## 1

#### A. Interpretation: the affirmative may only garner offense from the hypothetical enactment of the resolution.

#### Violation: THEY DON’T MEET B/C they don’t defend a hypothetical enactment of the resolutoon.

#### *\*GO SLOW\** Our interp is compatible with them reading a TVA about any number of racial issues related to patents (biopiracy, medical experimentation on POC) which solves their racism offense and our offense bc they defend a plan.

#### This demonstrates that it’s possible to be topical while also focusing on anti-black racism.

#### B. Our Offense

#### 1. Limits- post-fiat impacts are limited enough based on the plan text but allowing performative and pre-fiat impacts opens the floodgates – there’s an infinite number of justifications behind the 1AC or performative aspects of they could claim to garner offense from. No part of the 1AC warranted why their performance was a good thing or how they could garner offense which especially proves our argument

#### 2. Causality – debating the resolution forces the affirmative to defend a cause and effect relationship, the state doing x results in y. Non topical affs establish their own barometer “I think x is good for me” that aren’t negateable. Only the neg promotes switch side debate

#### 3. Exclusionary rule- you can’t vote on the case outweighs T because lack of preparation prevents rigorous testing of the AC claims. If we win fairness we don’t have to “outweigh” other impacts

#### 4. Debate is a game: forced winner/loser, competitive norms, and the tournament invite prove. Alternative impacts like activism or education can be pursued in other forums. This makes fairness the most important impact

#### 5. Preparation- repacking the topic gives the aff a huge edge, they can prepare for 6 months on an issue that catches us by surprise. Preparation is better than thinking on your feet- research demonstrates pedagogical humility and research skills are the only portable debate training

#### 6. Limits- there area finite amount of government restrictions, but an infinite number of non topical affirmatives. Consider this our “library disad”- not debating the topic allows someone to specialize in one area of the library for 4 years giving them a huge edge over people who switch research focus ever 2 months.

#### 7. Causality- debating the resolution forces the affirmative to defend a cause and effect relationship, the state doing x results in y. Non topical affs establish their own barometer “I think x is good for me” that aren’t negateable. Only the neg promotes switch side debate

#### 8. Drop the debater on T – the round is already skewed from the beginning because their advocacy excluded by ability to generate NC offense– letting them sever doesn’t solve any of the abuse

#### Theory is an issue of competing interpretations because reasonability invites arbitrary judge intervention based on preference rather than argumentation and encourages a race to the bottom in which debaters will exploit a judge’s tolerance for questionable argumentation.

## 2

#### Exclusive racial focus on the US masks capitalism and prevents unified struggle

**Gassama 99** – (1999, Ibrahim, JD, Associate Professor, University of Oregon School of Law, “TRANSNATIONAL CRITICAL RACE SCHOLARSHIP: TRANSCENDING ETHNIC AND NATIONAL CHAUVINISM IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION,” Michigan Journal of Race & Law, Vol. 5:133)

Today, as we are reminded time and again, the United States is the world's sole remaining superpower with a superheated economy that is the envy of the rest of the world. Yet, with less than five percent of the world's population, the United States unapologetically consumes far more than a proportionate share of the world's resources. '9 The American economy, largely dependent on an apparently irrepressible demand for cheaply made foreign consumer goods, propels along as the twentieth century comes to an end even as most of the rest of the world-Europe, Japan, China, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America--struggles to stay afloat.2 American economic supremacy is not new and neither are some of the governmental policies and practices that proceed along with it: pitifully small amounts of economic assistance to the world's poor, an unbridled military-industial complex that leads the world in the export of arms, and a propensity to employ military force against foreigners 22 who challenge its dominance. There are, of course, domestic parallels to all these examples of fundamental injustices and these, perhaps understandably, dominate the thinking of most American activists and scholars engaged in antisubordination work. Nonetheless, it appears from my particular vantage point23 that significant within every oppressed community in the United States is a perspective that could be summarized as follows: if the United States is going to be the world's principal enforcer of a global regime of inequality, our members should at least get equal opportunity to participate in this imperial enterprise whether it is to command military forces in Iraq or Korea; **to run C.I.A. stations in Paris or Kuala Lumpur**; to negotiate drilling rights in Ogoniland or Baku; to deny visas to "economic immigrants" in Bangkok or Freetown; or to win scholarships endowed by some dead imperialists. This is what I observe as the many "firsts" that are celebrated and we dutifully keep count of the numbers of representatives of this or that excluded community recruited into higher levels in the machinery of global supremacy. The fights over which disadvantaged groups get seats at the imperial dinner table, or get to taste some of the dribblings from it, usually occur without much heed paid to the broader transnational picture. The relative absence of a transnational or global perspective in the unfolding of many of these "domestic" struggles for justice is the focus of my comment on Eric Yamamoto's work. This absence is rarely challenged. Indeed, the attitude of neglect is so pervasive, it often operates unacknowledged.24 It is testimony to the enormous strength of the myth of American national exceptionalism that even those acutely and historically oppressed by its operation adopt its precepts uncritically, and actually nurture it in their struggles. At its core are the twin notions of fundamental faith, both in the integrity and sufficiency of the "American" nation and in the mythology of social progress. Great care is taken among mainstream activists not to destabilize the nation, or appear to do so, even at the expense of social justice.

#### Our critique independently outweighs the case - neoliberalism causes extinction and massive social inequalities – the affs single issue legalistic solution is the exact kind of politics neolib wants us to engage in so the root cause goes unquestioned. Farbod 15

( Faramarz Farbod , PhD Candidate @ Rutgers, Prof @ Moravian College, Monthly Review, http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2015/farbod020615.html, 6-2)

Global capitalism is the 800-pound gorilla. The twin ecological and economic crises, militarism, the rise of the surveillance state, and a dysfunctional political system can all be traced to its normal operations. We need a transformative politics from below that can challenge the fundamentals of capitalism instead of today's politics that is content to treat its symptoms. The problems we face are linked to each other and to the way a capitalist society operates. We must make an effort to understand its real character. The fundamental question of our time is whether we can go beyond a system that is ravaging the Earth and secure a future with dignity for life and respect for the planet. What has capitalism done to us lately? The best science tells us that this is a do-or-die moment. We are now in the midst of the 6th mass extinction in the planetary history with 150 to 200 species going extinct every day, a pace 1,000 times greater than the 'natural' extinction rate.1 The Earth has been warming rapidly since the 1970s with the 10 warmest years on record all occurring since 1998.2 The planet has already warmed by 0.85 degree Celsius since the industrial revolution 150 years ago. An increase of 2° Celsius is the limit of what the planet can take before major catastrophic consequences. Limiting global warming to 2°C requires reducing global emissions by 6% per year. However, global carbon emissions from fossil fuels increased by about 1.5 times between 1990 and 2008.3 Capitalism has also led to explosive social inequalities. The global economic landscape is littered with rising concentration of wealth, debt, distress, and immiseration caused by the austerity-pushing elites. Take the US. The richest 20 persons have as much wealth as the bottom 150 million.4 Since 1973, the hourly wages of workers have lagged behind worker productivity rates by more than 800%.5 It now takes the average family 47 years to make what a hedge fund manager makes in one hour.6 Just about a quarter of children under the age of 5 live in poverty.7 A majority of public school students are low-income.8 85% of workers feel stress on the job.9 Soon the only thing left of the American Dream will be a culture of hustling to survive. Take the global society. The world's billionaires control $7 trillion, a sum 77 times the debt owed by Greece to the European banks.10 The richest 80 possess more than the combined wealth of the bottom 50% of the global population (3.5 billion people).11 By 2016 the richest 1% will own a greater share of the global wealth than the rest of us combined.12 The top 200 global corporations wield twice the economic power of the bottom 80% of the global population.13 Instead of a global society capitalism is creating a global apartheid. What's the nature of the beast? Firstly, the "egotistical calculation" of commerce wins the day every time. Capital seeks maximum profitability as a matter of first priority. Evermore "accumulation of capital" is the system's bill of health; it is slowdowns or reversals that usher in crises and set off panic. Cancer-like hunger for endless growth is in the system's DNA and is what has set it on a tragic collision course with Nature, a finite category. Secondly, capitalism treats human labor as a cost. It therefore opposes labor capturing a fair share of the total economic value that it creates. Since labor stands for the majority and capital for a tiny minority, it follows that classism and class warfare are built into its DNA, which explains why the "middle class" is shrinking and its gains are never secure. Thirdly, private interests determine massive investments and make key decisions at the point of production guided by maximization of profits. That's why in the US the truck freight replaced the railroad freight, chemicals were used extensively in agriculture, public transport was gutted in favor of private cars, and big cars replaced small ones. What should political action aim for today? The political class has no good ideas about how to address the crises. One may even wonder whether it has a serious understanding of the system, or at least of ways to ameliorate its consequences. The range of solutions offered tends to be of a technical, legislative, or regulatory nature, promising at best temporary management of the deepening crises. The trajectory of the system, at any rate, precludes a return to its post-WWII regulatory phase. It's left to us as a society to think about what the real character of the system is, where we are going, and how we are going to deal with the trajectory of the system -- and act accordingly. The critical task ahead is to build a transformative politics capable of steering the system away from its destructive path. Given the system's DNA, such a politics from below must include efforts to challenge the system's fundamentals, namely, its private mode of decision-making about investments and about what and how to produce. Furthermore, it behooves us to heed the late environmentalist Barry Commoner's insistence on the efficacy of a strategy of prevention over a failed one of control or capture of pollutants. At a lecture in 1991, Commoner remarked: "Environmental pollution is an incurable disease; it can only be prevented"; and he proceeded to refer to "a law," namely: "if you don't put a pollutant in the environment it won't be there." What is nearly certain now is that without democratic control of wealth and social governance of the means of production, we will all be condemned to the labor of Sisyphus. Only we won't have to suffer for all eternity, as the degradation of life-enhancing natural and social systems will soon reach a point of no return**.**

#### The alternative is to affirm the model of the Communist Party – only party organizing can provide effective accountability mechanisms to correct chauvinist tendencies, educate and mobilize marginalized communities, and connect local struggles to a movement for global liberation.

Escalante, Philosophy @ UOregon, 18

[Alyson, M.A., is a Marxist-Leninist, Materialist Feminist and Anti-Imperialist activist. “PARTY ORGANIZING IN THE 21ST CENTURY” September 21st, 2018 <https://theforgenews.org/2018/09/21/party-organizing-in-the-21st-century/>] rVs

I would argue that within the base building movement, there is a move towards party organizing, but this trend has not always been explicitly theorized or forwarded within the movement. My goal in this essay is to argue that base building and dual power strategy can be best forwarded through party organizing, and that party organizing can allow this emerging movement to solidify into a powerful revolutionary socialist tendency in the United States. One of the crucial insights of the base building movement is that the current state of the left in the United States is one in which revolution is not currently possible. There exists very little popular support for socialist politics. A century of anticommunist propaganda has been extremely effective in convincing even the most oppressed and marginalized that communism has nothing to offer them. The base building emphasis on dual power responds directly to this insight. By building institutions which can meet people’s needs, we are able to concretely demonstrate that communists can offer the oppressed relief from the horrific conditions of capitalism. Base building strategy recognizes that actually doing the work to serve the people does infinitely more to create a socialist base of popular support than electing democratic socialist candidates or holding endless political education classes can ever hope to do. Dual power is about proving that we have something to offer the oppressed. The question, of course, remains: once we have built a base of popular support, what do we do next? If it turns out that establishing socialist institutions to meet people’s needs does in fact create sympathy towards the cause of communism, how can we mobilize that base? Put simply: in order to mobilize the base which base builders hope to create, we need to have already done the work of building a communist party. It is not enough to simply meet peoples needs. Rather, we must build the institutions of dual power in the name of communism. We must refuse covert front organizing and instead have a public face as a communist party. When we build tenants unions, serve the people programs, and other dual power projects, we must make it clear that we are organizing as communists, unified around a party, and are not content simply with establishing endless dual power organizations. We must be clear that our strategy is revolutionary and in order to make this clear we must adopt party organizing. By “party organizing” I mean an organizational strategy which adopts the party model. Such organizing focuses on building a party whose membership is formally unified around a party line determined by democratic centralist decision making. The party model creates internal methods for holding party members accountable, unifying party member action around democratically determined goals, and for educating party members in communist theory and praxis. A communist organization utilizing the party model works to build dual power institutions while simultaneously educating the communities they hope to serve. Organizations which adopt the party model focus on propagandizing around the need for revolutionary socialism. They function as the forefront of political organizing, empowering local communities to theorize their liberation through communist theory while organizing communities to literally fight for their liberation. A party is not simply a group of individuals doing work together, but is a formal organization unified in its fight against capitalism. Party organizing has much to offer the base building movement. By working in a unified party, base builders can ensure that local struggles are tied to and informed by a unified national and international strategy. While the most horrific manifestations of capitalism take on particular and unique form at the local level, we need to remember that our struggle is against a material base which functions not only at the national but at the international level. The formal structures provided by a democratic centralist party model allow individual locals to have a voice in open debate, but also allow for a unified strategy to emerge from democratic consensus. Furthermore, party organizing allows for local organizations and individual organizers to be held accountable for their actions. It allows criticism to function not as one independent group criticizing another independent group, but rather as comrades with a formal organizational unity working together to sharpen each others strategies and to help correct chauvinist ideas and actions. In the context of the socialist movement within the United States, such accountability is crucial. As a movement which operates within a settler colonial society, imperialist and colonial ideal frequently infect leftist organizing. Creating formal unity and party procedure for dealing with and correcting these ideas allows us to address these consistent problems within American socialist organizing. Having a formal party which unifies the various dual power projects being undertaken at the local level also allows for base builders to not simply meet peoples needs, but to pull them into the membership of the party as organizers themselves. The party model creates a means for sustained growth to occur by unifying organizers in a manner that allows for skills, strategies, and ideas to be shared with newer organizers. It also allows community members who have been served by dual power projects to take an active role in organizing by becoming party members and participating in the continued growth of base building strategy. It ensures that there are formal processes for educating communities in communist theory and praxis, and also enables them to act and organize in accordance with their own local conditions. We also must recognize that the current state of the base building movement precludes the possibility of such a national unified party in the present moment. Since base building strategy is being undertaken in a number of already established organizations, it is not likely that base builders would abandon these organizations in favor of founding a unified party. Additionally, it would not be strategic to immediately undertake such complete unification because it would mean abandoning the organizational contexts in which concrete gains are already being made and in which growth is currently occurring. What is important for base builders to focus on in the current moment is building dual power on a local level alongside building a national movement. This means aspiring towards the possibility of a unified party, while pursuing continued local growth. The movement within the Marxist Center network towards some form of unification is positive step in the right direction. The independent party emphasis within the Refoundation caucus should also be recognized as a positive approach. It is important for base builders to continue to explore the possibility of unification, and to maintain unification through a party model as a long term goal. In the meantime, individual base building organizations ought to adopt party models for their local organizing. Local organizations ought to be building dual power alongside recruitment into their organizations, education of community members in communist theory and praxis, and the establishment of armed and militant party cadres capable of defending dual power institutions from state terror. Dual power institutions must be unified openly and transparently around these organizations in order for them to operate as more than “red charities.” Serving the people means meeting their material needs while also educating and propagandizing. It means radicalizing, recruiting, and organizing. The party model remains the most useful method for achieving these ends. The use of the party model by local organizations allows base builders to gain popular support, and most importantly, to mobilize their base of popular support towards revolutionary ends, not simply towards the construction of a parallel economy which exists as an end in and of itself. It is my hope that we will see future unification of the various local base building organizations into a national party, but in the meantime we must push for party organizing at the local level. If local organizations adopt party organizing, it ought to become clear that a unified national party will have to be the long term goal of the base building movement. Many of the already existing organizations within the base building movement already operate according to these principles. I do not mean to suggest otherwise. Rather, my hope is to suggest that we ought to be explicit about the need for party organizing and emphasize the relationship between dual power and the party model. Doing so will make it clear that the base building movement is not pursuing a cooperative economy alongside capitalism, but is pursuing a revolutionary socialist strategy capable of fighting capitalism. The long term details of base building and dual power organizing will arise organically in response to the conditions the movement finds itself operating within. I hope that I have put forward a useful contribution to the discussion about base building organizing, and have demonstrated the need for party organizing in order to ensure that the base building tendency maintains a revolutionary orientation. The finer details of revolutionary strategy will be worked out over time and are not a good subject for public discussion. I strongly believe party organizing offers the best path for ensuring that such strategy will succeed. My goal here is not to dictate the only possible path forward but to open a conversation about how the base building movement will organize as it transitions from a loose network of individual organizations into a unified socialist tendency. These discussions and debates will be crucial to ensuring that this rapidly growing movement can succeed.

#### FW—The role of the ballot is to resist neoliberal ideology – filter negative arguments through an epistemological dismantling of neoliberalism.

HAY & ROSAMUND, PhDs, 2002 (Colin and Ben, Journal of European Public Policy Volume 9, Issue 2, 2002 p. 3-5)

The implicit supposition which seems to underlie much of the sceptical or second-wave literature seeking to expose the ‘myth’ or ‘delusion’ of globalisation, is that a rigorous empirical exercise in demystification will be sufficient to reverse the tide of ill-informed public policy made in the name of globalisation. Sadly, this has not proved to be the case. For **however convinced we might be by the empirical armoury mustered against the hyperglobalisation thesis** by the sceptics, their **rigorous empiricism leads them to fail adequately to consider the way in which globalisation comes to inform public policy-making.** **It is here,** we suggest, that **the discourse of globalisation** — and the discursive construction of the imperatives it is seen to conjure along with attendant fatalism about the possibilities for meaningful political agency — **must enter the analysis**. For, as the most cursory reflection on the issue of structure and agency reveals, **it is the ideas actors hold about the context in which they find themselves** rather than the context itself **which informs the way in which they behave** (Hay 1999a, forthcoming a). **This is no less true of policy makers and governments**. **Whether** the **globalisation** thesis **is ‘true’** or not **may matter far less than whether it is deemed to be true** (or, quite possibly, just useful) **by those employing it**. Consequently, **if the aim** of the sceptics **is to discredit the political appeal to dubious economic imperatives associated with globalisation**, then they might **we**ll **benefit from asking** themselves **why and under what conditions** politicians and **public officials invoke** external **economic constraints** in the first place. It is to this task that we direct our attentions in this paper. Yet at the outset a certain word of caution is perhaps required. For, even if we accept the potential causal role that ideas about globalisation might play in the structuration of political and economic outcomes, we may be in danger of narrowing the discursive field of our attentions at the outset. The ideas policy makers use to legitimate and/or to rationalise their behaviour should not simply be seen as more or less accurate reflections of the context they perceive (based on more or less complete information). Nor should discourses be understood as necessarily and exclusively ‘strategic’ (i.e. as relating to situations in which an actor’s employment of a discourse correlates directly to particular material interests). **Discourse matters** in at least two respects. **The way** in which **actors behave is not merely a reflection** of the degree of accuracy and completeness **of the information they possess**; **it is also** a reflection of **their normative orientation** towards their environment and potential future scenarios. Thus the constraints and/or opportunities which globalisation is held to imply might be understood (or misunderstood) in very similar ways in different (national) contexts. Yet such understanding are likely to provoke divergent responses from political actors with different normative orientations and diverse institutional contexts. Put simply, **though actors may share a** common **understanding of** the process of **globalisation, they may respond** very **differently to its** perceived **challenges and threats** **depending on whether one regards the future it promises in a positive or negative light** – witness the still ongoing debate within the governing SPD in Germany between supporters of Schröder and Lafontaine (see Lafontaine 1998; Lafontaine and Müller 1998; Schröder 1998; and for a commentary Jeffery and Handl 1999), or that in France between Bourdieu, Forrester and anti-globalisation groups like ATTAC on the one hand and social liberals within the Parti Socialiste on the other (see Bourdieu 1998; Boudieu and Wacquant 1999; Forrester 1999; and for a commentary Bouvet and Michel 1999; Meunier 2000). Within the European Commission, there is evidence to suggest that common understandings of globalisation can be quite consistent with distinct conceptions of the capacity to exercise meaningful agency as actors take up quite different ‘subject positions’ in relation to globalisation (Rosamond, 1999; 2000b). **It is important**, then, at the outset **that we consider the potential causal role of ideas about globalisation in the structuration of political and economic outcomes**.3 Our central argument is, we think, likely to prove controversial. It is simply stated, though its implications are more complex. Essentially, we suggest, **policy makers acting on the basis of assumptions consistent with the hyperglobalisation thesis may well serve**, in so doing, **to bring about outcomes consistent with that thesis, irrespective of its veracity and,** indeed, irrespective of its perceived veracity**.** This provocative suggestion with, if warranted, important implications, clearly requires some justification (see also Hay 1999b; Rosamond 1999, 2000b, 2000c). **Globalisation has become** a key referent of contemporary political discourse and, increasingly, **a lens through which policy-makers view the context in which they find themselves.** **If** we can assume that political actors have no more privileged vantage point from which to understand their environment than anyone else and — as most commentators would surely concede — that **one of the principal discourses through which that environment now comes to be understood is that of globalisation, then the content of such ideas is likely to affect significantly political dynamics.**

## Case

#### They explain how patents are rooted in anti-blackness but have no plan to address the material consequences of that—that means you should presume neg.

#### Anti-blackness K affs have existed for years and they keep getting voted for—how do you change this?

#### Black scholarship has a long history of focusing on improving material conditions through policy making--refusing to engage consigns AAS to the margins

Gates, PhD Cambridge, 06

(Henry Louis Jr., Alphonse Fletcher University Professor and Director of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research at Harvard University, *A Debate on Activism in Black Studies* in A Companion to African-American Studies, ed by L and J Gordon)

The founding fathers of what we now think of as African-American Studies were acutely aware of the distinction between scholarship that is political and politicized scholarship. Writing in 1925, the illustrious black bibliophile Arthur Schomburg worried aloud about propaganda masquerading as scholarship: work that was “on the whole pathetically over-corrective, ridiculously over-laudatory; apologetics turned into biography,” work marred at its core by “puerile controversy and petty braggadocio,” work that “has glibly tried to prove half of the world’s geniuses to have been Negroes and to trace the pedigree of the nineteenth-century Americans from the Queen of Sheba.” The great black intellectual and activist W. E. B. Du Bois himself, writing in 1933, warned black scholars against “whitewashing or translating wish into fact.” Closer to our own time, the sociologist Orlando Patterson memorably warned against the sort of Black Studies programs that utilize the “three P’s approach – black history as the discovery of princes, pyramids and pageantry.” Such an approach, he argued, “does violence to the facts . . . is ideologically bankrupt and is methodologically and theoretically deficient.” Would that these eloquent warnings had been heeded. Today, scholars in the field of African-American Studies struggle to agree on the most basic facts of our history. A vocal minority seeks the deepest truths about black America in cultist, outlandish claims about the racial ancestry of Cleopatra or the genetics of “souls.” It’s within this turbulent context that questions about the relation between scholarship and activism inevitably arise. Intellectuals like Schomburg and Du Bois thought that all scholarship about “the Negro would be political,” either implicitly or explicitly, given the fact that, as Schomburg put it, “The Negro has been a man without history because he has been considered a man without a worthy culture.” That’s why even Schomburg, a man who loved the library like life itself, argued for what he called an a priori “racial motive” in black scholarship, while Du Bois stressed that “the American Negro problem is and must be the center” of the scholarly concerns of the “college-bred Negro.” Since few, if any, colleges and universities offered courses that included content about African Americans, they viewed the scholar’s task – and his gift to the broader culture – as contributing to political progress by establishing the worth of the black culture in the court of academic and public opinion. In truth, the ideal of wholly disinterested scholarship – in any field of research – will probably remain an elusive one. But it’s one thing to acknowledge the political valence of even the “purest” scholarship; it’s another to demand of it immediate political utility. The ideal of knowledge for its own sake – what Robert Nisbet once called the “academic dogma” – may be unfashionable, and even unrealizable; but it should command our respect all the same. For it remains the basic rationale of the university. The scholar who analyzes the nineteenth-century slave narrative and its relation to the sentimental novel shouldn’t feel guilty because her research isn’t directly aiding the cause of distributive justice. But scholars are citizens, too, and if it is wrongheaded to demand political payoff from basic research, it would be equally untenable to demand that research be quarantined from the real-world considerations that weigh so heavily upon us. Elsewhere, I’ve called for departments of African-American Studies to join with historically black colleges and universities in establishing sophomore- and junior-year summer internships for community development (through organizations like the NAACP and the Children’s Defense Fund) to combat teenage pregnancy, so-called black-on-black homicide, and the transmission of HIV. Yet those who would enlist the academy in the cause of activism must confront the awkward fact that the political views of academics can no more be regimented than their scholarly opinions. In the socialist tradition thoughtful work on the political economy of black America has been done by such scholars as Gerald Horne, Adolph Reed, and Manning Marable, who urge us to rethink the basic institutions of Western liberal democracy. In a conservative vein, such black scholars as Thomas Sowell and Walter Williams have argued that the problems of black America must be addressed primarily through voluntarist means. Obviously, both positions cannot be correct, but you can’t gauge their validity by the relative compassion or commitment of their proponents. Policy disputes must be subjected to intellectual analysis, performed without a thumb on the scale. And it would be bitterly ironic if a field that was founded upon a protest against exclusion should itself become fearful of pluralism, either intellectual or political. A typically vanguardist form of scholarly vanity is, of course, to suppose that we have a unique purchase on political wisdom, beyond the reach of ordinary citizens. Yet, in the case of African-American Studies, the yearning for political potency is altogether understandable. Even as the academic field has become institutionalized, black America continues to suffer massive inequities that are the legacy of historical racism. To complicate the picture further, black America has itself become enormously fissured with a widening abyss between a growing middle class and an increasingly isolated underclass. Unfortunately, many of our conventional traditional modes of analysis simply fail to engage the vexing nature of these class differentials. “People don’t care that you know,” a street slogan has it, “until they know that you care.” But genuine progress will depend not just on caring more, but knowing more. Public policy issues can indeed be a central concern of African-American Studies, as they are at Harvard University, the University of Michigan, University of California at Los Angeles, Columbia University, and elsewhere. They raise conundrums as challenging as any you’ll find in the academy. Thirty years ago no one predicted the current class divide that insistently raises questions to which there are still no satisfactory answers. How do we put our people to work? How do we expand the black working and middle classes? How do structural and behavioral causes of poverty interact, and how can they be defeated? These are among the pressing issues that public policy scholars must address if they are to generate the new analyses and policy recommendations we desperately need. But the crisis of black America can’t be willed away by commitment alone. On the level of policy, of practical politics, it demands empirical and analytical rigor: in short, the string of the academic dogma. As W. E. B. Du Bois, himself a committed activist who never abandoned the life of the mind, once wrote, “Let us not beat wings in impotent frenzy” but “rather conquer the world by thought and brain and plan.”1(96-8)