### NC – T v K Affs

#### Interpretation: the affirmative must defend the hypothetical implementation of the resolution or a subset thereof –

#### A worker is a person who works

Merriam-Webster - ("Definition of WORKER," No Publication, xx-xx-xxxx, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/worker)//va

Definition of worker ¶

1a: one that [works](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/works) especially at manual or industrial labor or with a particular materiala factory worker—often used in combination ¶

b: a member of the [working](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/working) class ¶

A strike is a work stoppage for a certain purpose

Merriam-Webster https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/strike

Definition of strike (Entry 2 of 2) ¶

1: a tool for smoothing a surface (as of a mold) ¶

2: an act or instance of [striking](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/striking) ¶

3a: a work stoppage by a body of workers to enforce compliance with demands made on an employer ¶

b: a temporary stoppage of activities in protest against an act or condition ¶

#### Unconditional means absolute

Merriam-Webster - ("Definition of UNQUALIFIED," No Publication, xx-xx-xxxx, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/unqualified)//va

Definition of unconditional

1: not conditional or limited : [ABSOLUTE](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/absolute), [UNQUALIFIED](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/unqualified)

#### Our ability to develop critical subjectivities that can *strategically* challenge power structures necessitates this type of argument culture.

Cheryl MISAK Philosophy @ Toronto ‘8 “A Culture of Justification: The Pragmatist's Epistemic Argument for Democracy” *Episteme* 5 (1) p. 100-104

The charge that Rorty has had to face again and again is that he really is a relativist, holding that one belief is no better than another, and that one must “treat the epistemic standards of any and every epistemic community as on a par” (Haack 1995, 136). Rorty, that is, leaves us with no way of adjudicating claims that arise in different communities. It is argued that this is not only an unsatisfactory view, but it is incompatible with his commitment to his own set of beliefs and with his practice of arguing or giving reasons for them. Peirce would join in this charge, arguing that it is the community of inquirers or reasoners that matter, not this or that local community. One of Rorty’s responses to this clutch of objections is to say that he doesn’t have to treat the epistemic standards of every community as on a par: “I prize communities which share more background beliefs with me above those which share fewer” (Rorty 1995b, 153). There is nothing incoherent about asserting that your community has it right, for all “right” amounts to is what your community agrees upon. I have argued (2000, 12ff) that this kind of comeback puts Rorty in a very difficult position, giving him nothing to say against the likes of Carl Schmitt, the fascist legal philosopher who found it natural to join the Nazi bandwagon. Schmitt, like Rorty, argued that there is no truth and rationality in politics. Rather, politics is the arena in which groups assert themselves, with the strongest coming out on top and the weaker groups disappearing. One makes an existential choice – opts for a conception of the good – and then tries to attain “substantive homogeneity” in the population. Might ends up being right and the elimination of those who disagree with us ends up being a fine method of reaching our political decisions. A democrat or liberal like Rorty has an impossible time in giving us – and himself – reasons for opting for his view rather than his fascist opponent’s view. Once you give up aiming at truth, once you give up aiming at something that goes beyond the standards of your own community, then you give up the wherewithal to argue against the might-is-right view. The charge I am trying to answer here, on behalf of the non-Rortian pragmatist, is that mixing truth and politics is dangerous. One of the points I want to make is that, whatever the dangers are in saying morals and politics aim at the truth, the dangers of denying it are even more alarming. If we were to get rid of the notion of truth, nothing would protect us from the idea that there is nothing to get right, no better or worse action, and no better or worse way of treating others. Nothing would protect us from the Schmittian worldview. Another point is that the pragmatist view encourages something which is downright salutary, not dangerous at all. It encourages a culture of justification, a culture the importance of which grows as we face the challenges of living in a global society with worldviews struggling against each other. This thought was prominent in the debate about how the new democratic order in South Africa should be conceived. Here is how Etienne Murienik put it: If the new constitution is a bridge away from a culture of authority, it is clear what it must be a bridge to. It must lead to a culture of justification – a culture in which every exercise of power is expected to be justified; in which the leadership given by government rests on the cogency of the case offered in defense of its decisions, not the fear inspired by the force of its command. The new order must be a community built on persuasion, not on coercion.4 A final point rests on the nature of the kinds of answers the pragmatist envisions. Rorty and Rawls seem to think that any view of truth carries with it the idea that there is one and only one true answer to every question. It is important to see that, whatever the case might be for other views of truth, the pragmatist’s view of truth does not entail anything about the precise nature of right answers. On the Peircean view of truth, it might be true that the best solution to a problem is to compromise in a certain way. Or a question might have a number of equally right answers: it might be true that either A or B or C is an acceptable solution to a problem. That is, bringing truth into politics need not result in a view on which one theory of the good triumphs over the others. Indeed, the pragmatist account of truth does not require agreement at the end of the day (whatever that might mean) and it does not require the consent of all who are affected by a particular decision here and now. The right answer to a question might be one that only a few see is right. A right answer is the one that would be best – would stand up to the evidence and arguments – were we to inquire into the matter as far as we fruitfully could. That is, we are not primarily aiming at agreement in deliberation – we are aiming at getting a view that will stand up to reasons and evidence**.** That said, there may be cases in moral and especially political deliberation in which we do aim for agreement because we think that what will best stand up to reasons in that case is a solution that is agreed upon by all or by all who are affected. But this will be just one kind of case amongst many. Right answers aren’t necessarily answers that are acceptable by all. Nor are right answers necessarily those that resolve a conflict with a compromise, although sometimes a compromise or cooperative solution may indeed be what is required. Nor is bargaining always not conducive to truth – in some cases, that may be exactly what is required. This view of truth does not lead to zeal, oppression, closing off of discussion, or a squashing of pluralism, even if it might happen to be the case that there is only one reasonable conception of the good out there. The idea is that we are always aiming at getting the best answer – whatever that may be – and to do that we need to take into account the views of all. 6 . WHO DECIDES? One of the first questions put to those who would like to think of politics as a species of truth-oriented deliberation is this: why deliberate with the ignorant multitude? Would it not be better to expose our moral and political beliefs only to the reasons and experience of experts? Science, after all, doesn’t work by asking the person in the street what he or she thinks about quantum mechanics. The reason that the pragmatist’s epistemic justification is a justification of democratic politics, rather than of a hierarchical politics, in which an elite makes decisions, is that we do not and will not ever have an identifiable pool of moral and political experts. Dewey saw this clearly. As experts become specialized, “they are shut off from knowledge of the needs which they are supposed to serve” (Dewey 1926/1984, 364). Everyone engages in moral and political deliberation and it is not obvious that having special education makes you better at it – just look at priests, politicians, and moral philosophers/political theorists and ask yourself if they seem especially decent or especially wise when it comes to practical matters. Some people are good at examining moral and politi\cal issues, but it’s not clear that they are the ones trained to do so. Even if we could identify genuinely wise people, this kind of expertise is liable to be corrupted merely by being identified – merely by the wise person starting to think of herself as a moral expert.5 And it is far from clear that the rule of the wise would really take the views and experiences of all into account better than the democratic rule of the people. So how do we distinguish deliberating well and deliberating badly if we cannot appeal to education and training? No account of deliberative democracy can ignore the call to make the distinction. The trouble is that, in saying what good, as opposed to poor, deliberation amounts to, one finds oneself facing a justificatory problem: how can we specify what good deliberation is without simply assuming that our current standards of deliberation and inquiry are the gold standards? (This is the deep and central question of pragmatism: how do genuine norms arise out of contingent practices?) It will be unsurprising that I agree with Robert Talisse that the way forward is to focus on an epistemic justification of the whole range of deliberative virtues. Some of the virtues we think important in inquiry are open-mindedness, courage, honesty, integrity, rigor, willingness to listen to the views of others and to seriously entertain challenges to one’s own views, willingness to put oneself in another’s shoes, and the like. These virtues may well have a number of kinds of justifications – justifications, for instance, with their origins in the canons of etiquette or in this or that substantive moral or religious view. Politeness and Christianity (do unto others . . . ), for instance,may both dictate that we should listen to the views of others. But this kind of justification doesn’t break out of the circle of local practices. Talisse argues that the virtues are justified because they lead to true belief. Listening to others is not merely the polite thing to do, but it is also good because we might learn something. The epistemic argument I have presented on Peirce’s behalf gets us this far: we need to expose our beliefs to the views of others if we are to follow a method that will get us good or better or true beliefs. Talisse takes us the next step – there are other characteristics that make one an inquirer who aims at the truth. Honesty is the trait of following reasons and evidence, rather than self-interest. Modesty is the trait of taking your views to be fallible. Charity is willingness to listen to the views of others. Integrity is willingness to uphold the deliberative process, no matter the difficulties encountered. The distinction between deliberating well (having deliberative virtues) and deliberating badly (having deliberative vices), that is, is drawn in terms of whether a method promotes beliefs which are responsive to and fit with the reasons and evidence. 7 . THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY The pragmatist has offered us a compelling reason to take the views of others seriously and encourage the values associated with deliberative democratic politics. For inquirers must engage in the ongoing project of continually subjecting their beliefs to the tests of further experience and argument. The virtues inherent in a deliberative model of democratic citizenship must be cultivated if we are to come to good beliefs about how to treat others, how to resolve conflicts, and how to arrange society. The model of democratic citizenship which results is one that makes democratic citizenship part of a culture of justification. Citizens search for how best to structure our institutions and how best to live our lives. Democratic citizenship is a quest to get things right, with a genuine engagement in looking for right answers to pressing questions.We are not after mere agreement and we are not after the transformation of initial preferences into something that others can accept. We aim at getting things right – at getting beliefs that would forever stand up to scrutiny. In so aiming, citizens commit themselves to abiding by the decisions produced by the democratic procedure. For those decisions are the best we can do here and now. Here we find the justification of the coercive power of democracies. Eventually there has to be a decision in politics. The question that faces all societies is who decides and who wields the power to coerce once the decision is made? My argument is that as more people deliberate and more reasons and experience go into the mix, it will become more likely that the decisions made will account for the reasons and experience of all. The more likely, that is, that the answer will be right. Decisions produced by a democratic deliberative process are made by a rational method and so they are enforceable.

# Therapeutic Capture K

**Performance of the aff is an invitation for therapeutic capture. Fighting for subjectivity and self-actualization locates politics on the terrain of psychological modalities. This process leads our attention away from the material realities that have created suffering in the first place. Their relationship to the ballot is therapeutic – Individual and social problems are viewed as stemming from improper thoughts and that only by correcting our views of ourselves can produce more fulfilled lives.**

**Stewart 9** Tyrone Anthony Stewart, Ph. D., Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Maryland, College Park, WHAT IS A BLACK MAN WITHOUT HIS¶ PARANOIA? : CLINICAL DEPRESSION AND THE POLITICS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS’ ANXIETIES TOWARDS EMOTIONAL VULNERABILITY

On the first front, I will address the pervasive tendency in our culture¶ toward the therapeutic and the ways in which “acknowledging our weaknesses” and¶ “sharing our feelings” may ultimately **lead our attention away from the social¶ inequalities that may have caused our suffering in the first place.** And on the second¶ front, I will explore a confluence of circumstances (i.e., government, business, and¶ science) with have made the dominant paradigms of depression as an illness seem so¶ normal in dealing with prolonged or persistent sadness.8¶ In performing this deconstruction, I must make it clear that in dismantling¶ clinical depression as discursive construct my goal is not to construct another term to¶ take its place, for to fill the space left by its absence would invariably be only another¶ name for another pathology of affect. Rather, I am interested in disarming the¶ indisputability of the diagnosis and how it has led us to view the bodies of individuals¶ as detached from society and culture. It is my belief that the pervasive sadness and¶ despondency that is called “depression” in our society is in large part circumstantial¶ rather than biological and that by exploring matters of the social expectancies and¶ cultural values the frame emotional experience we can create a new understanding of¶ depression. Thus, my primary goal in leaving the concept of depression “in pieces” is¶ to bring social circumstance and cultural values (i.e. story) back into our¶ understanding of depression and to free-up the concept so that I can explore it in¶ different dimension in later chapters.¶ I began this dissertation with the example of Dave Chappelle on Oprah’s¶ couch because I am interested in the ways in which his story becomes a public story,¶ and the ways in which the meaning and value of that story changes in the process of¶ its retelling. On its surface, the Oprah Winfrey show is perhaps the most revered¶ daytime talk show in the present moment; however, the show is also part of a cultural¶ phenomenon that is much larger than its parts. The Oprah Winfrey Show is an¶ example of Americans’ investment in the therapeutic ethos, an investment which is¶ **girded by the belief that personal healing can best be accomplished through**¶ **fellowship and open confessions of suffering**; however, this investment is problematic¶ because it **restructures the relationship of the subject** to their social context, through¶ the re-interpretation of individual experiences and their repackaging as shared and¶ universal human experiences. As a democratic and equalizing ritual of sharing, the¶ therapeutic ethos creates a milieu in which individual differences can become¶ **depoliticized and intersections of race and gender become less salient** in¶ understanding the political nature and material realities of suffering.¶ The therapeutic ethos has been addressed in many different ways. It has been¶ seen as a “culture” and “gospel”; however, the historian Christopher P. Wilson views¶ it as “an ethos characterized by an almost obsessive concern with psychic and¶ physical health.”10 “Ethos” is perhaps a better term than “culture” as ethos signifies¶ the ways in which therapeutic language has permeated not only the precincts of¶ American society and culture which are charged with matters of health and wellbeing¶ (i.e., medicine) but also those realms not traditionally associated with those matters¶ (i.e., religion, education, government, advertising).11 Furthermore, in using the term¶ “ethos” we can also better approximate the way the power of its claims are often¶ unquestioningly **regarded as conventional wisdom**, as the term “depression,” as a¶ signifier of illness and pathology, can be taken up by anyone in our society regardless¶ of their authority or knowledge of psychology or psychiatry.¶ In commenting upon the therapeutic ethos, I must make it clear that I am not¶ addressing the clinical technique of psychotherapy or other means of counseling, nor¶ am I addressing its practitioners or patients. The assumption that the practice of¶ therapy is the same as the therapeutic ethos is a connection that I strongly wish to¶ dismantle. Unlike therapy itself (e.g., psychoanalysis or cognitive behavioral¶ therapy) the therapeutic ethos is not a structured practice, but rather it is a more¶ pervasive and paradigmatic way of viewing the **quest for selfhood and selfactualization**¶ **as a libratory process of reinvention.**12 The therapeutic ethos is a¶ commoner’s or lay viewpoint of psychic wellbeing, however it does influence expert¶ opinion and vice-versa. For the purposes of this dissertation, I am more so interested¶ in the phenomenon of employing therapeutic models in our understanding self,¶ suffering, and subjectivity in public discussions of emotional experience. 13 I am¶ interested in the therapeutic ethos and its more casual relationship with science and¶ the way in which the therapeutic is made into ‘common sense’ through this¶ relationship.¶ Furthermore, in my interest in the therapeutic ethos and its relation to black¶ men, I will not be pursuing an argument that black men resist the therapeutic out of¶ gender anxiety for to do so would be overly simplistic. Such writing has already been¶ done, and it has focused on white men to the exclusion of race.14 “Macho” (read:¶ white hegemonic masculinity) and “Cool” (read: black hegemonic masculinity) have¶ divergent histories and to look at gender to the occlusion of race would neglect black¶ men’s different emotional politics, although gender is an important factor. I will be¶ primarily be addressing the therapeutic in terms of the ways it erases the significance¶ of matters of race and gender, which will enable me to talk of its implications for¶ African American’s in general and African American men, in specific, in later¶ chapters.¶ Lastly, it has been argued elsewhere, and in varying ways, that the therapeutic¶ ethos has helped to create an “illness identity” within the phenomenon of depression,¶ ¶ wherein the effect (the “disorder” or “disease” of depression) becomes a **more** salient¶ and **visible than structural encounters** within the individual’s biography.15 In regards¶ to people in actual therapeutic situation (i.e., therapy with a trained professional) this¶ viewpoint has lead to the omission of more institutional forces of racism and¶ economic inequality, such as Euro-American physicians’ misinterpretation of African¶ Americans’ idioms of distress16 and the systemic lack of access to affective health¶ care among less affluent communities. The question that I want to answer in this¶ section is what are the political consequences of acquiescing to therapeutic models of¶ understanding subjective experiences which are, in part, caused by identity specific¶ encounters with such structural inequality? The short answer to that question is the¶ erasure of the structural factors of racism and classism that may have contributed to¶ the individual’s feelings of depression in the first place.¶ America’s Relationship with Therapeutic Cultures¶ American’s fascination with the therapeutic extends from what Eva¶ Moskowitz calls the “therapeutic gospel.”17 In her examination of America’s¶ relationship with therapy, she describes our reflex dependence on psychological cures¶ and hunger for personal fulfillment as having a “long and strange history.” According¶ to Moskowitz, the drive toward therapy began out of a desire for guidance and life direction¶ at a time when the influence of traditional religion (i.e. Protestantism) was¶ waning in the nineteenth century. Due to a convergence of factors, such as the rising¶ belief in science and the meta-physical, changing notions of individualism, and the¶ rise of consumer-based culture, Americans in the nineteenth century, increasingly¶ sought out strategies and products rather than parables and prayer to become better¶ people.18¶ Through this “therapeutic gospel,” Moskowitz argues, individual and social¶ problems began to be viewed as stemming from improper thoughts and poor self esteem,¶ **and that only by correcting our views of ourselves as individuals and as a¶ nation, would we may be able to live** happier and more fulfilled lives. Key to the¶ operation of the Moskowitz’s “therapeutic gospel” was the idea of the malleable¶ inner-self or “the mind,” which created another dimension of social identity that did¶ not exist prior to the professionalization and growing authority of medicine in the¶ late 19th century. Previous conceptualizations of the individual had dealt with the¶ notion of a “soul”; however, as the baggage of morality and guilt associated with this¶ concept and the authority of the religious officials charged with this work began to¶ lose favor the rational belief in science and self-improvement began to encroach upon¶ the religious perspective, but the belief in the malleable “inner-self” never fully¶ displaced religion. Rather, “ministers and other moralist began increasingly to¶ conform to medical models in making judgments and dispensing advice.”19 20 In this¶ way, the “mind” as the seat of rationality and enlightenment, in turn, established a¶ new locus of moral authority in the construction of the individual will. Ultimately, the¶ “therapeutic gospel” **helped to create a terrain** in which the problems of anxiety and¶ phobias as well as desire for social status could be fixed by the right attitude and the¶ right advice.21¶ Our reliance on such a conception of ‘the self’ is so prevalent in today’s¶ society that it is almost invisible. From talk shows to twelve-step programs to selfhelp¶ bestsellers, we are continually bombarded with solutions that suggest that we can¶ **transcend our troubles and angst by talking about them openly** and honestly; however,¶ it is through this same process of “sharing our feelings” that we may, in fact, **be**¶ **erasing the very matters of our social and cultural experience** that created our¶ discomfort in the first place. In a strange set of circumstances, the individualistic¶ ethos that permeates our common culture and inspires us to view ourselves as unique¶ and autonomous beings, may in the end generalize our experiences and identities.¶ Frank Füredi, in his examination of the therapeutic impulse, argues that¶ “despite its individualistic orientation, therapeutic intervention…often leads to the¶ pursuit of the standardization of people rather than to encourage a self-determined¶ individuality.”22 **Instead of creating individuals who have social agency**, Füredi¶ argues, the therapeutic ethos creates identities which rely upon various “publics” for¶ affirmation or recognition, be they ten alcoholics in a church basement or a national¶ television audience. The success of such a process of affirmation depends upon an¶ individual’s willingness to **defer the meaning of their experiences to the authority of**¶ **the group** and to relinquish any claims to difference which may threaten the cohesion¶ of the group;23 however, belonging has its benefits. Acquiescence to the therapeutic¶ ethos allows the individual a sense of identity and helps them to “make sense of their¶ predicament and gain moral sympathy.”24¶ The concept of “moral sympathy” is important in the construction of a “public¶ of the depressed,” because, as a disease of the mind – a mental illness – its lesions are¶ invisible. Moral sympathy is thus needed to assuage the beliefs that individuals can¶ “feel better” and “do better” for themselves out of will and discipline. Other mental¶ illnesses, such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, do not fare as well as depression¶ in terms of gaining moral sympathy, since they can sometimes be associated with¶ violent crime, particularly in news media.25 But arguably, perceptions of the mentally¶ ill have changed dramatically over the past twenty years, amounting to a virtual¶ reshaping of lay understandings and public attitudes toward various mental illnesses.¶ This change has not been the result of a single influence, but rather it has been the¶ result of a confluence of factors, from anti-stigma groups to cultural representations.¶ No longer are the mentally largely portrayed as violent or disturbed one-dimensional¶ characters, rather they are presents as characters who are “ill but talented, impaired¶ but not stupid, troubled but attractive.”26 Take for example, popular films such as¶ Rain Man (1988), Sling Blade (1996), A Beautiful Mind (2001), I Am Sam (2001),¶ Radio (2003), the Aviator (2004), the Soloist (2009) which have helped to create the¶ sentiment of understanding mental illnesses as a result of defective or damaged brain¶ processes and not the result of the moral faults of the individual.27 However the¶ absence of ‘fault’ or ‘blame’ does not preclude questions of responsibility or the need¶ for an explanation.¶ Within the therapeutic ethos, the “public of the depressed” are able to account¶ for their despondent moodiness, and ultimately their difference, through the general¶ belief that the human mind is fragile and can “break” just like a bone can fracture. It¶ is through this process, which Charles Barber calls the “physicalizing of behavior,”¶ that depression becomes a normalized;28 however, it is a process of normalization that¶ leans heavily upon a recent shift in common understandings of the **mind as a fallible body part.** The therapeutic ethos borrows from **scientific authority** the belief that the¶ body is knowable, generalizable, and universal, but in the end **replaces lived social**¶ **experiences with scripted ones** based upon medical authorities and the “physicalizing¶ of behavior.”¶ It is the lure that there is something “out there,” authenticated by¶ medical knowledge, that can describe people’s “indescribable” encounter with¶ depression **which makes the therapeutic ethos both attractive and limiting**; as much as¶ they may **gain in the articulation of their experiences, they may lose in regard to**¶ **context.**¶ Hostile Homogenization in the Therapeutic Encounter¶ At the core of the therapeutic ethos is the idea that our minds and our¶ thoughts are the essence our being and that by aligning our thinking with accepted¶ definitions of “illness” and practices of “healing” we can change our perceptions as¶ well as our circumstances. Viewing the mind in such a way is attractive because it¶ mobilizes the idea that we are ultimately in control of our health, our well-being, and¶ our material existence, but in the exchange we lean upon the wisdom and expertise of¶ medical institutions and the belief that such wisdom is neutral. It is the casual bridge¶ that is formed between the therapeutic ethos of “sharing feelings” and “self realization”¶ and the practice of therapy that **lends the therapeutic ethos its¶ normativity.** Thus, having access to medical discourses of self, suffering, and¶ **subjectivity** **enables** the depressed to make meaning of their experience; however, the¶ costs of that acquiescence are seldom considered. Take for example Andrew¶ Solomon, the author of the Noonday Demon: an Atlas of Depression and proponent of¶ the medicalization of depression, who argues:¶ To be given the idea of depression is to master a socially¶ powerful linguistic tool that segregates and empowers the¶ better self to which suffering people aspire. Though the¶ problem of articulation is a universal, it is particularly acute¶ for the indigent, who are starved for this vocabulary – which¶ is why basic tools such as group therapy can be so utterly¶ transforming for them.29¶ The ideas of a “transforming” vocabulary and a “socially powerful linguistic tool” are¶ noble concepts in Solomon’s crusading for the depressed, but what is downplayed in¶ this statement are the power dynamics involved in the therapeutic encounter and how¶ the simple adoption of such a “vocabulary” cannot change an individual’s¶ relationship to power and privilege.30¶ Absent from Solomon’s view are the ways in which the therapeutic encounter,¶ and the language and values that gird its appeals, are ordered by a particular¶ relationship to the culture of therapy, a relationship which black men and other¶ marginalized groups do not share in equally. This is not meant to imply that group¶ therapy cannot work in more culturally attuned settings among black men, as such¶ groups and their varied methods have been written about in work on minority¶ counseling.31 Nor is it meant to imply that African Americans are in any way not¶ participatory in the viewpoint expressed by Solomon. Rather, what is at issue is how¶ such a process dangerously simplifies healing as a matter of adopting the¶ “vocabulary” of depression and the therapeutic ethos of a “better self.” Viewing¶ **healing as a matter of “education”** ultimately dismisses any skepticism as an¶ individual act of resistance and unmoors it from the milieu of its occurrence. What¶ must be considered are how racism, environment, and self-esteem issues affect black¶ men in ways that are culturally political as well as personal.¶ The literature on African American’s experiences of “stress” does a much¶ better job of discussing the political nature of the depressive experience than does the¶ writing from within a therapeutic framework. This is because the therapeutic¶ discussion of depression often assumes the individual as a self-contained and¶ autonomous being, while the literature on stress takes into consideration the social¶ milieu of the individual. The literature on African American stress has examined the¶ way in which structural racism (i.e., institutional policies of inequality, cultural¶ messages of black inferiority, and unhealthy and/or toxic physical environments) has¶ had a negative impact on African American’s health and quality of life.32 Chappelle’s¶ use of the term “stress” in reference to his emotional state instead of “depression,”¶ perhaps, owes its rationale to this difference. Therefore, the factors that contribute to¶ stress must be considered when thinking of the etiology and experience of depression¶ and black men’s participation in therapy.¶ It is known that African American men underutilize formalized therapy and¶ counseling.33 African American men’s resistances to the practice of therapy are¶ conditioned by several factors, such as African American’s suspicions of therapists,¶ past negative experiences with public agencies and institutions, and the often¶ superficial relationships that black men must form with therapist: things that exist in¶ addition to the possible issue of gender.34 Furthermore, in many cases, black men in¶ therapy or counseling do not attend out of their own volition, as third party entities¶ (e.g., employers, clergy, or the judicial system) are often the primary reasons for¶ black men to begin to participate in therapy.35 Other researchers have called this¶ phenomenon a “forced process,” by which the process of “help,” reinforced across¶ many of society’s institutions, is viewed as a matter of coercion to the status quo.36¶ These factors make the therapeutic encounter not only foreign, but also possibly¶ hostile to black men. In these ways, the democratic appeal of such therapeutic¶ thinking on depression can erase matters of gendered and racial experience which are¶ part of the story and obstruct the individual’s authority to come to less mainstream¶ interpretations of the sadness of depression and its larger meaning, **for themselves.**