The US military is a critical measure or indicator of American hegemony, but its relationship with allies through relationships and pacts makes the situation more complicated. The US military is not only reliant on unilateral or coalition-led force, as seen in Iraq, but also it may use multilateral force to control, coerce and acquiesce allied nations in a particular cause. Incidentally, it was a US-led North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) coalition that enlisted international support for the Afghanistan incursion and subsequent occupation. According to Chomsky (2011), NATO “has become a global intervention force under US command” for the maintenance of US hegemonic power. Although numerous historical examples throughout the Cold War period and thereafter reinforce Chomsky’s claims, the NATO alliance almost fragmented in the face of Russian aggression in Ukraine. European partner nations within NATO are less willing to commit necessary resources to keep NATO viable as a multilateral organization dedicated to Europe’s defence and the broader stability of the West’s interests. Moreover, influential European members find themselves compromised by their energy dependency on Russia and by the logistics by which these resources come (Lewis & Roberts, 2014). It will be interesting to see whether European disregard for NATO will translate into the US making NATO a defunct organisation by downsizing itself from Europe’s defence into the future. The US may not see the point in continuing the NATO venture when it no longer serves its historical purpose of promoting US interests and defending its hegemony. Nevertheless, the US military is a global entity and NATO/Europe is not its sole focus currently. The US has key alliances and vested interests on the Pacific Rim. The existence of a US “Asian-centric grand strategy” – shifting US power and influence into Asia, particularly through its military – is currently resulting in the exercise of both formal and informal US control within Asian countries such as Japan and Korea (Jentleson, 2010, p. 368). Whether it be through bilateral alliances (such as US-Japan, US-South Korea) or through multilateral defense agreements (ANZUS), it is persuasive that US hegemony is seen as beneficial and stabilizing for these countries. This presence has translated into a US “empire of [military] bases” within Japan, South Korea, and even Australia (Shaplen & Laney, 2007, p. 82-97). Although the US military’s basing of its forces in foreign lands could be viewed as being akin to imperialism, and the historical legacy of US forces have been met with uneasiness, it is unlikely that these host nations will be willing to free themselves of the US military presence in the light of contemporary Chinese border disputes in their immediate vicinity. In a real sense, US military objectives, in relation to its allies, may often serve mutual rather than imperial interests.¶ The bilateral and multilateral recruitment of allied nations to the US is not exclusively tied to the military as an appendage of US hegemony. Moreover, the US is now looking to depart from “hard” power through military unilateralism in an attempt to “legitimize and universalize its interests” through international organizations, as it had previously done to great effect (Foot, Macfarlane & Mastanduno, 2003, p. 4). The unilateral experiment, underpinned by the Bush Doctrine, now seems to have given way to Obama-fashioned “soft power”: aiming at restoring global confidence in the US, whilst maintaining US “preponderance and prominence” in the United Nations (Foot et al., 2003, p. 4). According to Joseph Nye (2010), “soft” power is the ability to attract rather than to coerce (p. 9). It is the cultural attractiveness of the US, more so when engaged with the UN and espousing democratization, freedom and justice as the key to peace and prosperity, which best serves its hegemonic interests (Pimentel, 2014). But has previous damage done to US cultural hegemony as consequence of unilateralism irreconcilably undermined President Obama’s present-day attempts at reinstating US ideological and strategic influence. The current trend suggests that the US’ influence, particularly within the UN, has declined when using the Security Council as a barometer of US political and cultural hegemony. The ability of China and Russia to “double veto” in the Security Council does suggest that the US’ ability to control and coerce on a multilateral platform has reduced (MacFarquhar & Shadid, 2012). During the 1990s, after the breakup of the Soviet Union, the US enjoyed cultural dominance over the United Nations and the Security Council. More recently, however, Obama’s Administration is being consistently out-manoeuvred by geopolitical eventualities and the Sino-Russian bloc within the SC.¶ Although it may be argued that US military, cultural and political hegemony may be becoming increasingly toothless, the US still coerces and influences, to varying degrees, through the preeminent position of its economy on the world stage. No region has felt this more forcibly than Latin America. US economic meddling seen through the Washington Consensus of the late 1980s did result in a form of US imperialism (World Health Organization, n.d.). The neoliberal Washington Consensus, built on rethinking the relationship between government and the economy and emphasizing international macroeconomic stability, has left the current Obama administration with daunting challenges concerning its future relationship with Latin American countries (Lowenthal, 2009, p. 3-14). The WC provided the US with the ideological opportunity to exercise extensive informal control over certain South American governments and markets to meet its own ends in securing raw materials. This course of action resulted in an enduring legacy of US economic and military meddling; the installing of “puppet” governments; “exploitation …, marginalization …, exclusion” and an “accumulation of capital” for the US (Dello Buono, 2011, p. 155). It is unlikely that Latin American countries affected by US economic imperialism in the past will quickly forget mistreatment; however, current signs suggest the US is pursuing engagement of a Pan-American variety. President Obama needs the assistance of Latin America on a number of contentious political issues concerning human migration, narcotics/arms trafficking and trade concerning energy (Lowenthal, 2009, p. 4). Therefore, it seems as though the US imperial prerogative has been replaced by deepening dialogue, mutual understanding and trade benefits. The US is currently also more preoccupied with domestic duties rather than pursuing the expansion of its hegemony further into Latin America. Chomsky (2011) professes that “South America has been lost” and that “if the US could not control Latin America, it could not expect to achieve a successful order elsewhere in the world.” It is thus unlikely that US hegemony, in the modern Obama period, could similarly assert itself upon Latin America as it once did during the Washington Consensus, nor would it benefit to do so, as the region is becoming increasingly more powerful, assertive and economically viable in its own right. The US has thus wisely and practically abandoned its former imperialist proclivities in Latin America in lieu of bilateral and multilateral trade initiatives and incentives.¶ In balance, although US hegemony has been responsible – indirectly or otherwise – for exploitation and coercion in Latin America and elsewhere throughout the world, it has also contributed greatly to the phenomenon of globalization in the forms of mass media, information technology and online financialization (Baylis, Smith & Owens, 2014, p. 393). But does globalization correspond directly with US hegemony in the contemporary period? It is undeniable that as the world’s largest economy, the US stands to benefit from the globalization and financialization of capitalism. Nevertheless, globalization has arguably tended to “level the playing field” and opened further trade opportunities for all those who can capitalize on the technological innovation (Callari, 2010, p. 213). The presence of other major actors, such as transnational corporations (TNCs) and non-government organizations (NGOs), suggests that the global market is becoming increasingly independent from state objectives (Baylis et al., 2014, p. 111). Conversely, globalization has seemingly expanded beyond the control of US cultural, political and economic formal and informal authority – recent suspected foreign state-sponsored “hacking” of US Government websites highlights the challenges that globalization present regarding to state-control and privacy. For instance, the leaking of sensitive US Government documentats through WikiLeaks, also through America’s own National Security Agency, suggests that the US does not ultimately act as gatekeeper over the globalization of information and communication (Stelzer, 2013). That is not to say that the US is not vying to maintain a degree of control and leadership in regard to the communication innovation and subsequent opportunities. In response to such challenges, the Obama administration formed the International Strategy for Cyberspace. According to President Obama, the ISC will “oppose those who would seek to disrupt networks and systems, dissuading and deterring malicious actors, and reserving the right to defend these vital national assets as necessary and appropriate” (Nakashima, 2011). It is undeniable that the US will continue to profit in most areas from the globalization process, especially relating to electronic trade opportunities and the finance sector. However, to suggest that globalization is ultimately an instrument of US hegemony – or imperialism – is implausible due to the sheer complexity and global diversity of the phenomenon. Undoubtedly, however, the US is a preeminent global player in capitalizing on the processes of globalization.¶ In conclusion, the hegemony of the United States in the contemporary world does not amount to actual imperialism by intention, effect or disguise. Rather, the US proves itself prepared to exercise military hegemony increasingly in concert with its allies, consistent with its ideological and security interests whilst maintaining its important role as a global economic power. It is less concerned with being a policing power in the global community, especially under Obama’s Presidency and after broader failures seen in Iraq and offset by increasing Chinese military strength and capability. Further, it has had to accept less diplomatic influence on the world stage vis-a-vis China and Russia. More recently, the US exercises its hegemony, not in an imperialist way, but rather in an adhoc manner, according to emerging objectives of a security or ideological nature in concert with its sometimes or regular partners and coalitions in various spheres. Its interests and objectives vary across the Middle East, Asia/Pacific and Europe as does its modus operandi. It is hard to see that the US operates with imperialist designs and methods in the modern world; rather, Obama-styled foreign policy directives suggest that the US, instead, tries to deal with the world as it finds it in vying to preserve both its preponderance of power and relative world peace through Pax Americana.

#### Critique cannot rely simply on withdrawal but must have a praxis to engage the state to succeed – not doing so cedes the political to the right

**Mouffe 9** (CHANTAL MOUFFE, prominent Belgian political theorist, “The Importance of Engaging the State”, 2009 pages 233~237, DOA: 7/14/17)//AK

In both Hardt and Negri, and Virno, there is therefore emphasis upon ‘**critique as withdrawal’**. They all call for the development of a non-state public sphere. They call for self-organisation, experimentation, non-representative and extra-parliamentary politics. They **~~see~~ [think of] forms of traditional representative politics as inherently oppressive. So they do not seek to engage with them, in order to challenge them.** They seek to get rid of them altogether. **This disengagement is**, **for** such influential personalities in **radical politics** today, **the key to every political position** in the world. The Multitude must recognise imperial sovereignty itself as the enemy and discover adequate means of subverting its power. Whereas in the disciplinary era I spoke about earlier, sabotage was the fundamental form of political resistance, these authors claim that, today, it should be desertion. It is indeed through desertion, through the evacuation of the places of power, that they think that battles against Empire might be won. Desertion and exodus are, for these important thinkers, a powerful form of class struggle against imperial postmodernity. According to Hardt and Negri, and Virno, radical politics in the past was dominated by the notion of ‘the people’. This was, according to them, a unity, acting with one will. And this unity is linked to the existence of the state. The Multitude, on the contrary, shuns political unity. It is not representable because it is an active self-organising agent that can never achieve the status of a juridical personage. It can never converge in a general will, because the present globalisation of capital and workers’ struggles will not permit this. It is anti-state and anti-popular. Hardt and Negri claim that the Multitude cannot be conceived any more in terms of a sovereign authority that is representative of the people. They therefore argue that new forms of politics, which are non-representative, are needed. They advocate a **withdrawal from existing institutions**. This is something which **characterises much of radical politics today. The emphasis is not upon challenging the state. Radical politics today** **is often characterised by** a mood, **a sense** and a feeling, **that the state itself is inherently the problem.** Critique as engagement I will now turn to presenting the way I envisage the form of social criticism best suited to radical politics today. I agree with Hardt and Negri that it is important to understand the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism. But I consider that the dynamics of this transition is better apprehended within the framework of the approach outlined in the book Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001). What I want to stress is that many factors have contributed to this transition from Fordism to post-Fordism, and that it is necessary to recognise its complex nature. My problem with Hardt and Negri’s view is that, by putting so much emphasis on the workers’ struggles, they tend to see this transition as if it was driven by one single logic: the workers’ resistance to the forces of capitalism in the post-Fordist era. They put too much emphasis upon immaterial labour. In their view, capitalism can only be reactive and they refuse to accept the creative role played both by capital and by labour. To put it another way, they deny the positive role of political struggle. In Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics we use the word ‘hegemony’ to describe the way in which meaning is given to institutions or practices: for example, the way in which a given institution or practice is defined as ‘oppressive to women’, ‘racist’ or ‘environmentally destructive’. We also point out that every hegemonic order is therefore susceptible to being challenged by counter-hegemonic practices – feminist, anti-racist, environmentalist, for example. This is illustrated by the plethora of new social movements which presently exist in radical politics today (Christian, anti-war, counter-globalisation, Muslim, and so on). Clearly not all of these are workers’ struggles. In their various ways they have nevertheless attempted to influence and have influenced a new hegemonic order. This means that when we talk about ‘the political’, we do not lose sight of the ever present possibility of heterogeneity and antagonism within society. There are many different ways of being antagonistic to a dominant order in a heterogeneous society – it need not only refer to the workers’ struggles. I submit that it is necessary to introduce this hegemonic dimension when one envisages the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism. This means abandoning the view that a single logic (workers’ struggles) is at work in the evolution of the work process; as well as acknowledging the pro-active role played by capital. In order to do this we can find interesting insights in the work of Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello who, in their book The New Spirit of Capitalism (2005), bring to light the way in which capitalists manage to use the demands for autonomy of the new movements that developed in the 1960s, harnessing them in the development of the post-Fordist networked economy and transforming them into new forms of control. They use the term ‘artistic critique’ to refer to how the strategies of the counter-culture (the search for authenticity, the ideal of selfmanagement and the anti-hierarchical exigency) were used to promote the conditions required by the new mode of capitalist regulation, replacing the disciplinary framework characteristic of the Fordist period. From my point of view, what is interesting in this approach is that it shows how an important dimension of the transition from Fordism to post- Fordism involves rearticulating existing discourses and practices in new ways. It allows us to visualise the transition from Fordism to post- Fordism in terms of a hegemonic intervention. To be sure, Boltanski and Chiapello never use this vocabulary, but their analysis is a clear example of what Gramsci called ‘hegemony through neutralisation’ or ‘passive revolution’. This refers to a situation where demands which challenge the hegemonic order are recuperated by the existing system, which is achieved by satisfying them in a way that neutralises their subversive potential. When we apprehend the transition from Fordism to post- Fordism within such a framework, we can understand it as a hegemonic move by capital to re-establish its leading role and restore its challenged legitimacy. We did not witness a revolution, in Marx’s sense of the term. Rather, there have been many different interventions, challenging dominant hegemonic practices. It is clear that, **once we envisage social reality in terms of ‘hegemonic’** and ‘counter-hegemonic’ **practices, radical politics is not about withdrawing completely** from existing institutions. Rather, **we have no other choice but to engage with hegemonic practices, in order to challenge them.** This is crucial; **otherwise** we will be faced with a chaotic situation. Moreover, if we do not engage with and challenge the existing order, if we instead choose to simply escape the state completely, **we leave the door open for others to take control** of systems of authority and regulation. Indeed there are many historical (and not so historical) examples of this. When the Left shows little interest, **Right-wing and authoritarian groups are only too happy to take over the state.** The strategy of exodus could be seen as the reformulation of the idea of communism, as it was found in Marx. There are many points in common between the two perspectives. To be sure, for Hardt and Negri it is no longer the proletariat, but the Multitude which is the privileged political subject. But in both cases the state is seen as a monolithic apparatus of domination that cannot be transformed. It has to ‘wither away’ in order to leave room for a reconciled society beyond law, power and sovereignty. In reality, as I’ve already noted, others are often perfectly willing to take control. If my approach – supporting new social movements and counterhegemonic practices – has been called ‘post-Marxist’ by many, it is precisely because I have challenged the very possibility of such a reconciled society. To acknowledge the ever present possibility of antagonism to the existing order implies recognising that heterogeneity cannot be eliminated. As far as politics is concerned, this means the need to envisage it in terms of a hegemonic struggle between conflicting hegemonic projects attempting to incarnate the universal and to define the symbolic parameters of social life. A successful hegemony fixes the meaning of institutions and social practices and defines the ‘common sense’ through which a given conception of reality is established. However, such a result is always contingent, precarious and susceptible to being challenged by counter-hegemonic interventions. Politics always takes place in a field criss-crossed by antagonisms. A properly political intervention is always one that engages with a certain aspect of the existing hegemony. It can never be merely oppositional or conceived as desertion, because it aims to challenge the existing order, so that it may reidentify and feel more comfortable with that order. **Another important aspect of a hegemonic politics lies in establishing linkages** between various demands (such as environmentalists, feminists, anti-racist groups), so as **to** transform them into claims that will **challenge the existing structure of power relations. This is a further reason why critique involves engagement, rather than disengagement.** It is clear that the different demands that exist in our societies are often in conflict with each other. This is why they need to be articulated politically, which obviously involves the creation of a collective will, a ‘we’. This, in turn, requires the determination of a ‘them’. This obvious and simple point is missed by the various advocates of the Multitude. For they seem to believe that the Multitude possesses a natural unity which does not need political articulation. Hardt and Negri see ‘the People’ as homogeneous and expressed in a unitary general will, rather than divided by different political conflicts. Counter-hegemonic practices, by contrast, do not eliminate differences. Rather, they are what could be called an ‘ensemble of differences’, all coming together, only at a given moment, against a common adversary. Such as when different groups from many backgrounds come together to protest against a war perpetuated by a state, or when environmentalists, feminists, anti-racists and others come together to challenge dominant models of development and progress. In these cases, the adversary cannot be defined in broad general terms like ‘Empire’, or for that matter ‘Capitalism’. It is instead contingent upon the particular circumstances in question – the specific states, international institutions or governmental practices that are to be challenged. Put another way, the construction of political demands is dependent upon the specific relations of power that need to be targeted and transformed, in order to create the conditions for a new hegemony. This is clearly not an exodus from politics. **It is not ‘critique as withdrawal’, but ‘critique as engagement’.** It is a ‘war of position’ that needs to be launched, often across a range of sites, involving the coming together of a range of interests. This can only be done by establishing links between social movements, political parties and trade unions, for example. The aim is to create a common bond and collective will, engaging with a wide range of sites, and often institutions, with the aim of transforming them. This, in my view, is how we should conceive the nature of radical politics.

#### Our argument is not that the 1ac wasn’t authentic or radical enough, but rather that this model of debate-as-resistance-politics is a palliative. They sell out debate’s potential to generate positive agendas for change by making the ballot about affirming their voices as such—our counter-role of the ballot is to refuse those terms as a starting point to reclaim the political

Reed 2013 – professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania, specializing in race and American politics. He has taught at Yale, Northwestern and the New School for Social Research. An expert on racial and economic inequality, he is a founding member of the Labor Party and a frequent contributor to The Nation (2/25, Adolph, Nonsite, “Django Unchained, or, The Help: How “Cultural Politics” Is Worse Than No Politics at All, and Why”, http://nonsite.org/feature/django-unchained-or-the-help-how-cultural-politics-is-worse-than-no-politics-at-all-and-why)

In addition to knee-jerk anti-statism, the objection that the slaves freed themselves, as it shows up in favorable comparison of Django Unchained to Lincoln, stems from a racial pietism that issued from the unholy union of cultural studies and black studies in the university. More than twenty years of “resistance” studies that find again and again, at this point ritualistically, that oppressed people have and express agency have contributed to undermining the idea of politics as a discrete sphere of activity directed toward the outward-looking project of affecting the social order, most effectively through creating, challenging or redefining institutions that anchor collective action with the objective of developing and wielding power. Instead, the notion has been largely evacuated of specific content at all. “Politics” can refer to whatever one wants it to; all that’s required is an act of will in making a claim. The fact that there has been no serious left presence with any political capacity in this country for at least a generation has exacerbated this problem. In the absence of dynamic movements that cohere around affirmative visions for making the society better, on the order of, say, Franklin Roosevelt’s 1944 “Second Bill of Rights,” and that organize and agitate around programs instrumental to pursuit of such visions, what remains is the fossil record of past movements—the still photo legacies of their public events, postures, and outcomes. Over time, the idea that a “left” is defined by commitment to a vision of social transformation and substantive program for realizing it has receded from cultural memory. Being on the left has become instead a posture, an identity, utterly disconnected from any specific practical commitments. Thus star Maggie Gyllenhaal and director Daniel Barnz defended themselves against complaints about their complicity in the hideously anti-union propaganda film Won’t Back Down by adducing their identities as progressives. Gyllenhaal insisted that the movie couldn’t be anti-union because “There’s no world in which I would ever, EVER make an anti-union movie. My parents are left of Trotsky.”15 Barnz took a similar tack: “I’m a liberal Democrat, very pro-union, a member of two unions. I marched with my union a couple of years ago when we were on strike.”16 And Kathryn Bigelow similarly has countered criticism that her Zero Dark Thirty justifies torture and American militarism more broadly by invoking her identity as “a lifelong pacifist.”17 Being a progressive is now more a matter of how one thinks about oneself than what one stands for or does in the world. The best that can be said for that perspective is that it registers acquiescence in defeat. It amounts to an effort to salvage an idea of a left by reformulating it as a sensibility within neoliberalism rather than a challenge to it. Gyllenhaal, Barnz, and Bigelow exemplify the power of ideology as a mechanism that harmonizes the principles one likes to believe one holds with what advances one’s material interests; they also attest to the fact that the transmutation of leftism into pure self-image exponentially increases the potential power of that function of ideology. Upton Sinclair’s quip—“It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends upon his not understanding it”—takes on all the more force when applied not merely to actions or interpretations of an external world but to devoutly savored self-perception as well. That left political imagination now operates unself-consciously within the practical ontology of neoliberalism is also the most important lesson to be drawn from progressives’ discussion of Django Unchained and, especially, the move to compare it with Lincoln. Jon Wiener, writing in The Nation, renders the following comparisons: “In Spielberg’s film, the leading black female character is a humble seamstress in the White House whose eyes fill with tears of gratitude when Congress votes to abolish slavery. In Tarantino’s film, the leading female character (Kerry Washington) is a defiant slave who has been branded on the face as a punishment for running away, and is forced—by Leonardo DiCaprio—to work as a prostitute. In Spielberg’s film, old white men make history, and black people thank them for giving them their freedom. In Tarantino’s, a black gunslinger goes after the white slavemaster with homicidal vengeance.”18 Never mind that, for what it’s worth, Kerry Washington’s character, as she actually appears in the film, is mainly a cipher, a simpering damsel in distress more reminiscent of Fay Wray in the original King Kong than heroines of the blaxploitation era’s eponymous vehicles Coffy or Foxy Brown. More problematically, Wiener’s juxtapositions reproduce the elevation of private, voluntarist action as a politics—somehow more truly true or authentic, or at least more appealing emotionally—over the machinations of government and institutional actors. That is a default presumption of the identitarian/culturalist left and is also a cornerstone of neoliberalism’s practical ontology. In an essay on Lincoln published a month earlier, Wiener identifies as the central failing of the film its dedication “to the proposition that Lincoln freed the slaves” and concludes, after considerable meandering and nit-picking ambivalence that brings the term pettifoggery to mind, “slavery died as a result of the actions of former slaves.”19 This either/or construct is both historically false and wrong-headed, and it is especially surprising that a professional historian like Wiener embraces it. The claim that slaves’ actions were responsible for the death of slavery is not only inaccurate; it is a pointless and counterproductive misrepresentation. What purpose is served by denying the significance of the four years of war and actions of the national government of the United States in ending slavery? Besides, it was indeed the Thirteenth Amendment that abolished slavery. Slaves’ mass departure from plantations was self-emancipation, by definition. Their doing so weakened the southern economy and undermined the secessionists’ capacity to fight, and the related infusion of black troops into the Union army provided a tremendous lift both on the battlefield and for northern morale. How does noting that proximity of Union troops greatly emboldened that self-emancipation diminish the import of their actions? But it was nonetheless the Thirteenth Amendment that finally outlawed slavery once and for all in the United States and provided a legal basis for preempting efforts to reinstate it in effect. Moreover, for all the debate concerning Lincoln’s motives, the sincerity of his commitment to emancipation, and his personal views of blacks, and notwithstanding its technical limits with respect to enforceability, the Emancipation Proclamation emboldened black people, slave and free, and encouraged all slavery’s opponents. And, as Wiener notes himself, the proclamation tied the war explicitly to the elimination of slavery as a system. Firefly, or The Road to Serfdom So why is a tale about a manumitted slave/homicidal black gunslinger more palatable to a contemporary leftoid sensibility than either a similarly cartoonish one about black maids and their white employers or one that thematizes Lincoln’s effort to push the Thirteenth Amendment through the House of Representatives? The answer is, to quote the saccharine 1970s ballad, “Feelings, nothing more than feelings.” Wiener’s juxtapositions reflect the political common sense that gives pride of place to demonstrations of respect for the “voices” of the oppressed and recognition of their suffering, agency, and accomplishments. That common sense informs the proposition that providing inspiration has social or political significance. But it equally shapes the generic human-interest “message” of films like The Help that represent injustice as an issue of human relations—the alchemy that promises to reconcile social justice and capitalist class power as a win/win for everyone by means of attitude adjustments and deepened mutual understanding. That common sense underwrites the tendency to reduce the past to a storehouse of encouraging post-it messages for the present. It must, because the presumption that the crucial stakes of political action concern recognition and respect for the oppressed’s voices is a presentist view, and mining the past to reinforce it requires anachronism. The large struggles against slavery and Jim Crow were directed toward altering structured patterns of social relations anchored in law and state power, but stories of that sort are incompatible with both global marketing imperatives and the ideological predilections of neoliberalism and its identitarian loyal opposition. One can only shudder at the prospect of how Gillo Pontecorvo’s 1966 film, The Battle of Algiers, or Costa-Gavras’s State of Siege (1972) would be remade today. (Guy Ritchie’s and Madonna’s execrable 2002 remake of Lina Wertmüller’s 1974 film Swept Away may provide a clue; their abomination completely erases the original film’s complex class and political content and replaces it with a banal—aka “universal”—story of an encounter between an older woman and a younger man, while at the same time meticulously, almost eerily, reproducing, scene by scene, the visual structure of Wertmüller’s film.) Particularly as those messages strive for “universality” as well as inspiration, their least common denominator tends toward the generic story of individual triumph over adversity. But the imagery of the individual overcoming odds to achieve fame, success, or recognition also maps onto the fantasy of limitless upward mobility for enterprising and persistent individuals who persevere and remain true to their dreams. As such, it is neoliberalism’s version of an ideal of social justice, legitimizing both success and failure as products of individual character. When combined with a multiculturalist rhetoric of “difference” that reifies as autonomous cultures—in effect racializes—what are actually contingent modes of life reproduced by structural inequalities, this fantasy crowds inequality as a metric of injustice out of the picture entirely. This accounts for the popularity of reactionary dreck like Beasts of the Southern Wild among people who should know better. The denizens of the Bathtub actively, even militantly, choose their poverty and cherish it and should be respected and appreciated for doing so. But no one ever supposed that Leni Riefenstahl was on the left. The tale type of individual overcoming has become a script into which the great social struggles of the last century and a half have commonly been reformulated to fit the requirements of a wan, gestural multiculturalism. Those movements have been condensed into the personae of Great Men and Great Women—Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, George Washington Carver, Martin Luther King, Jr., Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, Ella Baker, Fannie Lou Hamer and others—who seem to have changed the society apparently by virtue of manifesting their own greatness. The different jacket photos adorning the 1982 and 1999 editions of Doug McAdam’s well known sociological study of the civil rights movement, Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970, exemplify the shift. The first edition’s cover was a photo of an anonymous group of marching protesters; the second edition featured the (staged) photo—made iconic by its use in an Apple advertising campaign—of a dignified Rosa Parks sitting alone on the front seat of a bus looking pensively out the window.20 Ironically, the scholarly turn away from organizations and institutional processes to valorize instead the local and everyday dimensions of those movements may have exacerbated this tendency by encouraging a focus on previously unrecognized individual figures and celebrating their lives and “contributions.” Rather than challenging the presumption that consequential social change is made by the will of extraordinary individuals, however, this scholarship in effect validates it by inflating the currency of Greatness so much that it can be found any and everywhere. Giving props to the unrecognized or underappreciated has become a feature particularly of that scholarship that defines scholarly production as a terrain of political action in itself and aspires to the function of the “public intellectual.” A perusal of the rosters of African American History Month and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day speakers at any random sample of colleges and universities attests to how closely this scholar/activist turn harmonizes with the reductionist individualism of prosperity religion and the varieties of latter-day mind cure through which much of the professional-managerial stratum of all races, genders, and sexual orientations, narrates its understandings of the world.