# 1AC Nano Nagle Round 5

**Pharma patent monopolies drive hormone shortages and price hikes now--damages the physical and mental health of transgender folks**

**Fragnito 20** [Maddalena Fragnito, 2020, "Commoning Molecules: Decolonising Biological Patents By Gender Hacking Protocols," Journal of International Women’s studies, <https://hcommons.org/deposits/item/hc:32817/>, accessed 9-7-2021] BCortez RCT//SR

Basic Rights Shortage13 Since both the production pathways of extraction and hormone synthesis are patentable subjects, nowadays, pharmaceutical companies retain all power over hormone molecules. This route to patenting creates basic rights shortages making transgender people reliant on global drug markets that may exclude them from accessing the drugs they need. This is the case during summer 2019 when testosterone disappeared from Italian pharmacies. In one of their latest bulletins (January 2020), the Italian Drug Agency (AIFA) confirms the temporary unavailability of most hormonal drugs, such as Nebid (Bayer), Testoviron (Bayer) and Sustanol (Aspen). When the supply of a drug is restricted, a country may lose access if the limited supplies are diverted by parallel trade, a practice that takes advantage of the price differences between different markets. Under WTO public health regulations, in fact, if there is a public health emergency, countries can use parallel trade flexibilities to import drugs. The problem arises when the drug is in short supply. By making less supply than is needed globally, monopolies can drive up the price by selling the whole supply to the country offering the highest price. This phenomenon forces the latter to buy the product – under “Emergency Conditions” and at an increased cost. The phenomenon, which generates discontinuous hormones intake for transgender people who need it, occurs in Italy alongside most parts of the world (Smiley et al. 2017). A disrupted hormone intake causes higher risks of thrombosis and chronic osteoporosis – not to mention depression and suicide rate due to the impossibility of bodily self-determination.∂ Another aspect to take into account is that, because of the restrictions on importing, countries can only import the drug for essential and emergency treatments (Class A drugs, listed as life-saving) and not for those considered to be less urgent and essential, such as the sextransitioning medical pathway which is not among the authorised conditions for the use of any medicinal product. This invisibility produces as an effect the fact that hormones are difficult to catalogue in Class A (life-saving drugs). On the contrary, the present hormones’ classification (Class C), which is authorised for – non life-saving drugs for – cisgender14 people’s hormonal therapies, do not protect transgender people from the consequences that discontinuous hormone intake can generate. ∂ Moreover, another factor that further complicates this classificatory void is related to the lack of data. For instance, in Italy, under the current legislation, AIFA can consider the introduction of a new therapeutic indication for a drug only if the pharmaceutical company that holds the marketing authorisation (in Italy, AIC) submits a request for an extension of therapeutic indications supported by related scientific evidence. However, there are no systematically collected datasets because gender transition does not follow a specific medical procedure: a perfect vicious circle. As a consequence, medical research and access to medication and care are affected, as well as increased risk to transgender people during emergencies. In summary, what emerges from this phenomenon is that the so-called “gender dysphoria”15 is considered to not require an essential treatment. Thus, in the context of hormone patent monopolies, the institutional classification of what is essential and what is an emergency – and to whom – threatens to put the needs of transgender people for hormone treatment into an invisible place. Thus, two issues have arisen so far. On the one hand, the question of consent around the contradiction of being all exposed – although at different levels – to hormonal pollution, while at the same time encountering serious difficulties when desiring sex hormonal therapy. On the other hand, the question of how this same contradiction, and its related problems, entwines with the strict regulative system of hormones’ patents. This is the main context in which DIWO biohacking workshops dealing with hormone knowledge, awareness, production are rising and, by proposing a more inclusive definition on what is essential and to whom, are spreading.

**Systems of power manipulate intellectual property to best exploit the vulnerable body – they determine which drugs are “acceptable” for public use and create the perception that gender dysphoric folk are “mentally ill”**

**Preciado 2013** |Paul B. Preciado is a professor of Political History of the Body, Gender Theory, and History of Performance at Université Paris VIII and director of the Independent Studies Program (PEI) of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona (MACBA). *Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics in the Pharmacopornographic Era*, 2013, Page 389-393|KZaidi

In fact, the pharmacopornographic industries are already in competition with the domestic affairs of the old nation-states . . . The war to come isn’t a war between states (Israel vs. Palestine or the United States vs. the oil-produc- ing countries) but more probably a war of pharmacopornographic multinationals against the multitude of vulnerable bodies, a war of the pharmaceutical multinationals that hold the copyright for active principles against the traditional gatherers of plants and their specific forms of knowl- edge, a war of the military-prison-industrial complexes against the racialized and pauperized populations, a war of mafia states against the users of “illegal” drugs, a war of the multinational conglomerates that coordinate the man- agement of medical and legal institutions and free market consumption against bodies deprived of nationality, a war of the systems of control that construct docile sexual sub- jects to achieve the total and limitless exploitation of their potentia gaudendi. The history of the transformations of production, distribution, and consumption of heroin offers several leads about the probable evolution of the legal and political management of sex hormones. Although their common origins don’t seem obvious, heroin and aspirin were synthesized in the same year, 1897, and in the same laboratory, by Hoff- man and Eichengrun, by means of the same process. It involved the simple acetylation of morphine (in the case of heroin) and salicylic acid (in the case of aspirin). Heroin and aspirin were legally marketed by Bayer the following year for the treatment of various pulmonary affections, because of their analgesic properties. Although restrictions on the production and distribution of heroin went into force in the 1920s, it was still possible to find heroin-based pills in an English pharmacological catalog in 1949.59 After fifty years of the repression and criminalization of the marketing of heroin, which resulted in the deterioration of fields, which weren’t being tilled, the adulteration of the substance, and the corruption of its trafficking networks, medical special- ists today are developing a gradual reintegration of heroin into the legal pharmaceutical market. For example, Macfarlan Smith Limited in Edinburgh is making yearly advances in the experimental and therapeutic use of this substance.60 The changes in the legal status of a substance and the description of a consumer as criminal or mentally ill (addicted in the case of heroin, and gender dysphoric in the case of sex hormones) facilitate the establishment of a political relationship between illegal drugs and biocodes of the production of gender. Sex hormones, whose consump- tion is strongly regulated by the state, are drugs whose use is, if not illegal, at least politically controlled; and their use, considering their potential for transforming gender and sex, is subject to specific restrictions that espouse administrative criteria and channels of distribution comparable to those of narcotic substances.

**Thus, the plan: The member nations of the World Trade Organization ought to abolish patents for sex-hormonal agents. Cx and before round checks all interps to deter friv theory and maximize substance**

**The plan solves – patent abolition breaks down hormone monopolies and expands access. The result is a commoning of science, spreading of DIWO biohacking workshops, and strengthening public health.**

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Parallel trade markets affect transgender people's access to medication and care as a direct consequence of a monopoly-based system. To strengthen this monopoly, there is the fact that every new drug, when patented, cannot be manufactured or sold by others for at least 20 years. Without competition, pharmaceutical companies can decide the price they want by claiming that the high costs are caused by research and development costs. However, as there is no transparency about how these companies invest their capital (or benefit from the appropriation of public research), no one can verify the plausibility of these claims. Although several civil society groups, projects and organisations such as “Fix the Patent Laws”16, “Fair Pricing of Medicines”17, “Treatment Action Campaign”18 and “Knowledge Ecology International”19, have been working for years on accessibility to medical treatments, governments have not done much to defend themselves against pharmaceutical monopolies, or to strengthen the discourse in favour of greater access to care. That said, sticking to the current system will never bring universal access to drugs: some will always be able gain access while others cannot. This is what “Open Source Pharma”20, a mixed community who seeks new ways to discover drugs, states when promoting to: “create a movement that includes existing initiatives and develop an alternative, comprehensive, opensource pharmaceutical system driven by principles of openness, patient needs, and affordability”. In the context of sex hormone therapies, to abolish patents would help to alleviate hormonal shortage and its effects on the transgender community. Also, it would allow companies’ patent monopolies to be bypassed by engaging in more crucial research on the synthesis of hormonesfor-transition. Thus, the abolition of all hormone patents would mean to invest in practices of commoning science, involving the spread of DIWO biohacking workshops such as those described above, and strengthening their relationship with the public healthcare systems. Overall, these are the main reasons why DIWO biohacking workshops, by self-producing and administering hormones, align to the “open-source pharmaceutical system” promoted by the Open Source Pharma network – besides trying to regulate and modify the margins of a monopoly-based system throughout the many connections with existing social movements for access to healthcare. Unfortunately, the traditional arguments in favour of patents are deeply diffused and well described by Jones’s quote, which comes from its “Introduction to Economic Growth” (2002). Economic growth is linked to the establishment of a relatively secure system of intellectual property rights. However, over the last twenty years, the notion of a direct link between intellectual property protection and rates of innovation has been increasingly questioned (HilairePérez et al. 2013). Scepticism towards patents among economists was instigated by some of the early empirical studies on the effectiveness of patent protection. For instance, some studies by Mansfield (1986) and Levin et al. (1987) have highlighted that, in most industries, patents were not perceived as useful tools for protecting innovations. Consequently, firms typically worked with appropriability strategies that did not contemplate any resort to patent protection. This finding has been corroborated by later research both in the US (Cohen et al. 2000) and Europe (Arundel and Kabla 1998). Another fascinating quantitative snapshot is provided by Moser (2005), who surveyed inventive activity undertaken outside the patent system in the mid-nineteenth century. Furthermore, empirical studies have also shown the possible negative impact of patents on subsequent technological developments. For instance, when technological change is cumulative, that is, when innovations are directly linked to previous ones, durable patent protection can have highly harmful effects on the rate of innovation (Lerner 2009). Following this stream of research, some recent economists of innovation have attempted new theoretical appraisals of the welfare costs and benefits of patent protection. So far, one of the most influential contributions in this vein is probably that of Boldrin and Levine (2008) who, on the strength of their analysis, argue for the abolition of all patent systems. In synthesis, the abolition of the patent systems could allow sex hormone therapies to gain sovereignty instead of upholding a monopoly-based system which pretends to do so being the patron and shaper of our needs and desires; to promote a cultural and scientific more-inclusive-reflection of what is essential treatment and for whom and, consequently; to widen access to transgender healthcare.

**The practice commoning of science is key – it subverts traditional healthcare and allows for autonomous modes of communal care**

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As opposed to closed science, where communicative dynamics are limited by institutional walls or restricted by patents, copyright and paywalls, open science has been defined as a way to produce scientific knowledge by sharing its results and removing obstacles to circulation. However, the relation between closed and open science is the result of complex historical dynamics, none of which are external to the political and economic needs of their times. From medieval knowledge to modern molecular patents, phases of closedness and openness followed by characterising science history as a modes/ regimes of knowledge production based on different ways to finance, valorise and appropriate common pieces of knowledge. Silvia Federici argues that violence against women from the beginning of capitalism till now can be understood as a war, waged through privatisation and knowledge enclosures, against the capacity of keeping communities together and defending non-commercial conceptions of healthcare, wealth and commons (2018). Furthermore, as Valeria Graziano suggests in “Rebelling with Care”, the ability of healthcare social justice movements to autonomously organise their knowledge and practices on care and assistance systems (even before the digital turn) has to be intended as a struggle that “have often led them to clash with managerial classes in state bureaucracies and private corporations” (Bria et al. 2019:38). From the 1940s to the 1970, governments became the major funders of public scientific research in exchange for both collective and national purposes and a contribution to the advancement of military technologies. In 1980, the US “Bayh–Dole Act” was approved (followed by similar laws in other countries) representing a fundamental change that opened the way for the new rhetoric of innovation to transfer public science discoveries to private corporations for the latter's profit (Delfanti 2013). Within this rapidly transformed context, research, even that carried out in public universities, became proprietary and functional to industries and governments (Ziman 2002). Today’s forms of participating in science are many and different: from online forums to crowd-funding platforms; from Wikipedia and collective books to common data-gathering platforms. However, the possibilities offered by these digital tools are not always related to effective democratisation of scientific knowledge production. Indeed, the Web 2.0’s purposes to restore a democratic and creative commoning of knowledge and its benefits, and to get it out from behind paywalls, contend with the reality that most technologies and platforms in use are exactly the point of contention between for profit and participatory processes. For instance, there is an abundance of platforms held by private companies, which are promoting the commoning of biomedical data to be sold just afterwards (i.e. 23andWe). Thus, we navigate an area where issues related to privacy, redistribution, and exploitable free labour are evident (Terranova 2004). Consequently, this mode of popular scientific knowledge production via digital platforms is not the alternative to the market it portrays itself as, but an integral part of it, which guarantees mediatized exposure and capital accumulation (Rajan 2006), and free-market competition (Hope 2008). In Marxian words, we are not divorced from the means of production, which are indeed more and more widespread and pervasive, yet, the fruit of our cooperation is routinely expropriated by companies through increasing management, data capture and knowledge control. Moreover, digital platforms, while revealing the extent to which social cooperation (and reproduction) is at the core of capital accumulation and economic control, are also proving that fluids and cells are the matter through which capital is fed. At the same time, digital tools have also transformed how we cooperate and reproduce ourselves and our communities within monopolistic property regimes, time management, normalisation of social relationships, and subjectivation processes coinciding with data profiling systems. Therefore, it is crucial to try answering at least two questions. The first is about what happens when digital tools are not sustained by commercial interests, meaning they can create more autonomous and common environments, through an infrastructural design that stimulates the redistribution of shareable knowledge as the wealth produced through cooperation. The second question, instead, would be about our possibility to strike against the machine, a “strike because we care” (Women’s Strike Assembly 2020) to better understand the specificity of how the reproduction of life and social relations, through digital technologies, impacts on ourselves. In synthesis, the question is whether a disruptive intervention in the procedures and protocols in which we are involved can allow us to critically re/appraise the relationship between knowledge, power and institutions – together with an understanding of new uses of the machine as a process for strengthening social bonds and self-determination. It follows that commoning science implies the redesign of technologies as well as the embodiment of collective scientific practices, which resist the coloniality of commercial patents and knowledge monopolisation and give back centrality to self-education and “praxis of care and response” (Haraway 2016) within communities that are already in place, enabling their capabilities to resist the push to reduce knowledge to what can be bought or sold. Commoning science (and molecules), therefore, is not just thinking of scientific knowledge and data as a common good that needs to be shared freely through the hacking or re/design of technological tools. It is also the use of participatory methods able to strengthen mutual healthcare practices within autonomous communities of care. Since there are no fully autonomous infrastructures because they depend, for instance, on already existing mainstream companies’ communication networks and technologies, the selected practices attempt to conceive more autonomous communities, and, from here, the conditions for the creation of more autonomous infrastructures based on collective values, governance and principles, instead of individual profit. This attempt is conceived not only through the design of open-source protocols and tools but also by the use of participatory workshop methods, which are fostering time together and are giving back centrality to collective practices of healthcare self-education.

**That’s necessary to envision body liberation and different modes of living**

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These participatory workshops draw on a network of relationships made under the expectation that we will each take care of one another and demonstrate a shift in thinking from the ethic of “I am on my own” to “we are in this together”. In fact, if institutions and exclusive patents produce “biopolitical fictions” (Preciado 2013) determining how bodies should be divided by gender and on how they should reproduce, heal and die; these practices of inclusion and care confront the becoming molecular mutants as a form of bodily liberation. Moreover, by resisting the dominant paradigm of modern life, which insists that what is bought and sold in the market is the only way to provide meaning and sustenance in our lives, commoning hormone molecules is a way to draw on our imagination by bringing out different ways of living. Following Hil Malatino’s words, “while trans bodies are routinely theorized as a prompt for cis folks to reconsider the ‘nature of nature’ (Barad 2015, 392) and, by extension, the nature of embodiment, we have not thought very much, or very carefully, about whether and what form of an ethics might spring from such a reconsideration” (2020).

**This form of copyleft gender hacking is not an affirmation of the state, but rather a demand and awakening for communities of care to create resistance**

**Preciado 13** |Paul B. Preciado is a professor of Political History of the Body, Gender Theory, and History of Performance at Université Paris VIII and director of the Independent Studies Program (PEI) of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Barcelona (MACBA). *Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics in the Pharmacopornographic Era*, 2013, Page 393-394|KZaidi

How to react in the face of states’ resistance to legal- izing the sale of pharmaceutical heroin or removing the consumption of sex hormones from psychiatric protocols? If we consider the close relationships maintained by the neoliberal nation-states, the pharmaceutical corporations, and the networks of drug trafficking, it appears urgent that those dismissed as junkies (the users of illegal drugs) and those diagnosed with gender dysphoria (the potential users of sex hormones) must organize into associations of copyleft drug consumers and force the state-industry- pharmaceutical-drug-trafficking networks to facilitate free access without restrictions to these biocodes of the produc- tion of subjectivity. Just as the users of Agreal prosecuted Sanofi-Aventis laboratories for the serious side effects61 of this medication (originally intended to disguise the symp- toms of menopause by blocking the action of the dopamine neurotransmitters), the users of heroin could prosecute the state in instances of withdrawal or overdose for that state’s having prevented the production, distribution, and consumption of that substance for users in a trustworthy and legal manner. This political pressure would lead gradually to the production and distribution of heroin (or cocaine, MDA, etc.) as generics that could be first bought freely on the pharmaceutical market and, in the long run, be produced and managed collectively as chemical prostheses commons. This would ultimately entail a process of a mul- titude-in-the-making, not only of a lobby of consumers of gender and sex biocodes but also a network of trans-junkie experts, a monster-multitude-in-the-making.

**Our framework is to prioritize trans-dignity. Cisnormative values have been normalized in educative spheres and lead to the continuous ignorance and underestimation of antiqueer violence. De-prioritizing this framework is violently unethical and denies value to life.**

**Francois ’17 et al**; Aderson B. Francois currently serves as the Director for Institute for Public Representation Civil Rights Law Clinic as well as a Professor of Law at The Georgetown Law School. Prior to joining the Georgetown faculty, Professor Francois directed the Civil Rights Clinic at Howard University School of Law, where he also taught Constitutional Law, Federal Civil Rights, and Supreme Court Jurisprudence. Professor Francois received his J.D. and B.A. from New York University. While the author serves as the Counsel of Record for this Amicus Brief. it is important to note that this Amicus Brief is submitted on behalf of REAGAN GREENBERG, ACHIM HOWARD, ALEXA RODRIGUEZ, JEYMEE SEMITI, AVATARA SMITH-CARRINGTON, SAVANNA WANZER, & SAM WILLIAMSON – who, identity as transgender people and individuals whose gender identity may not fit the rigid categorization of male or female. Amicus Brief - Gloucester County School Board, Petitioner, v. G.G., by his next friend and mother, Deirdre Grimm, Respondent. On Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit - BRIEF OF AMICI CURIAE REAGAN GREENBERG, ACHIM HOWARD, ALEXA RODRIGUEZ, JEYMEE SEMITI, AVATARA SMITH-CARRINGTON, SAVANNA WANZER, & SAM WILLIAMSON IN SUPPORT OF RESPONDENT - Available at SCOUTS blog – along with all amicus briefs on this matter- March – modified for language that may offend – - #CutWithKirby - <http://www.scotusblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/16-273-resp-amicus-greenberg.pdf> Bracketed for ableist language RCT//SR

Human dignity is at the core of this case. While this is not a constitutional case, the Court's reliance on human dignity bears repeating as its decision here so obviously implicates it. Transgender people are people and are deserving of treatment that upholds basic values of human dignity. For transgender people, a right to human dignity is the right to be accepted for who they are, to be valued, respected, and ethically treated, irrespective of their gender identity. For transgender people of all ages, recognizing that their gender does not match the gender they were assigned at birth is an enormous burden to carry when the institutions they navigate refuse to affirm their true identity. The ability to self-determine what gender best aligns with their identity, and then be acknowledged as such, is at the crux of bodily integrity. The reality of transgender people's lives is a daily reminder that virtually everything in the world is organized in a way that tells them that their identity is not normal. I often tell people that my body has been inextricably linked to violence since birth. On its face, this statement appears to be overdramatic. People begin to dissect and regurgitate a list of my privileges in attempts to ease their guilt, while simultaneously stripping me of my voice. You see, the violence I speak of is not that which we have been socialized to naturally fear but instead one that is systemically normalized. This is the type of violence that is often disregarded and negated because conversations around privilege and oppression are uncomfortable and for many, irrelevant. Avatara Smith-Carrington, Black, Age 24, Baltimore, MD Upon birth, an infant is designated a gender of either male or female.26 The infant then spends their youth adhering to socially constructed guidelines on how to present themselves as male or female.27 Their forms of identification—birth certificate, driver s license, passport, etc.—reflect the gender assigned at birth. In public forums, they face gender-segregated choices, such as joining a male or female soccer league, or becoming a boy scout or a girl scout, and those decisions are pressured by what is written on a piece of paper handed to thein at birth. This standardized, presumptive process is a much more oppressive system to navigate for those whose gender identity does not align with the gender assigned at birth. Transgender people face a complicated reality in great part because, from time immemorial, clinicians and academics have made transgender individuals the "objects of their inquiry,"28 using language that at times implicitly but far more often explicitly burdens transgender people with the mark of being "abnormal." Transgender people live in a society where "people must be willing to be pathologized" in order to have their gender identity socially and legally affirmed.29 Society today deems transgender people's gender identities, expressions, and sex "less natural and less legitimate" than those of non-transgender people.30 Transgender people are expected to carry not only medical prognosis, but also a physical appearance that passes as "male" or "female" in the eyes of non-transgender people. Even among well-meaning people, non-transgender attributes are "simply taken for granted" and "assumed to be natural or normal."31 Although the assessment of a person's gender, for the majority of people, tends to be in agreement with that person's gender identity, this is not the lived experience of transgender people. Most non-transgender people "remain oblivious to the subjective nature of gendering, primarily because they themselves have not regularly had the experience of being misgendered."32 One need look no further than the amici curiae briefs filed after the Petitioner filed its brief, such as the one by Safe Spaces for Women, to see evidence of a world in which the only "normal" perspective is that of non-transgender individuals. When calling specific attention to violence against women by men, counsel for Safe Spaces for Women did not include transgender women in their efforts to "ensur[e] that the voices of women who have suffered sexual abuse are heeded when policies are made that may directly affect their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being."33 This is a silencing of transgender identities and voices. Because of the assumptions created by our non-transgender frameworks, non-transgender individuals draw the conclusion that everyone they meet is also non-transgender.34 The mentality of assuming everyone you meet is non-transgender trickles into every aspect of life, from casual interactions with people on the street, to how coworkers address each other in the workplace. As such the majority of people are blind [ignorant of] to the struggles of transgender people, and the legitimacy of the struggle transgender people living in the United States face is obfuscated by that [ignorance] blindness. When people come out as transgender, many healthcare providers,35 employers, and educational institutions perpetuate violence against them by refusing to affirm their gender identity. When this lack of affirmation takes the form of exclusion— cutting off transgender individuals from work, health services, classes, or other essential structures—there can be no question that such exclusion is an act of violence. Even when transgender people are able to access non-affirming institutions, they are left with two options: (1) perform an identity that is not their own, which strips them of human dignity; or (2) defy the institution and face punishment, which is quite literally violent. Forcing a transgender individual into performing their gender assigned at birth forces that individual to live in a skin that is not their own. The inability of a transgender person to be acknowledged as the gender identity they align with forces individuals to live in violence.

**Academic spaces uniquely require agency and communities of care--biopolitical systems have erased lower class knowledge and biased our views, which makes epistemologies a prior question to evaluate**

**Hester 18.** Helen Hester (Helen Hester (United Kingdom, 1983) is associate professor of media and communication at the University of West London. Her lines of research include digital technologies, reproductive policies and the future of work), 2018, “Xenofeminism,” I have a pdf, sean!

The American second-wave self-help movement explicitly framed its activities as a means of restoring bodily autonomy to people who felt disenfranchised by their interactions with the medical establishment, and who were excluded from active decision making regarding their own care. As Ehrenreich and English put it, ‘When we demand control over our own bodies, we are making that demand above all to the medical system. It is the keeper of the keys.’12 The relationship between the providers and recipients of professionalized medical care in the 1970s was both highly gendered and deeply unequal, with service users ‘dependent on the medical system for the most basic control over their own reproductivity’.13 This was in the face of the threat of involuntary tubal ligations, unnecessary hysterectomies, and under-tested or unethically tested contraceptives. Initially developing out of the consciousnessraising activities of the second wave, ‘feminist self-help involved women meeting in small groups, sharing information and stories, educating themselves about their bodies and the medical establishment, and looking for remedies to minor bodily problems’.14 Its focus was on developing lay knowledge not only as a means to assert immediate agency over one’s own body – to more fully understand its workings – but also as part of a shareable process of self-enfranchisement and a first step in agitating for more patient-focused practices of care. Arguably, however, it is the movement’s attempts to wrest control away from the medical establishment for which it is most famous. This DIY approach spawned initiatives such as the seminal women’s heath book Our Bodies, Ourselves (OBOS) – first published in 1971 as the proceedings of a small self-help workshop that later became the Boston Women’s Health Book Collective. The collective faced many barriers to finding information about gynaecology and the reproductive body; it was often difficult for lay people to even get into medical libraries, and the writing process ‘involved the clandestine borrowing of library cards from bona fide medical students’.15 Much of the material included in the original edition of OBOS was the result of painstaking individual research in the face of scant information and resources – the sidestepping of medical gatekeepers and university librarians alike! Given the difficulties in obtaining even the most basic information about human health, the barriers in providing and accessing care beyond the professionalized medical establishment were remarkable. This was particularly the case when it came to procedures widely restricted by legislation. It was radical enough to include a chapter on abortion in OBOS (considering its publication two years before Roe v. Wade), but the need to widen actual access to abortion in the early seventies was particularly pressing. The feminist response to this was to set up abortion counselling and referral services, such as Jane in Chicago. Originally established as one of a number of networks in the US intended to connect people with so-called ‘backstreet abortionists’, the group’s activities later took a quite distinctive turn: At first the women in Jane concentrated on screening abortionists, attempting to determine which ones were competent and reliable. But they quickly realized that as long as women were dependent on illegal practitioners, they would be virtually helpless. Jane determined to take control of the abortion process so that women who turned to Jane could have control as well. Eventually, the group found a doctor who was willing to work closely with them. When they discovered that he was not, as he claimed to be, a physician, the women in Jane took a bold step: ‘If he can do it, then we can do it, too.’ Soon Jane members learned from him the technical skills necessary to perform abortions.16 Through witnessing and assisting with the performance of abortions beyond a professionalized clinical environment, members of Jane developed a new understanding of and attitude towards the procedure: ‘The techniques were very straightforward. [. . .] They were skills that, with practice and care’, any lay person could learn.17 With abortion thus demythologized, members of the service came to the conclusion that ‘the barriers that the medical establishment erected between patient and practitioner were not a function of either a woman’s needs or the needs of the situation’.18 Instead, they were a function of disciplinary power and a means of hoarding both institutional authority and useful knowledge. The group set itself a mission to further feminist reproductive sovereignty by making service users active participants in their own care – a process intended to denaturalize the condescending treatment that many received at the hands of doctors. Initially and primarily, Jane relied upon dilation and curettage abortions – a procedure in which the cervix is opened and the contents of the uterus are scraped out. Later, however, some members switched to a manual aspiration model using cannulas and syringes, which they learned about via the inventors of the Del-Em. Whilst Jane used methods related to menstrual extraction, rather than deploying the Del-Em itself, the accounts of those involved with the service remain useful to us for their critical engagement with medical instruments. Laura Kaplan organizes much of her history of Jane around the necessity of gaining ‘access to the tools and skills to affect the conditions’ of technomaterial existence – that is, she frames the circumnavigation of gatekeepers as a process of seizing technologies.19 Again, we see that the development and appropriation of technology was a crucial part of the feminist movement’s efforts to challenge medical sexism and profiteering. The Del-Em itself, as a technology designed by feminists to route around the juridical and medical restrictions upon access to abortion, demands to be seen in just these terms. In this case, there is another level to the general tendency towards free information exchange and the bypassing of gatekeepers. The Del-Em arguably represents an engagement with the principles of free and open source design as a means of ensuring the equitable dissemination of tools and technologies. Whilst the device was patented by its original designer (Lorraine Rothman), it was always intended to circulate in a free and non-commoditized fashion. The formal turn to intellectual property was not about securing individualized ownership of menstrual extraction and its instruments, but was in fact a concerted attempt to ensure that the Del-Em would remain freely available, protected, and shareable amongst those who might need it. This is important when contextualizing the emergence of the device, which was designed in California during the 1970s – a time and space associated with considerable innovation in software development. The emphasis on shareability associated with self-help in general, and with menstrual extraction in particular, can be thought of as ‘analogous to modes of shared and circulated production that gave birth to software such as UNIX, and later LINUX, as well as the open-source patent’20 – developments which some contemporary commentators see as suggestive of the rise of a new economy of contribution, grounded upon participatory knowledge exchange. An emerging interest in free and open source design and dissemination was characteristic of the Del-Em’s historical moment. In its commitment to non-market mechanisms, and its focus on information sharing and voluntary cooperation, the feminist self-help movement arguably demonstrates an ethos akin to that of what we now call the Creative Commons; this was one key prong of feminist efforts to work around oppressive pathways of healthcare. The xenofeminist manifesto touches upon the link between medical technologies and free and open source platforms in a different context – namely, healthcare for trans\* people in the twenty-first century. Paul B. Preciado is amongst those who have discussed the bypassing of gatekeepers within trans\* communities. His ground-breaking book Testo Junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics in the Pharmacopornographic Era describes his self-experimentation with Testogel – a synthetic androgen administered through the skin. As he remarks, whilst some people choose to use the drug ‘as part of a protocol to change sex’, others are ‘self-medicating without trying to change their gender legally or going through any psychiatric follow-up’.21 Preciado positions himself within this latter camp, taking testosterone outside of the narrowly defined territories of its institutionally sanctioned usage. He is not taking it with the permission of doctors in order to transition from ‘female’ to ‘male’; he is illicitly self-administering it, appropriating and repurposing specific molecules in an act of autoexperimentation without preconceived goals or ideal outcomes. The decision to not seek an official diagnosis is in part a refusal to submit to the policing gaze of medical and juridical authorities. As Joshua Rivas observes in his engagement with Testo Junkie: Before a transgender individual can generally be prescribed a course of hormone replacement therapy (and in France have its associated costs covered by social security), the trans-person must first meet certain minimum eligibility criteria set forth in the Harry Benjamin International Gender Dysphoria Association’s Standards of Care, including diagnosis with a gender identity disorder by a mental health professional or physician. Preciado in this way situates herself [sic] within a biopolitically constructed space of clandestinity and non-recognition . . . .22 Some commentators see this dynamic as characteristic of wider tensions between trans\* communities and disciplinary powers in the Global North, arguing that trans\* people ‘seek access to surgical, hormonal and psychotherapeutic treatments, but seek to avoid pathologisation and stigmatisation – this is a defining characteristic, perhaps the central dilemma, of their relationship with clinicians’.23 This dilemma is one reason why some people with the means to do so might choose to sidestep an official diagnosis as a means of accessing treatments and technologies. As with feminist self-help in the 1970s, a fractious relationship with healthcare infrastructures drives people to find different ways of accessing care, often tied to self-experimentation within politicized support networks. The grasp of gatekeepers upon both knowledges and technologies has loosened significantly in recent years, however, as reflected by clinical guidelines. The Royal College of Psychiatrists notes that ‘Hormones and hormone-blockers are readily available via the internet. The medical practitioner or specialist must consider the risks of harm to the patient by not prescribing hormones in these circumstances.’24 The guidance, therefore, is that GPs or other non-specialist medical practitioners ‘prescribe “bridging” endocrine treatments as part of a holding and harm reduction strategy while the patient awaits specialised endocrinology or other gender identity treatment’.25 We can see that having alternative means of accessing information, peer support, and pharmaceuticals has forced profound changes in the way the medical establishment conceives of treatment. This represents a new means of resisting those institutions that have historically fought to restabilize the disciplinary grid of gender in the face of biotechnical innovations that might unsettle it. By taking testosterone in an unsanctioned fashion, Preciado uses technical intervention within and upon the body as a means of contesting the pharmacopornographic regime that constitutes him. He expresses this quite forcefully at times, insisting that ‘your body, the body of the multitude and the pharmacopornographic networks that constitute them are political laboratories, both effects of the process of subjection and control and potential spaces for political agency and critical resistance to normalization’.26 In a move that clearly resonates with self-help’s privileging of the lay healer, Preciado explicitly frames auto-experimental engagements with embodiment as part of a tradition of radical amateurism. This is associated particularly with herbalists, midwives, and witches – practitioners who were deliberately excluded from medicine in order to enable its simultaneous professionalization and masculinization. Preciado claims that the coming of modernity involved a widespread ‘process of eradicating knowledge and lower-class power while simultaneously working to reinforce the hegemonic knowledge of the expert, something indispensable to the gradual insertion of capitalism on a global scale’.27 Networked communication technologies, however, have made it increasingly difficult to continue stockpiling knowledge in exclusionary ways.

**Specifically true for queer narratives--living in a heteronormative society means that queer values are always pushed aside and stigmatized, making us believe it’s not important enough. That uniquely creates an obligation to prioritize it**

**Elias 2003** (John Elias, Professor at San Francisco University, Journal of Homosexuality, Vol. 45, no. 2/3/4, p. 64, 2003) Blair AC

Akin to organized religion and the biomedical field, the educational system has been a major offender. Wedded to disseminating the idea that heterosexuality is the ultimate and best form of sexuality, “Schools have maintained, by social custom and with reinforcement from the law, the promotion of the heterosexual family as predominant, and therefore the essence of normal. From having been presumed to be ‘normal,’ heterosexual behavior has gained status as the right, good, and ideal lifestyle” (Leck, 1999, p. 259). School culture in general is fraught with heteronormativity. Our society has long viewed queer sexualities as “. . . deviant, sinful, or both, and our schools are populated by adolescent peers and adult educators who share these heterosexual values” (Ginsberg, 1999, p. 55). Simply put, heteronormativity and sexual prejudice pervade the curriculum at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary levels (for examples of this and ways of intervening, see: Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997; Letts & Sears, 1999; Lovaas, Baroudi, & Collins, 2002; Yep, 2002). Besides the hegemonic hold schools have had regarding a heterosexual bias, school culture continues to devote much energy to maintaining “. . . the status quo of our dominant social institutions, which are hierarchical, authoritarian, and unequal, competitive, racist, cissexist, and homophobic”

**Prioritize probability--anything else justifies ridiculous conclusions and freezes action. We’re psychologically biased to err on the side of large scale threats**

**Kessler 08** (Oliver; April 2008; PhD in IR, professor of sociology at the University of Bielefeld, and professor of history and theory of IR at the Faculty of Arts; Alternatives, Vol. 33, “From Insecurity to Uncertainty: Risk and the Paradox of Security Politics” p. 211-232)

The problem of the second method is that it is very difficult to "calculate" politically unacceptable losses. If the risk of terrorism is defined in traditional terms by probability and potential loss, then the focus on dramatic terror attacks leads to the marginalization of probabilities. The reason is that even the highest degree of improbability becomes irrelevant as the measure of loss goes to infinity.^o The mathematical calculation of the risk of terrorism thus tends to overestimate and to dramatize the danger. This has consequences beyond the actual risk assessment for the formulation and execution of "risk policies": If one factor of the risk calculation approaches infinity (e.g., if a case of nuclear terrorism is envisaged), then there is no balanced measure for antiterrorist efforts, and risk management as a rational endeavor breaks down. Under the historical condition of bipolarity, the "ultimate" threat with nuclear weapons could be balanced by a similar counterthreat, and new equilibria could be achieved, albeit on higher levels of nuclear overkill. Under the new condition of uncertainty, no such rational balancing is possible since knowledge about actors, their motives and capabilities, is largely absent. The second form of security policy that emerges when the deterrence model collapses mirrors the "social probability" approach. It represents a logic of catastrophe. In contrast to risk management framed in line with logical probability theory, the logic of catastrophe does not attempt to provide means of absorbing uncertainty. Rather, it takes uncertainty as constitutive for the logic itself; uncertainty is a crucial precondition for catastrophes. In particular, catastrophes happen at once, without a warning, but with major implications for the world polity. In this category, we find the impact of meteorites. Mars attacks, the tsunami in South East Asia, and 9/11. To conceive of terrorism as catastrophe has consequences for the formulation of an adequate security policy. Since catastrophes hap-pen irrespectively of human activity or inactivity, no political action could possibly prevent them. Of course, there are precautions that can be taken, but the framing of terrorist attack as a catastrophe points to spatial and temporal characteristics that are beyond "rationality." Thus, political decision makers are exempted from the responsibility to provide security—as long as they at least try to preempt an attack. Interestingly enough, 9/11 was framed as catastrophe in various commissions dealing with the question of who was responsible and whether it could have been prevented. This makes clear that under the condition of uncertainty, there are no objective criteria that could serve as an anchor for measuring dangers and assessing the quality of political responses. For ex- ample, as much as one might object to certain measures by the US administration, it is almost impossible to "measure" the success of countermeasures. Of course, there might be a subjective assessment of specific shortcomings or failures, but there is no "common" currency to evaluate them. As a consequence, the framework of the security dilemma fails to capture the basic uncertainties. Pushing the door open for the security paradox, the main problem of security analysis then becomes the question how to integrate dangers in risk assessments and security policies about which simply nothing is known. In the mid 1990s, a Rand study entitled "New Challenges for Defense Planning" addressed this issue arguing that "most striking is the fact that we do not even know who or what will constitute the most serious future threat, "^i In order to cope with this challenge it would be essential, another Rand researcher wrote, to break free from the "tyranny" of plausible scenario planning. The decisive step would be to create "discontinuous scenarios ... in which there is no plausible audit trail or storyline from current events"52 These nonstandard scenarios were later called "wild cards" and became important in the current US strategic discourse. They justified the transformation from a threat-based toward a capability- based defense planning strategy.53 The problem with this kind of risk assessment is, however, that even the most absurd scenarios can gain plausibility. By constructing a chain of potentialities, improbable events are linked and brought into the realm of the possible, if not even the probable. "Although the likelihood of the scenario dwindles with each step, the residual impression is one of plausibility. "54 This so-called Othello effect has been effective in the dawn of the recent war in Iraq. The connection between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda that the US government tried to prove was disputed from the very beginning. False evidence was again and again presented and refuted, but this did not prevent the administration from presenting as the main rationale for war the improbable yet possible connection between Iraq and the terrorist network and the improbable yet possible proliferation of an improbable yet possible nuclear weapon into the hands of Bin Laden. As Donald Rumsfeld famously said: "Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence." This sentence indicates that under the condition of genuine uncertainty, different evidence criteria prevail than in situations where security problems can be assessed with relative certainty.

**Err aff--the media and state most likely overinflate the threat**

**Jackson 12**—Director of the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, the University of Otago. Former. Professor of International Politics at Aberystwyth University (8/5/12, Richard, The Great Con of National Security, http://richardjacksonterrorismblog.wordpress.com/2012/08/05/the-great-con-of-national-security/)

It may have once been the case that being attacked by another country was a major threat to the lives of ordinary people. It may also be true that there are still some pretty serious dangers out there associated with the spread of nuclear weapons. For the most part, however, most of what you’ve been told about national security and all the big threats which can supposedly kill you is one big con designed to distract you from the things that can really hurt you, such as the poverty, inequality and structural violence of capitalism, global warming, and the manufacture and proliferation of weapons – among others. The facts are simple and irrefutable: you’re far more likely to die from lack of health care provision than you are from terrorism; from stress and overwork than Iranian or North Korean nuclear missiles; from lack of road safety than from illegal immigrants; from mental illness and suicide than from computer hackers; from domestic violence than from asylum seekers; from the misuse of legal medicines and alcohol abuse than from international drug lords. And yet, politicians and the servile media spend most of their time talking about the threats posed by terrorism, immigration, asylum seekers, the international drug trade, the nuclear programmes of Iran and North Korea, computer hackers, animal rights activism, the threat of China, and a host of other issues which are all about as equally unlikely to affect the health and well-being of you and your family. Along with this obsessive and perennial discussion of so-called ‘national security issues’, the state spends truly vast sums on security measures which have virtually no impact on the actual risk of dying from these threats, and then engages in massive displays of ‘security theatre’ designed to show just how seriously the state takes these threats – such as the x-ray machines and security measures in every public building, surveillance cameras everywhere, missile launchers in urban areas, drones in Afghanistan, armed police in airports, and a thousand other things. This display is meant to convince you that these threats are really, really serious. And while all this is going on, the rulers of society are hoping that you won’t notice that increasing social and economic inequality in society leads to increased ill health for a growing underclass; that suicide and crime always rise when unemployment rises; that workplaces remain highly dangerous and kill and maim hundreds of people per year; that there are preventable diseases which plague the poorer sections of society; that domestic violence kills and injures thousands of women and children annually; and that globally, poverty and preventable disease kills tens of millions of people needlessly every year. In other words, they are hoping that you won’t notice how much structural violence there is in the world. More than this, they are hoping that you won’t notice that while literally trillions of dollars are spent on military weapons, foreign wars and security theatre (which also arguably do nothing to make any us any safer, and may even make us marginally less safe), that domestic violence programmes struggle to provide even minimal support for women and children at risk of serious harm from their partners; that underfunded mental health programmes mean long waiting lists to receive basic care for at-risk individuals; that drug and alcohol rehabilitation programmes lack the funding to match the demand for help; that welfare measures aimed at reducing inequality have been inadequate for decades; that health and safety measures at many workplaces remain insufficiently resourced; and that measures to tackle global warming and developing alternative energy remain hopelessly inadequate. Of course, none of this is surprising. Politicians are a part of the system; they don’t want to change it. For them, all the insecurity, death and ill-health caused by capitalist inequality are a price worth paying to keep the basic social structures as they are. A more egalitarian society based on equality, solidarity, and other non-materialist values would not suit their interests, or the special interests of the lobby groups they are indebted to. It is also true that dealing with economic and social inequality, improving public health, changing international structures of inequality, restructuring the military-industrial complex, and making the necessary economic and political changes to deal with global warming will be extremely difficult and will require long-term commitment and determination. For politicians looking towards the next election, it is clearly much easier to paint immigrants as a threat to social order or pontificate about the ongoing danger of terrorists. It is also more exciting for the media than stories about how poor people and people of colour are discriminated against and suffer worse health as a consequence. Viewed from this vantage point, national security is one massive confidence trick – misdirection on an epic scale. Its primary function is to distract you from the structures and inequalities in society which are the real threat to the health and wellbeing of you and your family, and to convince you to be permanently afraid so that you will acquiesce to all the security measures which keep you under state control and keep the military-industrial complex ticking along. Keep this in mind next time you hear a politician talking about the threat of uncontrolled immigration, the risk posed by asylum seekers or the threat of Iran, or the need to expand counter-terrorism powers. The question is: when politicians are talking about national security, what is that they don’t want you to think and talk about? What exactly is the misdirection they are engaged in? The truth is, if you think that terrorists or immigrants or asylum seekers or Iran are a greater threat to your safety than the capitalist system, you have been well and truly conned, my friend. Don’t believe the hype: you’re much more likely to die from any one of several forms of structural violence in society than you are from immigrants or terrorism. Somehow, we need to challenge the politicians on this fact.

**Scholarly discourse and engagement with politics is key to effective structural reform - critique is insufficient.**

**Purdy ’20** - Jedediah S. Britton-Purdy et al, 20 - ("Building a Law-and-Political-Economy Framework: Beyond the Twentieth-Century Synthesis by Jedediah S. Britton-Purdy, David Singh Grewal, Amy Kapczynski, K. Sabeel Rahman :: SSRN," 3-2-2020, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\_id=3547312)//ey/

To embrace the possibility of democratic renewal requires rejecting the terms of the Twentieth-Century Synthesis. We believe that the legal realists—and thinkers in a much longer history of political thought—were right in believing that "the economy" is neither self-defining nor self-justifying. The emphasis in these traditions has been the right one: on power, distribution, and the need for legitimacy as the central themes in the organization of economic life. Moreover, precisely because economic ordering is a political and legal artifact, the idea of an "autonomous" economic domain has always been obscurantist and ideological, even when accepted in good faith.' Law does not and never could simply defer to such a realm. Rather, law is perennially involved in creating and enforcing the terms of economic ordering, most particularly through the creation and maintenance of markets. One of its most important roles, indeed, is determining who is subject to market ordering and on what terms, and who is exempted in favor of other kinds of protection or provision.' Thus the program of law, politics, and institution building often called "neoliberalism" is, and can only be, a specific theory of how to use state power, to what ends, and for whose benefit.' The ideological work of the Twentieth-Century Synthesis has been to naturalize and embed in legal institutions from the Supreme Court to the Antitrust Office and World Trade Organization a specific disposition of power. This power represents a deployment of market ordering that produces intense and cross-cutting forms of inequality and democratic erosion. However, Twentieth-Century Synthesis theorists tend not to see this, precisely because the Synthesis makes it so hard to see (or at least so easy to overlook). If it is to succeed, law and political economy will also require something beyond mere critique. It will require a positive agenda. Many new and energized voices, from the legal academy to political candidates to movement activists, are already building in this direction,' calling for and giving shape to programs for more genuine democracy that also takes seriously questions of economic power and racial subordination;171 more equal distribution of resources and life chances;172 more public and shared resources and infrastructues;173 the displacement of concentrated corporate power and rooting of new forms of worker power;174 the end of mass incarceration and broader contestation of the long history of the criminalization and control of poor people and people of color in building capitalism;175 the recognition of finance and money as public infrastructures;176 the challenges posed by emerging forms of power and control arising from new technologies;177 and the need for a radical new emphasis on ecology.178 These are the materials from which a positive agenda, over time, will be built. Political fights interact generatively with scholarly and policy debates in pointing the way toward a more democratic political economy. The emergence of new grassroots movements, campaigns, and proposals seeking to deepen our democracy is no guarantee of success. But their prevalence and influence make clear the dangers and opportunities of this moment of upheaval—and highlight the stakes of building a new legal imaginary. 179 Neoliberal political economy, with its underlying commitments to efficiency, neutrality, and anti-politics, helped animate, shape, and legitimate a twentieth-century consensus that erased power, encased the market, and reinscribed racialized, economic, and gendered inequities. By contrast, a legal imaginary of democratic political economy, that takes seriously underlying concepts of power, equality, and democracy, can inform a wave of legal thought whose critique and policy imagination can amplify and accelerate these movements for structural reform and, if we are lucky, help remake our polity in more deeply democratic ways.

**Reform makes revolution more likely. Rejecting it condescendingly asserts the possibility of radical change is better than the certainty of real improvement.**

**Delgado ’87** - Delgado, Richard [teaches civil rights and critical race theory at University of Alabama School of Law. He has written and co-authored numerous articles and books], “The Ethereal Scholar: Does Critical Legal Studies Have What Minorities Want?”, Harvard Civil Rights - Civil Liberties Law Review, 1987

Critical scholars reject the idea of piecemeal reform. Incremental change, they argue, merely postpones the wholesale reformation that must occur to create a decent society.38 Even worse, an unfair social system survives by using piecemeal reform to disguise and legitimize oppression. 39 Those who control the system weaken resistance by pointing to the occasional concession to, or periodic court victory of, a black plaintiff or worker as evidence that the system is fair and just.40 In fact, Crits believe that teaching the common law or using the case method in law school is a disguised means of preaching incrementalism and thereby maintaining the current power structure.41 To avoid this, CLS scholars urge law professors to abandon the case method, give up the effort to find rationality and order in the case law, and teach in an unabashedly political fashion. 42 The CLS critique of piecemeal reform is familiar, imperialistic and wrong. Minorities know from bitter experience that occasional court victories do not mean the Promised Land is at hand.43 The critique is imperialistic in that it tells minorities and other oppressed peoples how they should interpret events affecting them.44 A court order directing a housing authority to disburse funds for heating in subsidized housing may postpone the revolution, or it may not. In the meantime, the order keeps a number of poor families warm. This may mean more to them than it does to a comfortable academic working in a warm office. It smacks of paternalism to assert that the possibility of revolution later outweighs the certainty of heat now, unless there is evidence for that possibility. The Crits do not offer such evidence. Indeed, some incremental changes may bring revolutionary changes closer, not push them further away. Not all small reforms induce complacency; some may whet the appetite for further combat. The welfare family may hold a tenants' union meeting in their heated living room. CLS scholars' critique of piecemeal reform often misses these possibilities, and neglects the question of whether total change, when it comes, will be what we want.

**Adopt a hybridizing strategy - exploiting contradictions in hegemonic discourse maintains critical distance while effectively challenging the state.**

**Kapoor, 2008** (Ilan, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, “The Postcolonial Politics of Development,” p. 138-139)

There are perhaps several other social movement campaigns that could be cited as examples of a ‘hybridizing strategy’.5 But what emerges as important from the Chipko and NBA campaigns is the way in which they treat laws and policies, institutional practices, and ideological apparatuses as deconstructible. That is, they refuse to take dominant authority at face value, and proceed to reveal its contingencies. Sometimes, they expose what the hegemon is trying to disavow or hide (exclusion of affected communities in project design and implementation, faulty information gathering and dissemination). Sometimes, they problematize dominant or naturalized truths (‘development = unlimited economic growth = capitalism’, ‘big is better’, ‘technology can save the environment’). In either case, by contesting, publicizing, and politicizing accepted or hidden truths, they hybridize power, challenging its smugness and triumphalism, revealing its impurities. They show power to be, literally and figuratively, a bastard. While speaking truth to power, a hybridizing strategy also exploits the instabilities of power. In part, this involves showing up and taking advantage of the equivocations of power — conflicting laws, contradictory policies, unfulfilled promises. A lot has to do here with publicly shaming the hegemon, forcing it to remedy injustices and live up to stated commitments in a more accountable and transparent manner. And, in part, this involves nurturing or manipulating the splits and strains within institutions. Such maneuvering can take the form of cultivating allies, forging alliances, or throwing doubt on prevailing orthodoxy. Note, lastly, the way in which a hybridizing strategy works with the dominant discourse. This reflects the negotiative aspect of Bhabha’s performativity. The strategy may outwit the hegemon, but it does so from the interstices of the hegemony. The master may be paralyzed, but his paralysis is induced using his own poison/medicine. It is for this reason that cultivating allies in the adversarial camp is possible: when you speak their language and appeal to their own ethical horizons, you are building a modicum of common ground. It is for this reason also that the master cannot easily dismiss or crush you. Observing his rules and playing his game makes it difficult for him not to take you seriously or grant you a certain legitimacy. The use of non-violent tactics may be crucial in this regard: state repression is easily justified against violent adversaries, but it is vulnerable to public criticism when used against non-violence. Thus, the fact that Chipko and the NBA deployed civil disobedience — pioneered, it must be pointed out, by the ‘father of the nation’ (i.e. Gandhi) — made it difficult for the state to quash them or deflect their claims.

**Anything else isn’t pragmatic**

**Zannoti ’13** - Zannoti, Laura, associate professor of Political Science at Virginia Tech., Ph.D. from the University of Washington in 2008 and joined the Purdue University faculty in 2009. “Governmentality, Ontology, Methodology: Re-thinking Political Agency in the Global World”, originally published online 30 December 2013, DOI: 10.1177/0304375413512098, P. Sage Publications MC

By questioning substantialist representations of power and subjects, inquiries on the possibilities of political agency are reframed in a way that focuses on power and subjects’ relational character and the contingent processes of their (trans)formation in the context of agonic relations. Options for resistance to governmental scripts are not limited to ‘‘rejection,’’ ‘‘revolution,’’ or ‘‘dispossession’’ to regain a pristine ‘‘freedom from all constraints’’ or an immanent ideal social order. It is found instead in multifarious and contingent struggles that are constituted within the scripts of governmental rationalities and at the same time exceed and transform them. This approach questions oversimplifications of the complexities of liberal political rationalities and of their interactions with non-liberal political players and nurtures a radical skepticism about identifying universally good or bad actors or abstract solutions to political problems. International power interacts in complex ways with diverse political spaces and within these spaces it is appropriated, hybridized, redescribed, hijacked, and tinkered with. Governmentality as a heuristic focuses on performing complex diagnostics of events. It invites historically situated explorations and careful differentiations rather than overarching demonizations of ‘‘power,’’ romanticizations of the ‘‘rebel’’ or the ‘‘the local.’’ More broadly, theoretical formulations that conceive the subject in non-substantialist terms and focus on processes of subjectification, on the ambiguity of power discourses, and on hybridization as the terrain for political transformation, open ways for reconsidering political agency beyond the dichotomy of oppression/rebellion. These alternative formulations also foster an ethics of political engagement, to be continuously taken up through plural and uncertain practices, that demand continuous attention to ‘‘what happens’’ instead of fixations on ‘‘what ought to be.’’83 Such ethics of engagement would not await the revolution to come or hope for a pristine ‘‘freedom’’ to be regained. Instead, it would constantly attempt to twist the working of power by playing with whatever cards are available and would require intense processes of reflexivity on the consequences of political choices. To conclude with a famous phrase by Michel Foucault ‘‘my point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to hyper- and pessimistic activism.

**Our material impacts preclude – anything else is an ivory tower appeal to the white academy and homogenizes subjectivity**

**Curry 14** – Tommy J. Curry (“Black Studies, Not Morality: Anti-Black Racism, Neo-Liberal Cooptation, and the Challenges to Black Studies Under Intersectional Axioms” Forthcoming in Emerging Voices of Africana: Disciplinary Resonances, Third World-Red Sea Press, ed. Michael Tillotson. 2014. Accessed via academia.edu)

There is a mythology at work in how Black people think about the utilization of knowledge against the structures of racism and white supremacy that result in the inevitability of anti-Black death. In the academy and the concentric communities that center scholarly knowledge as the basis of discourse, there is a practice among various levels of students that de-radicalize the potential of these criticisms to make meaningful change in the structures and mentality of all those involved. The Black undergraduate and graduate student lacking the professional credentials to assert their opinion as true, or insightful, as the product of scholarly research, utilizes mimicry to convince the listener of the rightness of their position. In taking on, or parroting, the radical literature of their heroes and heroines, they strive to transform the insights of these/ their professors, lawyers, activists into a new morality. This morality seeks to escape any practical debates about the construction and constructing of a new world, or new consciousness. For these students, repeating the sacred texts of high intellectuals; the manipulators of post-structural texts/postcolonial discourse/psychoanalytic theories of death, life, power, gender, the Black woman, capitalism, bare life, vestibularity, and of course race, seek to convince the world that as disciples of these texts, they (the poor, the Black, the female, the marginalized student) in fact do hold the key to understanding the world beneath them, as they are now elevated to the realms of theory, from the perspectives of their gods who reside in the Ivory tower. The mistake Black theorists make in understanding the ineffectiveness of their theories to transform the world is fundamentally rooted in the actuality of the world before them. Despite the radicality—the (new) content, the (revolutionary) ideas, and the (existential) ethicality— of the proposed theory, there is an apriori belief by the “radical (Black) theorist” that the oppressor class, be they: white, bourgeois, or male; the people the theory is directed towards, are in fact moral people able to be persuaded, convinced, and transformed through their own capacities and recognition of the “other realities” suffered by the oppressed. There is an erroneous belief that Black theory can be understood, acted upon, recognized by a person that can understand, or a newly emerged person that can now understand, the perspective of the “representative of the oppressed” speaking to them. Why is this case? What is it in the act of critiquing whites, the bourgeoisie, or men that make the oppressed believe fundamentally that these groups can change? For the people who are “actually oppressed,” “materially oppressed,” “silenced,” or the Black male who is killed/dead and cannot speak, but only be spoken about by the academics who use his death as a symbol—a catalyst—of conversation with whites, this belief does not exist. But for this group, Black theorists and their parrots, who are the “representatives of the oppressed” that merely act as sleeping dictionaries, or in the case of Black men, talking monkeys this belief is substantiated by an ancient faith in reason and the modern hope of discourse. A Black intellectual socialized to imitate white theories and by effect the pre-established semiotics that signify “intellect” as the basis of their discourse with whites under the banner of radicality, pessimism or anti-racist realism is of the greatest concern. In its brute reality, this discursive replication was the primary concern of Carter G. Woodson’s The Miseducation of the Negro (1933). Contrary to the pop culture summation of Woodson’s 1933 work, Woodson was not primarily concerned with the general education of Blacks by whites, Woodson was concerned with the “highly educated Negro,” who in studying the ideas founded upon white understandings of philosophy, economics, law, and religion, sought to apply this knowledge to the Black community. “The educated Negro have the attitude of contempt toward their own people because in their own as well as in their mixed schools Negroes are taught to admire the Hebrew, the Latin and the Teuton and to despite the African” (Woodson, 1933, p.1). Woodson’s comment upon the disciplinary/civilizational basis of “theory,” is profound, despite being almost a century old. The highly educated Negro, the same culprit of E. Franklin Frazier’s Failure of the Negro/Black Intellectual, seeks to distant themselves from the Black community who remain mere objects of study. Seeing themselves as ontologically different from the other-Black-objects they study, these Black theorist(s) speak to white gatekeepers and members of their own intellectual class who reward them for the adamancy and spread of the ideas offered as morality. By claiming to be enlightened and spreading “truth” the post-structural/intersectional theorist need not know about the actual conditions of the people they speak of, they need only present these bodies and their conditions through the theories accepted by their particular discipline and/or disciplinary community. Black Study effectively becomes the process of confining/distorting/revising Black life to fit theory. As Ahmed reminds us, “facts require explanations, and all explanations, even bad ones, presume a configuration of concepts, which we provisionally call 'theory,' In other words, theory is not simply a desirable but a necessary relation between facts and their explanations” (1994, p.34). It is when this theory is considered to be ontological—fundamental and necessary to the facts they seek to explain—that they become apriori and ideological. It is this paradigm from which the theory we concern ourselves with, and its effect upon the actual study of Black people, are placed at odds with Black Studies. Since the ontological claim is apriori, it dismisses the need for the study of Black life since it takes the relation between the facts of Black existence and theories proposed to be necessary to the Black bodies observed. The truth concerning Blackness thereby becomes revelation of some constant unchanging principle within Blackness rather than the study of structures, historically conditioned and dynamic, upon Black peoples. This bourgeois fanaticism voids the world of actual Black people and replaces them with Black subjects found wanting for knowledge, recognition, and the politics of the “Black theorist-observer.” In the cases of intra-group critiques like that of Black feminism, or Black queer/quare theories of Blackness, the reaction of the Black theorist becomes peculiar. Knowing that the objects of their criticism are powerless, in the sense that they do not generate the ideologies or control the institutions that allow them to be patriarchs, owners, or capital “O” oppressors, these critiques construct the Black community as the masculine extension of the Black male’s pathology. The Black community then is not dynamic, but despotic. In its discursive rendering of the gender and sexual dynamics that produce homophobia and sexism, Blackness is masculinized, so that the creation of the image needed to give teeth to these accounts resonates with the negrophobia of the white listener. In other words, these theories are not geared towards the cultural and psychical transformations in the Black community, as seen from the perspective of those in these communities, but rather they exist in methodological and derelictical crisis (Curry, 2011a; 2011b) being fundamentally geared towards the formulation of accounts that epistemologically converge with theories given by the academy so that these reflections about Blackness gain currency with mainstream academic thought and given the title of “theory.” This process is valued even though the cost of making these theories recognizable resulting in pathologizing the community these theories are supposed to reflect. This is not to say that there is not homophobia, sexism, classism, colorism, and other manifestations of derivative power differences maintained by white supremacism in the Black community. It is to say however, that isolating gender to females as if Black men do not suffer from their hetero-maleness, or making queerness/quareness into a universal corrective to Blackness without attending to the class differential of those queer/quare speakers and the impoverished heteronormative Christian Blacks they speak about only perpetuates the conceptual and actual distance that “highly educated Negros” have from the problems their theories claim to represent. Suggesting that the Black community can be seen through its problems, without attending to the causes of these phenomena, is in all reality an erasure of the complexity of Black life. These “theories” are in fact demanding that the actual lives of Black people be erased, eradicated, and demonized for the convenience of theoretical coherence/currency amongst other “educated Black elites.” For the narrative of grand theories like Black feminism, or queer theory, or Marxism to remain legitimate, the complex lives of Black people who fall out of their universalist accounts have to be censored. The desire to censor that which does not support “the grand narrative,” is why fundamental aspects of anti-Blackness, and routine aspects of Black life remain unattended to in Black scholarship. This expurgation of texts, topics, and themes to reflect that which is “theoretically permissible” is why the sexual abuse of Black men and boys by Black men and Black women in our very own communities, even when shown to us by the memoir of Antwone Fisher’s Finding Fish (2001), or historically with the rape of Black men by white men and women documented by Thomas Foster’s (2011) article “The Sexual Abuse of Black Men under American Slavery,” remain ignored and denied by the intellectuals /disciples of these moralities/theories. What the presence of these ideologies show, in Black debates about Blackness, is that the presence of Black bodies, and Black voices, do little to change the dominant power structures in society, or the academy alike. The quotidian repetition of the trinity, “race, class and gender,” does nothing to challenge, uproot, or reorient Western categories of knowledge. In fact, the adoption of these categories only extend the Europe’s taxonomic claim over Black bodies, distorting them epistemologically, over-determining them ontologically, and confining them politically. Accepting these categories ergonomically contoured upon the bodies and anthropology of whites only reproduces, or rather indicates the reification of, white supremacist logics upon Black inquiry (Luguones, 2010). The decision to “see” and “understand” that which was deemed Black and non-human through the machinations created by the white human indicates that the contingency of white cultural inventions, and the anti-Blackness carried within, has have been elevated to the status of universal and nature human (social) delineations. Politically, this commits Black theorists to the legitimacy of white reformist apparati which fit these categories used to describe disadvantage. Under these white anthropological categories, the Black thinker asks for (human) recognition, demands the (equal) rights of citizenship, cries out for the (justice) thought to be held in the rule of law, despite their claims of radicality which suggest that Blackness is founded only upon violence, invisibility, and tyranny. Though acknowledged rhetorically, the positionality of the colonized/civilized/white is taken to be the end of the racial suffering for the native/uncivilized/ Black. In short, race, class, and gender demands us to attend to the extent that we are racially, sexually, or economically disadvantaged for not being recognized and embedded within empire as white, not a divestment in that which is presented as natural, but in fact only the cultural inventions of white supremacist taxonomies. The liberal translation of racism-white supremacy, sexual exploitation, and economic deprivation into race, gender, and class functions as an outstretched hand allowing the white imagination and the Eurocentric canon an opportunity to grasp onto the problems created by the Eurocentric order of knowledge that produced them. These realities of dehumanization are originally rooted in the racist anthropology that essentialized hierarchy into sexuality and ordered capital and property around these prior divisions. This is what is meant in the distinction made in “On Derelict and Method” (2011a) between pseudological criticism and culturalogical formulations of knowledge which create and situate knowledge, and the theories used to explain Black existence, upon the relation Blackness has to the world immediately, rather than its assimilation into the world by the extent to which it adopts the standards and pathologies of occidentalist anthropology (e.g. humanity, gender, unconsciousness, etc.). Pseudological criticism is not meant to overthrow the systems of knowledge, or question the existence of the oppressor class. It seeks recognition from them and as such proceeds to engage white consciousness, or Black moral/ideological sentiment as the basis of claiming to “transform” the subject matter of the critique. The Black theorist, as pseudological advocate, is now propagandist: where arguments are not based on the rigor by which facts concerning Black life are explainable through a particular theory, but rather how a said theory is valued axiomatically—being preferred to all other explanations simply there is goodness associated politically within disciplines and the concentric Black emanating from the university that see the world from this particular view. The inherent goodness or badness of a theoretical is dangerously anti-social. Situated as a means by which the recognized morality of theories creates and expands its following, rather than communities able to criticize, test, and examine the claimed relationship between itself and the facts of Blackness in the world. This tendency must be resisted by culturalogical constructions of knowledge and real BLACK RADICALISM; a radicalism like that urged by Sylvia Wynter (2006) in “On How We Mistook the Map for the Territory and Re-Imprisoned Ourselves in Our Unbearable Wrongness of Being, of Desétre: Black Studies Toward the Human Project,” that does not presuppose the philosophical anthropology and humanism of a white/western world as the basis of corrective for the ills of knowledge. The vulnerability of Black Studies, the appeal to conceptualizations of white being as the basis and template from which thought about Blackness emanates, was driven by three factors for Wynter: (1) the end of the civil rights movement, (2) the defection of the most creatively original practitioner of the Black Arts movement Leroi Jones/Amiri Baraka, and (3) “the rise of Black feminist thought and fiction, which took as one of their major targets the male and macho hegemonic aspect of the Black nationalist aesthetic and its correlated Black Arts Movement, even where Black women had played as creative a role as men” (Wynter, 2006, p. 110). “The coup de grace to both the Black Arts and the Black Aesthetic Movements, however, was to be given by the hegemonic rise of a black (soon to be ‘African-American’) poststructuralist and ‘multicultural’ literary theory and criticism spearheaded by Henry Louis Gates, Jr.” (p.110). The rise of post-structuralism, its designation as high theory, and its application to visceral Blackness divested the power of the Black Arts Movement and the political ideals of the Black Power Movement to challenge and replace the disciplinary pillars of white literary and philosophical foundations. Gates application of Continental philosophy was not without baggage. These theories carried with them certain metaphysical presumptions that were, like the veracity of their universal claim to humanity, illusory. Following Madhu Dubey’s analysis put forth in her book Black Women Novelists and the Nationalist Aesthetic (1994), Wynter sees the argument waged against the Black Nationalist aesthetic as somewhat contradictory. Though “Gates poststructuralist critique had now come to accuse practitioners of Black Aesthetics and Black Arts, in Derridian terms, of putting forward a metaphysical concept of Blackness as presence and thereby, instead of displacing an essentialist notion of identity, of having merely installed Blackness as another transcendent signified” (2006, p.111). Rejecting such a tendency in articulations of Blackness became itself a recognized and cherished good throughout the academy, so much so that waging the charge of essentialism, this metaphysical Blackness, in another’s work was tantamount to being “seen” as profound critique. Morality therefore stands in for rigor in the disciplinary anxiety towards a “Black” Black Studies and buttresses the popular recognition (the confirmation bias) of these good values shared between scholars which stand in for actual argument. In short, Black Nationalism was accused of being “entrapped by racial essentialism which by its reversal of the Western definition of Blackness had come to depend on the absent presence of the Western framework it sets out to subvert” (Wynter, 2006, p. 111). Recognizing that Gates’ critique of Black Power/Nationalist Aesthetics simply recentered the metaphysical framework by which ontology is viewed in the West, Wynter concludes that it was in fact “Gates’ poststructuralist activity itself [which] depends on the absent present of the very same Western framework that it was also ostensibly contesting” (ibid.). Similar to the analysis of Aijaz Ahmed’s In Theory, Wynter points out the disciplinary, and hence political, normalization of Black Nationalism as irreverent rhetoric(s) with little theoretical content able to substantively provide an alternative to Western metaphysical problems of MAN. This reductive reading of Black Power/Nationalism outside of its aims toward decolonization (of knowledge and society) is the natural defense mechanism of white disciplinarity. According to Wynter, the recognition of Black Power’s transformative cultural substance is incomprehensible in our present order of knowledge for two reasons: “the first is due to the imperviousness of our present disciplines to phenomena that fall outside their predefined scope; the second, to our reluctance to see a relationship…between the epistemology of knowledge and the liberation of a people” (2006, p.113). This is a relationship Wynter ultimately concludes that “we are not properly able to theorize” (2006, p.113). The title of Wynter’s essay is of the utmost importance in our consideration of her immediate point. Mistaking the map for the territory is a rarely spoken of reification fallacy by which one mistakes the abstraction of an entity/object for the material object itself. In appealing to “theory,” Black people have come to experience themselves as désetre/dysbeing ultimately making Blackness, even in its allegedly critical moments imitative of the Absolutely Being—the dispositions, ills, and failures of European man under the veil of the cherished HUMAN and his REASON. Such mimicry is only the triumph of white supremacy, not its refutation—a goal requiring its disentanglement from the Black humanity. Conclusion: There are no liberation strategies against anti-Blackness that can occur within discourses or debates presuming the liberatory processes of dialectic and dialogic remedy if the categories Black people are confined to remain enclosed within the assumptions and predilections of European man. The oppositional logic ignited by the deployment of gender constructions on Black bodies making the Black hetero-male the mimetic equivalent of white patriarchy, as well as the assumptions of Enlightenment liberalism codified as recognition of the plight/invisibility of the racial/gendered/marginalized other, concretizes rather than dispels the mythology of Black pathology. To suggest that within Blackness—the zones of non-Being that precede the genocidal rage of white negrophobia—Black inhumanity is imitative, not only desiring, but confining itself to the existing oppressive relations of white people to the world, is to hold that within Black people unable to live out their existentially known humanity under white supremacy there actually resides multiple axes of self-actualized and hierarchialized power over other non-Beings that remains structured, existing, and a mirroring of white actualized Being. This thesis, which selectively assigns moral revelation and escapism to intersectional subjects, ultimately suggests that Black life, Black existence has no content and substance of its own. It is to theorize Blackness as completely mimetic and impotent to create fundamentally different relations to the world and others outside of the colonial meanings and oppositions taken to be essential to race, class, and gender. The aforementioned problem of “thinking Blackness,” theoretically is the product of what Lewis Gordon (2006) has termed disciplinary decadence, or the inability of thinking to escape the ontology of the disciplines and decadent traditions from which they originate. The weight of Gordon’s reflection is not in its corrective vision of thought within the university, but its articulation of the consequences suffered in “our thinking” about Blackness through the codifications of anti-Blackness trapped within the works, texts, and histories of Europe. Blackness, when left to be accounted for within thinking of the Black theorist-observer, and I would add teleological impetus assigned to Black “Man” as homo politicus, and homo economicus, inscribes the racist presumptions of a barbarous Black nature incapable of reflective thought and alternative orders which emerge from their existence that can sustain a civilization. It is to presume that the Black political can only be the imitation, assimilation, and preservation into the realm of Western man. This is why Wynter rejects Western man, gender, white anthropology, precisely because she understands that this is not a matter of focus as if reason is universal, but cultural construction, since reason like man is the contingent product of Europe's aspiration to "BE." Wynter (2006) rightly notes, it was to be as a function of the West’s institutionalization of itself in terms of its then epochally new self-conception or sociogenic code as Absolute Being (whether in its first form as homo politicus, or from the nineteenth century onward, in its purely supernaturalized form as biocentric homo oeconomicus, with both variants over-represented as if they were the human), thereby, that the majority of the darker-skinned peoples of the earth (all of whom were now to be incorporated, willy nilly into the West’s epochally new conception of the human and its correlated formulation of a general order of existence) would come to be seen, known, and classified, as we also came to see, know, and classify ourselves, not as other human beings but, instead as Native, Negro, Blackfellas, and ultimately, Nigger Others to the True Human Self of the West’s Man (p.146). Thus critique, our application and turning of reason/dialogue/consciousness to Blackness is assimilationist; only achieving “Being” hypothetically, as being recognized like a white human because Black people exhibit the same ontological failures of white humanity. Such discussions therefore insist upon the substitution of Blackness for whiteness so that to "Be" in a world that is situated in "Non-Being," is to act, think, be pathological like the biological western man, but as we know this is an inadequate answer to the sociogenic analysis put forth in Frantz Fanon and Aime Cesaire which demand the creation of a NEW MAN and by effect new knowledge and the end of disciplinarity. Black Studies must rededicate itself to positions of Blackness rooted in the aesthetic inclination, the creative potential of Black existence, freed from the disciplinary mandates of Western man and the invention of the Black masculine which haunts the historiography of Black Studies. High theory, (i.e. the liberal, poststructural/psychoanalytic, intersectional, feminist, reformism of the day) will not do.

**Methodological pluralism is good--stops dogmatism, creates better strategies, and avoids reductionism**

Roland **Bleiker 14**, Professor of International Relations, University of Queensland, “International Theory Between Reification and Self-Reflective Critique,” International Studies Review, 16(2), 6-17-2014, p.325-327

This book is part of an increasing trend of scholarly works that have embraced poststructural critique but want to ground it in more positive political foundations, while retaining a reluctance to return to the positivist tendencies that implicitly underpin much of constructivist research. The path that Daniel Levine has carved out is innovative, sophisticated, and convincing. A superb scholarly achievement. For Levine, the key challenge in international relations (IR) scholarship is what he calls “unchecked reification”: the widespread and dangerous process of forgetting “the distinction between theoretical concepts and the real-world things they mean to describe or to which they refer” (p. 15). The dangers are real, Levine stresses, because IR deals with some of the most difficult issues, from genocides to war. Upholding one subjective position without critical scrutiny can thus have far-reaching consequences. Following Theodor Adorno—who is the key theoretical influence on this book—Levine takes a post-positive position and assumes that the world cannot be known outside of our human perceptions and the values that are inevitably intertwined with them. His ultimate goal is to overcome reification, or, to be more precise, to recognize it as an inevitable aspect of thought so that its dangerous consequences can be mitigated. Levine proceeds in three stages: First he reviews several decades of IR theories to resurrect critical moments when scholars displayed an acute awareness of the dangers of reification. He refreshingly breaks down distinctions between conventional and progressive scholarship, for he detects self-reflective and critical moments in scholars that are usually associated with straightforward positivist positions (such as E.H. Carr, Hans Morgenthau, or Graham Allison). But Levine also shows how these moments of self-reflexivity never lasted long and were driven out by the compulsion to offer systematic and scientific knowledge. The second stage of Levine's inquiry outlines why IR scholars regularly closed down critique. Here, he points to a range of factors and phenomena, from peer review processes to the speed at which academics are meant to publish. And here too, he eschews conventional wisdom, showing that work conducted in the wake of the third debate, while explicitly post-positivist and critiquing the reifying tendencies of existing IR scholarship, often lacked critical self-awareness. As a result, Levine believes that many of the respective authors failed to appreciate sufficiently that “reification is a consequence of all thinking—including itself” (p. 68). The third objective of Levine's book is also the most interesting one. Here, he outlines the path toward what he calls “sustainable critique”: a form of self-reflection that can counter the dangers of reification. Critique, for him, is not just something that is directed outwards, against particular theories or theorists. It is also inward-oriented, ongoing, and sensitive to the “limitations of thought itself” (p. 12). The challenges that such a sustainable critique faces are formidable. Two stand out: First, if the natural tendency to forget the origins and values of our concepts are as strong as Levine and other Adorno-inspired theorists believe they are, then how can we actually recognize our own reifying tendencies? Are we not all inevitably and subconsciously caught in a web of meanings from which we cannot escape? Second, if one constantly questions one's own perspective, does one not fall into a relativism that loses the ability to establish the kind of stable foundations that are necessary for political action? Adorno has, of course, been critiqued as relentlessly negative, even by his second-generation Frankfurt School successors (from Jürgen Habermas to his IR interpreters, such as Andrew Linklater and Ken Booth). The response that Levine has to these two sets of legitimate criticisms are, in my view, both convincing and useful at a practical level. He starts off with depicting reification not as a flaw that is meant to be expunged, but as an a priori condition for scholarship. The challenge then is not to let it go unchecked. Methodological pluralism lies at the heart of Levine's sustainable critique. He borrows from what Adorno calls a “constellation”: an attempt to juxtapose, rather than integrate, different perspectives. It is in this spirit that Levine advocates multiple methods to understand the same event or phenomena. He writes of the need to validate “multiple and mutually incompatible ways of seeing” (p. 63, see also pp. 101–102). In this model, a scholar oscillates back and forth between different methods and paradigms, trying to understand the event in question from multiple perspectives. No single method can ever adequately represent the event or should gain the upper hand. But each should, in a way, recognize and capture details or perspectives that the others cannot (p. 102). In practical terms, this means combining a range of methods even when—or, rather, precisely when—they are deemed incompatible. They can range from poststructual deconstruction to the tools pioneered and championed by positivist social sciences. The benefit of such a methodological polyphony is not just the opportunity to bring out nuances and new perspectives. Once the false hope of a smooth synthesis has been abandoned, the very incompatibility of the respective perspectives can then be used to identify the reifying tendencies in each of them. For Levine, this is how reification may be “checked at the source” and this is how a “critically reflexive moment might thus be rendered sustainable” (p. 103). It is in this sense that Levine's approach is not really post-foundational but, rather, an attempt to “balance foundationalisms against one another” (p. 14). There are strong parallels here with arguments advanced by assemblage thinking and complexity theory—links that could have been explored in more detail.