## 1

#### Our interpretation is that the aff should only defend desirability of the hypothetical implementation of a topical governmental action.

#### Resolved requires policy action

Louisiana State Legislature (<https://www.legis.la.gov/legis/Glossary.aspx>) Ngong

**Resolution**

**A legislative instrument** that generally is **used for** making declarations, **stating policies**, and making decisions where some other form is not required. A bill includes the constitutionally required enacting clause; a resolution **uses the term "resolved".** Not subject to a time limit for introduction nor to governor's veto. ( Const. Art. III, §17(B) and House Rules 8.11 , 13.1 , 6.8 , and 7.4 and Senate Rules 10.9, 13.5 and 15.1)

#### Violation: they don’t and they gain offense off something that isn’t the passage of a government action i.e. the method. Reading a disad is insufficient when they would uplayer it.

#### Debate is a game since we’re both here to win so procedural questions come first. The only role of the ballot and judge is to vote for whoever better debated the topic. Only evaluating the consequences of the plan allows us to determine the practical impacts of politics and preserves the predictability that fosters engagement. Rigorous contestation and third and fourth-line testing are key to generate the self-reflexivity that creates ethical subjects.

#### Vote Neg:

#### Their interp explodes limits and allows affs to monopolize the moral high ground. The lack of a stable mechanism lets them radically re-contextualize their aff and erase neg ground via perms – that causes a race to the margins where they’re incentivized to defend uncontestable statements like “racism bad” or “2+2=4.” Caselists are concessionary, unpredictable, beaten by perms, and don’t justify their model.

#### 2] SSD is good – it forces debaters to consider a controversial issue from multiple perspectives. Non-T affs allow individuals to establish their own metrics for what they want to debate leading to ideological dogmatism, while SSD encompasses your education.

#### 3] TVA: Allow for strikes to destroy the state and meaning

#### Detailed research over specific points of difference is necessary for activism.

**Iverson ’9** [Joel; 2009; Associate Professor of Communication at the University of Montana, Ph.D in Communication from Arizona State University Relations at the University of Sydney; Debate Central, “Can Cutting Cards Carve into Our Personal Lives: An Analysis of Debate Research on Personal Advocacy,” https://debate.uvm.edu/dybvigiverson1000.html; GR]

Mitchell (1998) provides a thorough examination of the pedagogical implication for academic debate. Although Mitchell acknowledges that debate provides preparation for participation in democracy, limiting debate to a laboratory where students practice their skill for future participation is criticized. Mitchell contends:

For students and teachers of argumentation, the heightened salience of this question should signal the danger that critical thinking and oral advocacy skills alone may not be sufficient for citizens to assert their voices in public deliberation. (p. 45)

Mitchell contends that the laboratory style setting creates barriers to other spheres, creates a "sense of detachment" and causes debaters to see research from the role of spectators. Mitchell further calls for "argumentative agency [which] involves the capacity to contextualize and employ the skills and strategies of argumentative discourse in fields of social action, especially wider spheres of public deliberation" (p. 45). Although we agree with Mitchell that debate can be an even greater instrument of empowerment for students, we are more interested in examining the impact of the intermediary step of research. In each of Mitchell's examples of debaters finding creative avenues for agency, there had to be a motivation to act. It is our contention that the research conducted for competition is a major catalyst to propel their action, change their opinions, and to provide a greater depth of understanding of the issues involved.

The level of research involved in debate creates an in-depth understanding of issues. The level of research conducted during a year of debate is quite extensive. Goodman (1993) references a Chronicle of Higher Education article that estimated "the level and extent of research required of the average college debater for each topic is equivalent to the amount of research required for a Master's Thesis (cited in Mitchell, 1998, p. 55). With this extensive quantity of research, debaters attain a high level of investigation and (presumably) understanding of a topic. As a result of this level of understanding, debaters become knowledgeable citizens who are further empowered to make informed opinions and energized to take action. Research helps to educate students (and coaches) about the state of the world.

Without the guidance of a debate topic, how many students would do in-depth research on female genital mutilation in Africa, or United Nations sanctions on Iraq? The competitive nature of policy debate provides an impetus for students to research the topics that they are going to debate. This in turn fuels students’ awareness of issues that go beyond their front doors. Advocacy flows from this increased awareness. Reading books and articles about the suffering of people thousands of miles away or right in our own communities drives people to become involved in the community at large.

Research has also focused on how debate prepares us for life in the public sphere. Issues that we discuss in debate have found their way onto the national policy stage, and training in intercollegiate debate makes us good public advocates. The public sphere is the arena in which we all must participate to be active citizens. Even after we leave debate, the skills that we have gained should help us to be better advocates and citizens. Research has looked at how debate impacts education (Matlon and Keele 1984), legal training (Parkinson, Gisler and Pelias 1983, Nobles 19850 and behavioral traits (McGlone 1974, Colbert 1994). These works illustrate the impact that public debate has on students as they prepare to enter the public sphere.

The debaters who take active roles such as protesting sanctions were probably not actively engaged in the issue until their research drew them into the topic. Furthermore, the process of intense research for debate may actually change the positions debaters hold. Since debaters typically enter into a topic with only cursory (if any) knowledge of the issue, the research process provides exposure to issues that were previously unknown. Exposure to the literature on a topic can create, reinforce or alter an individual's opinions. Before learning of the School for the America's, having an opinion of the place is impossible. After hearing about the systematic training of torturers and oppressors in a debate round and reading the research, an opinion of the "school" was developed. In this manner, exposure to debate research as the person finding the evidence, hearing it as the opponent in a debate round (or as judge) acts as an initial spark of awareness on an issue. This process of discovery seems to have a similar impact to watching an investigative news report.

Mitchell claimed that debate could be more than it was traditionally seen as, that it could be a catalyst to empower people to act in the social arena. We surmise that there is a step in between the debate and the action. The intermediary step where people are inspired to agency is based on the research that they do. If students are compelled to act, research is a main factor in compelling them to do so. Even if students are not compelled to take direct action, research still changes opinions and attitudes.

Research often compels students to take action in the social arena. Debate topics guide students in a direction that allows them to explore what is going on in the world. Last year the college policy debate topic was,

Resolved: That the United States Federal Government should adopt a policy of constructive engagement, including the immediate removal of all or nearly all economic sanctions, with the government(s) of one or more of the following nation-states: Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Syria, North Korea.

This topic spurred quite a bit of activism on the college debate circuit. Many students become actively involved in protesting for the removal of sanctions from at least one of the topic countries. The college listserve was used to rally people in support ofvarious movements to remove sanctions on both Iraq and Cuba. These messages were posted after the research on the topic began. While this topic did not lend itself to activism beyond rallying the government, other topics have allowed students to take their beliefs outside of the laboratory and into action.

In addition to creating awareness, the research process can also reinforce or alter opinions. By discovering new information in the research process, people can question their current assumptions and perhaps formulate a more informed opinion. One example comes from a summer debate class for children of Migrant workers in North Dakota (Iverson, 1999). The Junior High aged students chose to debate the adoption of Spanish as an official language in the U.S. Many students expressed their concern that they could not argue effectively against the proposed change because it was a "truism." They were wholly in favor of Spanish as an official language. After researching the topic throughout their six week course, many realized much more was involved in adopting an official language and that they did not "speak 'pure' Spanish or English, but speak a unique dialect and hybrid" (Iverson, p. 3). At the end of the class many students became opposed to adopting Spanish as an official language, but found other ways Spanish should be integrated into American culture. Without research, these students would have maintained their opinions and not enhanced their knowledge of the issue. The students who maintained support of Spanish as an official language were better informed and thus also more capable of articulating support for their beliefs.

The examples of debate and research impacting the opinions and actions of debaters indicate the strong potential for a direct relationship between debate research and personal advocacy. However, the debate community has not created a new sea of activists immersing this planet in waves of protest and political action. The level of influence debater search has on people needs further exploration. Also, the process of research needs to be more fully explored in order to understand if and why researching for the competitive activity of debate generates more interest than research for other purposes such as classroom projects.

Since parliamentary debate does not involve research into a single topic, it can provide an important reference point for examining the impact of research in other forms of debate. Based upon limited conversations with competitors and coaches as well as some direct coaching and judging experience in parliamentary debate, parliamentary forms of debate has not seen an increase in activism on the part of debaters in the United States. Although some coaches require research in order to find examples and to stay updated on current events, the basic principle of this research is to have a commonsense level of understanding(Venette, 1998). As the NPDA website explains, "the reader is encouraged to be well-read in current events, as well as history, philosophy, etc. Remember: the realm of knowledge is that of a 'well-read college student'" (NPDA Homepage,<http://www.bethel.edu/Majors/Communication/npda/faq2.html>). The focus of research is breadth, not depth. In fact, in-depth research into one topic for parliamentary debate would seem to be counterproductive. Every round has a different resolution and for APDA, at least, those resolutions are generally written so they are open to a wide array of case examples, So, developing too narrow of a focus could be competitively fatal. However, research is apparently increasing for parliamentary teams as reports of "stock cases" used by teams for numerous rounds have recently appeared. One coach did state that a perceived "stock case" by one team pushed his debaters to research the topic of AIDS in Africa in order to be equally knowledgeable in that case. Interestingly, the coach also stated that some of their research in preparation for parliamentary debate was affecting the opinions and attitudes of the debaters on the team.

Not all debate research appears to generate personal advocacy and challenge peoples' assumptions. Debaters must switch sides, so they must inevitably debate against various cases. While this may seem to be inconsistent with advocacy, supporting and researching both sides of an argument actually created stronger advocates. Not only did debaters learn both sides of an argument, so that they could defend their positions against attack, they also learned the nuances of each position. Learning and the intricate nature of various policy proposals helps debaters to strengthen their own stance on issues

#### 4] Fairness is an impact –

#### A] Fairness is good and prior – debate’s a game that requires effective competition and negation, which makes their offense inevitable, it internal link turns clash and engagement.

#### B] Cutting negs to every possible aff wrecks small schools, which has a disparate impact on under-resourced and minority debaters.

#### C] Can’t weigh the aff—it’s just as likely that they’re winning it because we weren’t able to effectively prepare to defeat it.

#### D] Inescapable – the AC conforms to every norm of debate – speed, speech times, ballots – proves they value playing the game and isolating T as the one bad rule is arbitrary.

#### E] Probability – ballots can’t shape our subjectivity or create broad political change but can rectify in-round skews.

#### No impact turns:

#### 1] T is just an argument for why the aff is a bad idea, which is what every single negative position says—there’s nothing unique about T that causes violence but the cap k or case turns don’t

#### 2] T isn’t violent – A] I don’t have the power to impose a norm – only to convince you my side is better. T doesn’t ban you from the activity – the whole point is that norms should be contestable

**Use competing interps—reasonability collapses to offense defense paradigm.**

**No RVIs — Baiting—they’ll just bait theory and prep it out—justifies infinite abuse and results in a chilling effect**

## 2

#### The resolution is incoherent-

#### 1] Merrian websters defines to as

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/to

to preposition Save Word To save this word, you'll need to log in. Log In \ tə, tu̇, ˈtü \ Definition of to (Entry 1 of 3) 1a—used as a function word to **indicate movement** or an action or condition suggestive of movement toward a place, person, or thing reached

#### But just governments can’t move to an obligations so rez is incoherent

#### 2] Merrian Websters defines right as

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/right

**having** the **axis perpendicular to** the **base**

#### But there is no base for strikes to be perpendicular to, so the rez does nothing

**3] Merrian websters defines Strike as** **to delete something**

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

#### 4] Merrian Websters defines workers as

any of the sexually underdeveloped and usually **sterile members of a colony of social ants**, bees, wasps, or termites that perform most of the labor and protective duties of the colony

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/worker

#### 5] you can’t be sure anything besides yourself exists – we could be deceived by a demon, dreaming, or in a simulation so the whole world could be nonexistent

#### 6] In order to say I want to fix x problem, you must say that you want x problem to exist, since it requires the problem exist to solve, which makes any moral attempt inherently immoral.

## Case

### 1NC – Case

#### Their investment into the university is a tool of speed-elitism. The move for more transparent discussions about revolutionary praxis mystifies the reliance on the highly exclusive and unethical technologies of the university. By figuring those technics as the metrics for liberatory strategization, that expands debate’s state of exploitation.

Hoofd 10 – Ingrid M. Hoofd is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communications and New Media at the National University of Singapore, ("The Accelerated University: Activist-Academic Alliances and the Simulation of Thought." Ephemera: Theory and politics in organisation, Vol. 10, No.1 (September 2010), <http://www.ephemerajournal.org/contribution/accelerated-university-activist-academic-alliances-and-simulation-thought>) KB + TR Recut Justin

Cries announcing the **demise** of the university abound, in particular in Europe and North America. Those who utter these cries often do this in an admirable attempt to **renew** the original mandate of the university, namely the fostering of **truth**, **justice** and **democratic debate**. Giving up on the now largely neoliberal and managerial university system that plagues Europe and the United States, some such critics try to mobilise a renewal of this mandate **outside academia’s institutional walls** with people and groups who represent an alternative to neoliberal globalisation. Much of this mobilisation is in turn done through technologies and discourses of mobility and tele-communication. Examples here are the European anti-Bologna ‘new university’ projects like Edu-Factory, the various autonomous virtual universities, and the intellectual collaboration with local and international activists and non-Western academics. I am referring here in particular to the promising formation of various extra-academic ‘activist-research’ networks and conferences over the last years, like Facoltà di Fuga (Faculty of Escape), Mobilized Investigation, Rete Ricercatori Precari (Network of Precarious Researchers), Investigacció (Research), Universidad Nómada (Nomadic University), and Glocal Research Space. Characteristically, these projects organise events that try to set up dialogues between non-Western and anti-neoliberal activists and academics, and carve out spaces for offline and web-based discussion and participation. Initiators and participants of these projects often conceptualise their positions as relating closely to **alter-globalist activism** – positions which hence are **hoped** to effectively **subvert neo-liberalism** as well as the **elitist-managerial university space** and its problematic method of scientific objectification for capitalist innovation.

In this paper, I will explain how such announcements of **the university’s demise**, the conceptualisation of its current situation as **one of crisis**, as well as the mobilisation of **the true academic mandate** today which often segues into a **nostalgia for the original university** of independent thought, truth and justice, are themselves paradoxically **complicit in the techno-acceleration that** precisely **grounds and reproduces neo-liberalism.** This is because the playing out of such nostalgia typically runs through the problematic invocation of **the humanist opposition between doing and thinking.** This causes the terms and their mode of production to become increasingly intertwined under contemporary conditions of capitalist simulation in which ‘thinking’ is more and more done in service of an economist form of ‘doing’. The aforementioned commendable projects thus paradoxically appear foremost as symptoms of acceleration.

Moreover, I will argue that this acceleration increasingly renders certain groups and individuals as **targets of techno-academic scrutiny and violence.** This increasing objectification that runs through the contemporary prostheses of the humanist subject hence spells disaster for non-technogenic forms of **gendered**, **raced** and **classed otherness.** I therefore suggest that this disastrous state of affairs is precisely carried out by the humanist promise of transcendence, democracy and justice that currently speeds up institutions like the university, and vice versa. Following this line of thought through, I claim that technological acceleration then surprisingly also harbours the promise of the coming of **a radical alternative** to neo-liberalism, and that it is precisely through the eschatological performance of this promise – arguably a repetition of the Christian belief in the apocalypse – that these activist-research projects and their neo-liberal mode of production may fruitfully **become the future objects of their own critique.** In short then, this paper attempts to affirm and displace the projects’ call for reinstating the original ‘true’ or transcending the current ‘spoilt’ university, in the hope of gesturing towards yet another alterity, through its own accelerated argument.

I argue that the complicity of projects like Edu-Factory and Facoltà di Fuga in technological acceleration should primarily be understood in terms of what I in my work call **speed-elitism** (Hoofd, 2009: 201). I extrapolate the idea of speed-elitism largely from the work of John Armitage on the discursive and technocratic machinery underlying current neoliberal capitalism. In turn, I will argue that these activist-academic projects exacerbate speed-elitism by connecting the latter to Jacques Derrida’s ideas on technology and thought, as well as the late Bill Readings’ and Fred Moten and Stefano Harney’s critiques of the contemporary university. In ‘Dromoeconomics: Towards a Political Economy of Speed’, Armitage and Phil Graham suggest that due to the capitalist need for the production of excess, there is a strong relationship between the forces of communication and the logic of speed. They connect the logic of speed specifically to a certain militarisation of society under neoliberalism. In line with Virilio’s Speed and Politics, they argue that the areas of war, communication and trade are today intimately connected through the technological usurpation and control of space (and territory), and through the compression and regulation of time. Eventually, Armitage and Graham suggest that ‘**circulation** has become **an essential process** of capitalism, **an end in itself**’ (Armitage and Graham, 2001: 118) and that therefore any form of cultural production increasingly finds itself tied up in this logic.

Neoliberal capitalism is hence a system in which the most intimate and fundamental aspects of human social life – in particular, forms of thought and linguistic difference – are formally subsumed under this system by being **circulated** as capital. In “Resisting the Neoliberal Discourse of Technology’, Armitage elaborates on this theme of circulation by pointing out that the current mode of late-capitalism relies on the continuous extension and validation of the infrastructure and the optimistic discourses of the new information technologies. Discourses that typically get repeated in favour of what I designate as the emerging speed-elite are those of connection, instantaneity, liberation, transformation, multiplicity and border crossing. **Speed-elitism**, I therefore argue, **replaces Eurocentrism** today as the primary nexus around which global and local disparities are organised, even though it largely builds on the formalisation of Eurocentric conceptual differences like doing versus thinking, and East versus West.

Under speed-elitism, the utopian emphasis on the transparent mediation through technologies of instantaneity gives rise to the fantasy of the networked spaces ‘outside’ the traditional academic borders as radical spaces, as well as the desire for a productive dialogue or alliance between activism and academia. This would mean that activism and academia have become *relative* others under globalisation, in which the (non-Western or anti-capitalist) activist figures as some kind of *hallucination* of radical otherness for the Western intellectual. This technological hallucination serves an increasingly aggressive neo-colonial and patriarchal economic state of exploitation, despite – or perhaps rather *because of* – such technologies of travel and communication having come to figure as tools for liberation and transformation.

So the discourses of techno-progress, making connections, heightened mobility and crossing borders in activist-academic alliances often go hand in hand with the (implicit) celebration of highly mediated spaces for action and communication between allied groups. Such **discourses** however **suppress** the **violent colonial, capitalist and patriarchal history** of those technological spaces and the subsequent unevenness of any such alliance. More severely, they **foster an oppressive** sort of **imaginary ‘collective’ or ‘unity of struggles’ through the myth of ‘truly’ allowing for radical difference and multiplicity within that space** – a form of **techno-inclusiveness that** in turn **excludes** a variety of **non-technogenic groups and slower classes**. That these highly mediated spaces of thought and knowledge production are exclusivist is also shown by Sheila Slaughter and Gary Rhoades’ study of the transformation of higher education in ‘The Academic Capitalist Knowledge/Learning Regime’. Slaughter and Rhoades argue that new technologies allow the neo-liberal university to precisely cross the borders of universities and external for-profit and non-profit agencies in the name of development, production and efficacy, resulting in ‘new circuits of knowledge’. These ‘opportunity structures’ (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2004: 306) that the neoliberal economy creates, I in turn argue, become precisely those spaces of imagination that come to signify as well as being resultant of the university’s humanist promise of reaching-out to alterity. This paradoxically also **leads to** what Slaughter and Rhoades accurately identify as a ‘**restratification among and within** **colleges** and **universities’** (2004: 307).

*Thought* is then increasingly exercised in, and made possible through, spaces that are just as much spaces of acceleration and militarisation. The increasing complicity of the humanities in the applied sciences within the contemporary university, and hence the integration of critical thinking and neo-liberalist acceleration, is also a major theme running through Jacques Derrida’s *Eyes of the University*. Derrida there suggests that neo-liberalisation entails a militarisation of the university, claiming that ‘never before has so-called basic research been so deeply committed to ends that are at the same time military ends’ (Derrida, 2004: 143). The intricate relation between the military (‘missiles’) and the imperatives of the humanities (‘missives’) also pervades Derrida’s ‘No Apocalypse, Not Now’, in which he argues that the increasing urgency with which intellectuals feel compelled to address disenfranchisement and crisis **paradoxically** leads to a differential acceleration of such oppression through technologies of instantaneous action. But the relationship between new technologies and the subject’s *perception* of and subsequent desire for the incorporation of otherness that speed-elitism engenders, is best illustrated through Derrida’s *Archive Fever* and *Monolingualism of the Other*. Derrida’s concerns here are not so much directly with the contemporary university, but rather with the link between how thought is situated in technologies of communication (like language) and the emergence of authority as well as (academic and activist) empowerment.

#### Use comparative worlds-

#### [1] Prevents infinite NIBs and tricks that make it impossible to affirm

#### [2] Real world – ethical judgments are relevant only in terms of how they impact the world – that outweighs on portability

#### [3] Collapses – we can only determine the truth of the rez by comparing it to other worlds – probability and intuitions should be the tiebreaker since people default to comparative worlds.

#### [4] Topic education – forces them to disprove the plan which is k2 topic ed – outweighs on timeframe and is the only unique impact – TT allows them to recycle NIBs.

#### [5] Inclusion – they exclude Ks and alternative advocacies that prevents our ability to deconstruct why and how violence happens – independent reason to reject them.

#### [6] c/a resolved definition

#### That outweighs on textuality – the rez is a question of the aff policy action and outweighs affirm or negate definitions because those words are not included in the resolution

#### Grant neg new 2NR responses to AC spikes and theory arguments: a) the implication is unknown until the 1AR b) strat skew – 1AR extrapolations are devastating to destroy every neg route to the ballot c) forcing the neg to answer every spike in the NC is impossible and I can’t make other arguments, means every round gets wasted on horrible norms

#### Spikes force mind sweeping and are extremely blippy harming disabled debaters which is an independent reason to drop them for accessibility

### Thesis

#### Truth commissions and protests across the Global South rely on making public governmental atrocities.

Kivisto ‘14(Peter, Richard Swanson Prof. of Social Thought, Chair of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Welfare @ Augustana College, “Postmodernity as an Internal Critique of Modernity”, *Postmodernism in a Global Perspective*, pp. 105-108)

Because signs no longer refer to real referents, because the real has collapsed into the hyperreal, meaning has evaporated. In a rather notorious instance of applying this thinking to a concrete event, Baudrillard (1991) claimed that the Gulf War was nothing more than a television and computer graphics spectacle—the difference between this war and the war games in a video arcade presumably having essentially disappeared. Of course, there is an element of truth to this claim. Indeed, a similar claim was made by Slavoj Zizek (2002: 37) about the war in Afghanistan that took place in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, which he depicted as “a virtual war fought behind computer screens.” Lost in Baudrillard’s vision, however, as David Lyon (1994: 52) pointedly noted, is the fact that there really (i.e., not hyperreally) were “blood—stained sand and bereaved families.” Lost, too, are beliefs about patriotic duty, geopolitical realities, the economics of oil, and similar very real considerations that lead nations into war. In his book on terrorism, which is described in the subtitle as a “Requiem for the Twin Towers,” Baudrillard (2002) describes Al Qaeda’s attack on the United States in terms of the “symbolism of slaughter” and “sacriﬁcial death” as a mode of challenging American hegemony. Again, he treats a bloody event only as a spectacle and not as the consequence of a complex interplay of political, economic, and social forces that underlie the spectacle. Incidentally, and not noted by Baudrillard, the architect of the Twin Towers was Minoru Yamasaki, who had earlier designed the ill-fated Pruitt-Igoe. My criticism of Baudrillard revolves around the obvious point that there is a reality that people experience, emotionally respond to, and attempt in some fashion to shape. There is a life outside of the television set and outside of cyberspace. The emotionless and meaningless worlds depicted in ﬁlms such as David Lynch’s Blue Velvet and Quentin Tarantino’s ﬁlms from Pulp Fiction to his more recent offerings, Inglourious Basterds and Django Unchained, are not synonymous with our lived experiences, nor do most people convolute the two (Denby, 2009; Bauman, 1992: 149-55; Best and Kellner, 1991: 137-44). Although it is certainly true that the world of consumerism has changed considerably in recent years, little evidence can be mustered to claim that we have left modern culture for postmodern culture. The continued potency of religious belief, for example, calls into question the pervasiveness of meaninglessness Baudrillard envisions. The existence of the new social movements concerned with such issues as the environment, peace, feminism, civil rights, and poverty also calls into question the extent to which people in advanced industrial societies have opted for political passivism and escapism. By claiming that we have moved from production to consumption, this version of postmodernism shows evidence of a serious blind spot. It is obvious that goods continue to be produced, although in a global economy this might mean that they are being produced in poor countries, where workers are paid abysmal wages and are forced to work exploitatively long hours in unsafe and unsanitary factories. The clothes purchased at the shopping mall and online are the products of this darker side of our contemporary culture. Moreover, as Alex Callinicos (1989: 162) has pointedly noted, not only are most of the world’s inhabitants excluded from the consumerism Lyotard and Baudrillard describe but also poor people in the advanced industrial societies have only a limited involvement in this kind of consumption. In a generous assessment of Baudrillard that appeared shortly after his death in 2007, Robert Antonio (2007: 2) pointed out that Baudrillard’s abandonment of leftist politics was a reflection of his assessment of the failure of the 1968 student/worker protests. This event led to his the abandonment of the Marxist dream of a radiant future. Unlike Zizek (2008), who some continue to describe as a Marxist, Baudrillard was not inclined to argue “in defense of lost causes.” Nor was he prepared to endorse the anti-utopian pragmatism of liberal democracy. Rather, in relentlessly promoting his often contradictory but deeply pessimistic diagnoses of our times, he became a media star, which included homage to him in one of the Matrix ﬁlms and a US lecture tour that was part of the Institute of Contemporary Arts’ “Big Thinkers” series. He played a major role in creating and sustaining the postmodern moment, but near the end of his life he claimed that the term that best deﬁned him was nihilist. Liquid Modernity Baudrillard was the most explicit and insistent advocate for radical postmodernism (Lemert, 2005: 36-40). Other postmodemists have offered more tempered assessments of the postmodern condition, viewing it in many respects as a new phase of modernity rather than constituting a radical rupture between past and present. No one better exempliﬁes this position than the Polish-born sociologist, Zygmunt Bauman, who has published a series of books explicitly devoted to postmodern concerns (Bauman, 1993, 1995, and 1997). Of particular emphasis in these theoretical reflections is an appreciation of the signiﬁcance of ambivalence in postmodernity. Peter Bielharz (2009: 97) sees a parallel between Bauman’s thought and that of Simmel, contending that in both one ﬁnds a commitment “to the idea of ambivalence as a central orienting device and motif of modernity." By the turn of the century, Bauman (2000) opted to replace the term postmodern with the idea of “liquid modernity.” Perhaps to avoid the confusions and incessant debates about postmodernism and perhaps also to distance himself from postmodernism’s more radical proponents, this original term can be seen as useful in carving out an intellectual space in which to articulate his own position. Agreeing with the claim that grand narratives had ceased to be compelling, Bauman (2007) sees the present as an “age of uncertainty.” The preceding stage of modernity can be characterized as “solid.” In contrast, the current stage is “liquid” insofar as patterned social conduct and the social structures essential to making such forms of everyday social relations durable no longer exist. Instead, we live during times in which these structures no longer keep their shape for very long, “because they decompose and melt faster than the time it takes to cast them...” The consequence is that structured forms today “cannot serve as frames of reference for human actions and long-term life strategies because of their short life expectations" (Bauman, 2007: 1). In short, people in the contemporary world are consigned to living out their lives with a far greater focus on the present and immediate future rather than with the “open horizon of the future" that Wagner (2008: 1) associated with the early phase of modernity. What makes Bauman so dramatically different from someone like Baudrillard is that his assessment of our current condition does not lead him to nihilism. On the contrary, he thinks that today, more than ever before, ethical conduct must be grounded in a sense of personal responsibility. We may live in uncertain times, but we don’t live in amoral times. It’s for this reason that Bauman continues to deﬁne himself as a socialist. He would thus likely agree with Bielharz (2009: 140) that socialism today should be viewed, not so much as an alternative economic system to capitalism, but as its “alter ego.”