# 1NC v Disability

### 1

#### Capitalism causes massive violence and inevitable extinction – the fundamental task is developing tools for organization and tactics to bring about revolution.

Escalante ‘19

[Alyson, revolutionary Marxist (duh), philosophy at U of Oregon. 09/08/2019. “Truth and Practice: The Marxist Theory of Knowledge”. <https://failingthatinvent.home.blog/2019/09/08/truth-and-practic-the-marxist-theory-of-knowledge/>] Pat

The world we live in today is in a dire state. Climate destruction continues at a fast pace, and every with every passing day, capitalism proves itself to be incapable of addressing this. Capitalist production and its endless drive for resources to match artificial market demands has created a climate crisis that leaves us on the brink of potential extinction.

Governments around the world are turning to far right and fascist leaders to assuage their fears of an uncertain future, and the most marginalized and oppressed suffer because of it. Fascism is on the rise, and history tells us very clearly what that can result in without opposition.

The decaying US empire continues to lash out in violence across the globe in a desperate attempt to re-assert its power and hegemony. Whole countries are destroyed in its desperate bids for more fossil fuels. The world burns from America’s white phosphorus weaponry.

The need for a revolutionary movement capable of replacing capitalism with something better has never been so clear. The choice between socialism or barbarism has never been so stark. More and more people are starting to realize that reform cannot save us, that capitalism and imperialism themselves are the problem, and that we must unite and band together to fight for a better world.

The question then is: how will we know what strategies, what tactics, and what ideas to unite around? If the skeptics and postmodernists are correct that knowledge is always relative and localized, then we cannot built a global and universal strategy to unite around. If they are correct then we are doomed to small acts of localized or individual resistance in the face of apocalypse. To embrace such a vision of the world (with its accompanying epistemological skepticism) is to embrace defeat.

The masses do not want to embrace defeat, they want to know how to fight back. Marxism can provide the tools necessary to engage in that fight.

Marxism, with its self criticism and its insistence on incorporating the valuable ideas of its critics has created a means for unifying workers across the globe with anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggles. The Marxist belief in the possibility of true ideas, tested and verified in practice, creates the possibility for unity on a global scale. The scientific status of Marxism means that as our climate changes, as our world looks more and more grim, Marxism will adapt through struggle and practice; it will provide us with the ideas and tools we need to fight and win.

There will be no victory for the workers of the world without the ability to wield a revolutionary science. What is at stake in questions of Marxist epistemology is the very possibility of creating a philosophical and scientific basis for revolution. We must defend this possibility. We must defend the scientific status of Marxism, and must insist on the possibility of victory.

#### The 1AC’s emphasis on localism and resistance is unable to scale-up to generate meaningful resistance to capital – you can only beat a universal with a counter-universal.

Williams and Srnicek ‘15

[Alex Williams and Nick Srnicek, fastest Leftists in the West. City University London. 2015. “Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work”.] pat

To invoke modernity is ultimately to raise the question of the future. What should the future look like? What courses should we set? What does it mean to be contemporary? And whose future is it? Since the emergence of the term, modernity has been concerned with unravelling a circular or retrospective notion of time and introducing a rupture between the present and the past. With this break, the future is projected as being potentially different from and better than the past. Modernity is tantamount to ‘the discovery of the future’ and has therefore found itself intimately linked with notions such as ‘progress, advance, development, emancipation, liberation, growth, accumulation, Enlightenment, embetterment, [and the] avant-garde’. Suggesting that history can progress through deliberate human action, it is the nature of this progress that competing definitions of modernity have struggled over. Historically, the left has found its natural home in being oriented towards the future. From early communist visions of technological progress, to Soviet space utopias, to the social democratic rhetoric of the ‘white heat of technology’, what set the left apart from the right was its unambiguous embrace of the future. The future was to be an improvement over the present in material, social and political terms. By contrast, the forces of the political right were, with a few notable exceptions, defined by their defence of tradition and their essentially reactionary nature.

This situation was reversed during the rise of neoliberalism, with politicians like Thatcher commanding the rhetoric of modernisation and the future to great effect. Co-opting these terms and mobilising them into a new hegemonic common sense, neoliberalism’s vision of modernity has held sway ever since. Consequently, discussions of the left in terms of the future now seem aberrant, even absurd. With the postmodern moment, the seemingly intrinsic links between the future, modernity and emancipation were prized apart. Philosophers like Simon Critchley can now confidently assert that ‘we have to resist the idea and ideology of the future, which is always the ultimate trump card of capitalist ideas of progress’. Such folk-political sentiments blindly accept the neoliberal common sense, preferring to shy away from grand visions and replace them with a posturing resistance. From the radical left’s discomfort with technological modernity to the social democratic left’s inability to envision an alternative world, everywhere today the future has largely been ceded to the right. A skill that the left once excelled at – building enticing visions for a better world – has deteriorated after years of neglect. If the left is to recover a sense of progress, however, it cannot simply adopt the classic images of history headed towards a singular destination. Progress, for these approaches, was not only possible, but in fact woven as a necessity into the very fabric of history. Human societies were thought to travel along a pre-defined pathway towards a single outcome modelled after Europe. The nations of Europe were deemed to have developed capitalist modernity independently, and their historical experiences of development were considered to be both necessary and superior to those of other cultures. Such ideas dominated traditional European philosophy and continued on in the influential modernisation literature of the 1950s and 1960s, with their attempts to naturalise capitalism against a Soviet opponent. Partly endorsed by both early Marxism and later Keynesian and neoliberal capitalisms, a one-size-fits-all model of historical progress positioned non-Western societies as lacking and in need of development – a position that served to justify colonial and imperial practices.

From the standpoint of their philosophical critics, these notions of progress were disparaged precisely for their belief in preconceived destinations – whether in the liberal progression towards capitalist democracy or in the Marxist progression towards communism. The complex and often disastrous record of the twentieth century demonstrated conclusively that history could not be relied upon to follow any predetermined course. Regression was as likely as progress, genocide as possible as democratisation. In other words, there was nothing inherent in the nature of history, the development of economic systems, or sequences of political struggle that could guarantee any particular outcome. From a broadly left perspective, for example, even those limited but not insignificant political gains that have been achieved – such as welfare provision, women’s rights and worker protections – can be rolled back. Moreover, even in states where nominally communist governments took power, it proved far more difficult than expected to transition from a capitalist system of production to a fully communist one. This series of historical experiences fuelled an internal critique of European modernity by way of psychoanalysis, critical theory and poststructuralism. For the thinkers of postmodernism, modernity came to be associated with a credulous naivety. In Jean-François Lyotard’s epochal definition, postmodernity was identified as the era that has grown to be suspicious of the grand metanarrative. On this account, postmodernity is a cultural condition of disillusionment with the kinds of grandiose narratives represented by capitalist, liberal and communist accounts of progress.

To be sure, these critiques capture something important about the chronological texture of our time. And yet, the announcement of the end of grand narratives has often been viewed by those outside Europe as being absolutely of a piece with modernity. Further, with the benefit of thirty years’ hindsight, the broader impact of the cultural condition diagnosed by Lyotard has not been the decline of belief in metanarratives per se, but rather a broad disenchantment with those offered by the left. The association between capitalism and modernisation remains, while properly progressive notions of the future have wilted under postmodern critique and been quashed beneath the social wreckage of neoliberalism. Most significantly, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of globalisation, history does appear to have a grand narrative. Throughout the world, markets, wage labour, commodities and productivity-enhancing technologies have all expanded under the systemic imperative to accumulate. Capitalism has become the destiny of contemporary societies, happily coexisting with national differences and paying little heed to clashes between civilisations. But we can draw a distinction here between the endpoint (capitalism) and the pathway towards it. Indeed, the mutual entanglement of countries means that the European pathway (heavily reliant on exploiting colonies and slavery) is barred for many of the newly developing countries. While there are broad paradigms of development, each country has had to find its own unique way to respond to the imperatives of global capitalism. The path of capitalist modernisation is therefore instantiated in different cultures, following different trajectories and with different rhythms of development. Uneven and combined development is the order of the day. Progress is therefore not bound to a single European path, but is instead filtered through a variety of political and cultural constellations, all directed towards instantiating capitalist relations. Today, modernisers simply fight over which variant of capitalism to install.

Recuperating the idea of progress under such circumstances means, first and foremost, contesting the dogma of this inevitable endpoint. Capitalist modernity was never a necessary outcome, but instead a successful project driven by various classes and a systemic imperative towards accumulation and expansion. Various modernities are possible, and new visions of the future are essential for the left. Such images are a necessary supplement to any transformative political project. They give a direction to political struggles and generate a set of criteria to adjudicate which struggles to support, which movements to resist, what to invent, and so on. In the absence of images of progress, there can only be reactivity, defensive battles, local resistance and a bunker mentality – what we have characterised as folk politics. Visions of the future are therefore indispensable for elaborating a movement against capitalism. Contra the earlier thinkers of modernity, there is no necessity to progress, nor a singular pathway from which to adjudicate the extent of development. Instead, progress must be understood as hyperstitional: as a kind of fiction, but one that aims to transform itself into a truth. Hyperstitions operate by catalysing dispersed sentiment into a historical force that brings the future into existence. They have the temporal form of ‘will have been’. Such hyperstitions of progress form orienting narratives with which to navigate forward, rather than being an established or necessary property of the world. Progress is a matter of political struggle, following no pre-plotted trajectory or natural tendency, and with no guarantee of success. If the supplanting of capitalism is impossible from the standpoint of one or even many defensive stances, it is because any form of prospective politics must set out to construct the new. Pathways of progress must be cut and paved, not merely travelled along in some pre-ordained fashion; they are a matter of political achievement rather than divine or earthly providence.

SUBVERSIVE UNIVERSALS

Any elaboration of an alternative image of progress must inevitably face up to the problem of universalism – the idea that certain values, ideas and goals may hold across all cultures. Capitalism, as we have argued, is an expansionary universal that weaves itself through multiple cultural fabrics, reworking them as it goes along. Anything less than a competing universal will end up being smothered by an all-embracing series of capitalist relations. Various particularisms – localised, specific forms of politics and culture – cohabitate with ease in the world of capitalism. The list of possibilities continues to grow as capitalism differentiates into Chinese capitalism, American capitalism, Brazilian capitalism, Indian capitalism, Nigerian capitalism, and so on. If defending a particularism is insufficient, it is because history shows us that the global space of universalism is a space of conflict, with each contender requiring the relative provincialisation of its competitors. If the left is to compete with global capitalism, it needs to rethink the project of universalism.

But to invoke such an idea is to call forth a number of fundamental critiques directed against universalism in recent decades. While a universal politics must move beyond any local struggles, generalising itself at the global scale and across cultural variations, it is for these very reasons that it has been criticised. As a matter of historical record, European modernity was inseparable from its ‘dark side’ – a vast network of exploited colonial dominions, the genocide of indigenous peoples, the slave trade, and the plundering of colonised nations’ resources. In this conquest, Europe presented itself as embodying the universal way of life. All other peoples were simply residual particulars that would inevitably come to be subsumed under the European way – even if this required ruthless physical violence and cognitive assault to guarantee the outcome. Linked to this was a belief that the universal was equivalent to the homogeneous. Differences between cultures would therefore be erased in the process of particulars being subsumed under the universal, creating a culture modelled in the image of European civilisation. This was a universalism indistinguishable from pure chauvinism. Throughout this process, Europe dissimulated its own parochial position by deploying a series of mechanisms to efface the subjects who made these claims – white, heterosexual, property-owning males. Europe and its intellectuals abstracted away from their location and identity, presenting their claims as grounded in a ‘view from nowhere’. This perspective was taken to be untarnished by racial, sexual, national or any other particularities, providing the basis for both the alleged universality of Europe’s claims and the illegitimacy of other perspectives. While Europeans could speak and embody the universal, other cultures could only be represented as particular and parochial. Universalism has therefore been central to the worst aspects of modernity’s history.

Given this heritage, it might seem that the simplest response would be to rescind the universal from our conceptual arsenal. But, for all the difficulties with the idea, it nevertheless remains necessary. The problem is partly that one cannot simply reject the concept of the universal without generating other significant problems. Most notably, giving up on the category leaves us with nothing but a series of diverse particulars. There appears no way to build meaningful solidarity in the absence of some common factor. The universal also operates as a transcendent ideal – never satisfied with any particular embodiment, and always open to striving for better. It contains the conceptual impulse to undo its own limits. Rejecting this category also risks Orientalising other cultures, transforming them into an exotic Other. If there are only particularisms, and provincial Europe is associated with reason, science, progress and freedom, then the unpleasant implication is that non-Western cultures must be devoid of these. The old Orientalist divides are inadvertently sustained in the name of a misguided anti-universalism. On the other hand, one risks licensing all sorts of oppressions as simply the inevitable consequence of plural cultural forms. All the problems of cultural relativism reappear if there are no criteria to discern which global knowledges, politics and practices support a politics of emancipation. Given all of this, it is unsurprising to see aspects of universalism pop up throughout history and across cultures, to see even its critics begrudgingly accept its necessity, and to see a variety of attempts to revise the category.

We can turn now to one final aspect of universalism, which is its heterogeneous nature. As capitalism makes clear, universalism does not entail homogeneity – it does not necessarily involve converting diverse things into the same kind of thing. In fact, the power of capitalism is precisely its versatility in the face of changing conditions on the ground and its capacity to accommodate difference. A similar prospect must also hold for any leftist universal – it must be one that integrates difference rather than erasing it. What then does all of this mean for the project of modernity? It means that any particular image of modernity must be open to co-creation, and further transformation and alteration. And in a globalized world where different peoples necessarily co-exist, it means building systems to live in common despite the plurality of ways of life. Contrary to Eurocentric accounts and classic images of universalism, it must recognize the agency of those outside Europe, and the necessity of their voices inbuilding truly planetary and universal futures. The universal, then, is an empty placeholder that hegemonic particulars (specific demands, ideals and collectives) come to occupy. It can operate as a subversive and emancipatory vector of change with respect to established universalisms, and it is heterogeneous and includes differences, rather than eliminating them.

#### Fantasies of disabled bodies as inherently resistant to capitalism mystifies how disability becomes a site of value extraction and papers over Western privilege.

Puar ‘17

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Neoliberal investments in the body as portfolio, as site of entrepreneurship, entail transition of some disabled bodies from the disciplinary institutions of containment, quarantine, and expulsion into forms of incorporative biopolitical control. David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder argue that “disabled people have shifted from modernity’s exception (a line of defect to be isolated and eradicated) to postmodernist [neoliberal] exceptionality (failing bodies resuscitated by an increasingly medicalized state). In this latter state, the ontology of disability retrieves a formerly fallen object and makes it newly available for cultural rehabilitation,” a euphemism for producing cultural docility.45 Mitchell and Snyder track this shift of people with disabilities located from “a former era of economic burden” of paternalistic, institutional, and welfare regimes when disabled people were “social pariahs,” to what they term “objects of care” that impel the investment of service economies and neoliberal strategies of intervention and rehabilitation—“a ‘hot’ ticket item for potential research and funding schemes.”

Mitchell and Snyder’s claim situates the disabled body as the site of extreme productivity— and thus, profitability— precisely through its lack of conventional productive laboring value. Once excluded from the labor system because of their “unproductivity,” disabled bodies have become the “sites for the exercise of the primitive accumulation that fuels capitalism.” This productivity is thus not “measured by his or her ability to produce goods and ser vices that satisfy social/human needs,” as Erevelles points out, but rather “based solely on capitalist exploitative demands for increasing profit.”48

And yet, despite this profitability, Mitchell and Snyder argue that the disabled non/laborer is also a resistant non-capacitated body, implicitly challenging the incomplete liberal proj ect of docility by refusing to assimilate into a laboring capacity. In echoing Russell and Malhotra’s conviction that disability reveals a central contradiction, a paradox even, of capitalism, Mitchell and Snyder laud Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s rerouting from the worker as the paradigmatic resistant subject in Marxist theory to “living labor” or “non- productive bodies,” as the nascent site of dissent. No longer able to locate a single site of re sis tance to capitalism in a “ simple, agonistic division of labor,” Mitchell and Snyder ask, “Where does re sistance manifest itself once a concept of the workers’ revolution no longer seems tenable and how will this re sis tance govern itself without the institution of new hierarchies of in equality?”49 In other words, the undermining of capitalism will come from those who cannot or will not work, from those whose “capacities make them ‘unfit’ for labor.”50 This unfitness, they argue, proves “imminently productive” because these bodies inhabit and generate alternative biopo liti cal scripts of consumption, family, and nation.51 They evidence this assertion by averring that “the disabled people that we know are some of the worst consumers on the planet because they have neither the means, the interest, nor the gullibility of mistaking meaning with market . . . disabled artists in the U.S. live some of the most sparingly non- consumptive lives and, yet, this is what we admire about them the most.”52

I will leave aside for a moment the geopolitical inflections fueling certitude regarding the passé potential of organized resistance at the point of production. The claim about the inherent resistant capacity of the non-productive disabled laborer bears a complex relation to Mitchell and Snyder’s earlier conviction that disabled bodies have now transitioned into objects of care that represent a unique site for the capture of every element for capitalist profit. Do the individual consumption practices of disabled people (artists) mitigate, even remotely, the profitability of the sites of primitive accumulation that objects of care generate? Further, the resistance of non-consumptive lives pales in a global economic context where, as Gayatri Spivak reminds us, humanistic training in consumerism is foreclosed for populations whose labor creates consumer opportunities for others. The (individual) capacity to consume—or to refuse to consume—is already predicated on the privileged position of the consumer-citizen. Mitchell and Snyder lionize the non-laboring debilitated body as the new threshold of resistance — a crypto- capacity — via their positions as improper producers as well as consumers. But this formulation, as much as it would seem empowering to embrace, actually relies on the occlusion of the centrality of debilitation to the workings of capitalism. It effaces the unflinching need for “social pariahs” available for injury, excluded from the economies that hail certain bodies worthy of being objects of care, however compromised this inclusion may be. There are surely individuals with disabilities [disabled people] who perhaps neither labor nor consume “properly,” but any resistance this may signal is not an a priori feature of being disabled. Further, populations that are not roped into an economy of rehabilitative objects of care are sites of profit precisely for their availability for injury, their inability to labor, their exclusion from adequate health care, and their ideological production as lazy, criminal, and burdensome. While these populations may well enact various forms of resistance to capitalism, they do not escape the violent pro cesses of primitive accumulation that extract profit from the disposability that threatens these exact populations.

Mitchell and Snyder further vacillate between the figures of the resistant non- productive unfit non/worker and that very same worker as incorporated into capitalist sites of profit. They argue that “we are increasingly approaching a time when all that formerly passed as the undesirability of life in a disabled body proves increasingly ‘advantageous’ from the standpoint of an immaterial labor market.” The immaterial labor market is a reference to technologies that allow for productivity to be redefined against the grain of the “laboring body”— for example, fostering virtual participation in workplaces for mobility- impaired individuals. However, these very same technologies, driven by the conventional laboring body, produce vastly debilitated populations across the globe, from Chinese laborers in Apple factories who commit suicide, to wheelchair technology that enhances mobility developed in Israel 48 on the backs of Palestinian oppression and immobility, to the mountains of e-waste hand-sanded by the working poor in India, to the neo colonial extraction of minerals and natural substances from resource- rich areas for the purposes of manufacturing hardware.

Is it possible that the figure of the non-productive disabled body becomes something of a fetish in Mitchell and Snyder’s text, recoding resistance as a form of automatic capacitation, an onto-crypto-capacity? This body occludes, to some extent, populations that are neither positioned as resistant to capitalism nor promoted as objects of care. Rather these populations are constructed as objects of imminent disposability, continually subjected to paternalistic austerity regimes, violent institutionalization, and debilitation that is not in any way redeemable through cultural rehabilitation. (Cultural rehabilitation as an ave nue to normalization can be eschewed only if in fact it is an available possibility to turn away from.) Their debilitation functions as a form of value extraction for otherwise disposable bodies. Lauding the inherent resistance to capitalism of disabled bodies as well as the advantages of the immaterial labor market for people with disabilities both depend on three factors: first, the assumption or invocation of the identity or grouping of disabled people as an a priori given; which then, secondly, entails the substantial occlusion of the manufacturing of disability, that is, capitalist exploitation as an ongoing process of debilitation; which then, thirdly, submerges the supplemental relation between objects of care and social pariahs or objects of disposability — disability as a potential site of cultural incorporation and debilitation of populations made available and/or targeted for injury—in a neoliberal economy that profits from both. The burden-to-care periodization is one that therefore racializes as well as temporospatializes: between eugenics as it has been and the biopolitics of inclusion of the now (described as “post- imperialist”), a split that largely speaks to liberal spaces of privilege; and between the pro gress of the West/developed nations and the disarray of the rest/developing nations. ///

#### Vote negative for communist organizing – that requires collective struggle and the establishment of centralized organization to inform both theory and practice.

Kuhn ‘18

[Gabriel, Austrian-born writer and translator living in Sweden. Among his book publications is “All Power to the Councils! A Documentary History of the German Revolution of 1918-1919”. March 2018. “Don't Mourn, Organize! Is Communism a Pipe Dream—or a Viable Future?” <https://brooklynrail.org/2018/03/field-notes/Dont-Morn-Organize-Is-Communism-a-Pipe-Dreamor-a-Viable-Future>] pat

The forms of organization this requires must go further than the affinity group but stop short of the vanguard party. Affinity groups do not answer the demand for mass organizing that mass societies require. But neither do vanguard parties. They attempt to lead the masses, not organize them, and that’s a big difference. The party model might in general be insufficient for mass organizing today. The networks that movementism gave way to are perhaps more appropriate, but only if they can overcome the assumption that the looser the connections are, the better. This assumption is wrong. Loose connections might suit the needs of an ever more flexible market economy, but not of effective political organizing. To “have contacts” is not enough; you need to do something with them. And you need to stay committed to the projects you initiate. I will try to flesh this out by listing the aspects I consider most important in organizing today.

1. We need to leave sectarianism behind. The left is weak and each additional division weakens it further. In a 2011 article titled “Movement, Cadre, and the Dual Power,” Joel Olson made a simple, yet very important observation: “We believe that the old arguments between communists and anarchists are largely irrelevant today.” This must be our point of departure.

2. We need theory that is adapted to our times. It must overcome the false contradiction between “class struggle” and “cultural struggle.” There is a fruitful debate about a “new class politics” in the German-speaking world. Sebastian Friedrich, one of its main proponents, drew these conclusions in an article published by Counterpunch:

A new class politics does not relegate gender, race, and imperial legacy to issues that are supplementary to class relations. These issues, and the struggles they imply, are an integral part of class relations. In fact, feminist, anti-racist, and anti-colonial struggles are the base on which effective unified class struggles must be launched.… A new class politics must clarify where and how the specific experiences of workers based on gender, race, citizenship, and other factors converge. It must reveal the overlapping interests of workers as members of the class. This makes common struggles possible.

3. We must not rely on the “objective forces” identified by historical materialism. Subjective forces are important for change. It is easy to underestimate how much neoliberalism shapes the lives even of people opposed to it. In the Global North, political activism has become a leisure activity that people engage in or not, depending on their mood, the identity they are trying to create for themselves, or the road of “self-improvement” they have chosen. In almost all cases, it is secondary to professional careers and personal comforts. Under such circumstances, it is difficult to get anything done. There is nothing wrong with being “voluntaristic.” Radical change is dependent on people wanting radical change, no matter how much Marxists still insist on economic realities determining individual consciousness and, therefore, individuals’ capacity for political action. An organization’s efficiency relies on the individual qualities of its members, that is, responsibility, reliability, and accountability.

Making Things Concrete

If we want communism to be more than a pipe dream, we have to be willing to face reality, even if it confuses, challenges, or even frightens us. We cannot ignore struggles that refer to communist ideals, simply because they aren’t the struggles we’d like to see. If our enthusiasm for communism remains limited to lecture halls and conference rooms, it won’t be anything the powerful will lose sleep over.

The struggle that currently receives most attention among communists of all stripes in the Global North is the one in Kurdistan. In Rojava (Syrian Kurdistan), forces affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers’ Party, PKK, have established a direct-democratic council system, based on the “democratic confederalism” conceived by the imprisoned PKK leader Abduallah Öcalan. Öcalan describes democratic confederalism as “a non-state political administration or a democracy without a state,” and cites Murray Bookchin’s “libertarian municipalism” as a major influence. There are people who celebrate this as a form of anarchism. But as an observant friend of mine noted, an anarchism that is imposed by a leader is a strange kind of anarchism. Besides, there are reports from the ground that challenge the libertarian narrative. The editors of Lower Class Magazine, an online project dedicated to “low budget underground journalism,” travel regularly to Kurdistan and have the following to say:

The Western left sees Rojava as the realization of a democracy “from below”: communes, councils, a confederation; no hierarchies, no party, a spontaneous mass project. Anarchists and “libertarian” communists wax lyrically about the dawn of a direct-democratic Shangri-La. […] Yes, the change in Rojava comes “from below. It is based on the power of the people, no doubt. Communes and councils are at the heart of decision-making, that is true. But as essential is the following: None of this would be happening if it wasn’t for a vanguard leading the way. The revolution in Rojava proves that Leninist vanguardism is correct, not false.

Another European journalist visiting the region noted that the cadres of the People’s Protection Units, YPG, relate to the councils of Rojava in the same way the Bolshevists related to the councils of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, there are troubling pragmatic alliances, which have included collaboration with the U.S. military. Yet the people behind Rojava Solidarity NYC sum up the situation well:

Rojava, an autonomous region in Northern Syrian, the largest revolutionary territory of the 21st century, has projected anarchist and communist ideas to the forefront of political discourse and into the pragmatic and messy reality of everyday life. … From communal relationships to the councils and self-defense units, we can assess numerous potential routes by which we can create liberated communities at home, while learning from their possibilities and pitfalls.

Rojava won’t be the answer to our problems. No single struggle ever is. But the developments in Rojava challenge us to discuss real-life strategies for radical change. It is easy to focus on shortcomings, but if this is all we ever do, where will it get us?

Councils are essential for communist projects. Their power, which is based on the direct involvement and active participation of the masses, is curtailed as soon as political interest groups, such as parties, assume control over them. This conviction separated historical council communism, represented by figures such as Otto Rühle and Anton Pannekoek, from the Bolsheviks. Pannekoek wrote:

The councils are no government; not even the most central councils bear a governmental character. For they have no means to impose their will upon the masses; they have no organs of power. All social power is vested in the hands of the workers themselves.

Unless we want the transition to communism to entail enormous human suffering (which would be utterly absurd), we need to consider the fact that billions of people will need to be fed, sheltered, nursed, provided with access to clean water, and so forth. To produce according to the needs of the people rather than the needs of profit requires enormous efforts in planning, especially if current living standards are to be upheld. (Living standards don’t equal standards of consumption—the standards of consumption in the Global North cannot and should not be upheld, since they are unsustainable.) Furthermore, we must collectively dispose of industrial and nuclear waste, weapons of mass destruction, and ticking environmental bombs. None of this is possible without a level of centralization, no matter how visceral the reactions are that the word might provoke in some circles.

Only a council system can combine the centralization required by the complexity of modern societies with participative democracy. Centralization requires formal structures. Participative democracy requires these structures to be transparent. They need to be bottom-up rather than top-down, and delegates must be directly responsible to their constituencies. The council system is the only administrative framework to provide that.

Romanticizing particular struggles rarely does any good, no matter how council-based they are—or claim to be. If radicals in the Global North fail to address concerns with respect to struggles in the Global South, it is not respectful but condescending. To escape into the intellectual poverty of cultural relativism doesn’t help. We can only evolve from critical engagement. But real-life struggles are our starting point. It makes little sense to demand struggles for communism if we shy away from engaging with the ones that exist. Arundhati Roy put it simply after spending time with Maoist Naxalites in the forests of central India, an experience she chronicled in the book Walking with the Comrades. She said: “I went in because I wanted to tell the story of who these people are.” This informs revolutionary theory and, in turn, improves revolutionary practice. Most importantly, it is crucial for saving communist struggles from betraying their own principles. Everyone can watch failure unfold. The challenge lies in helping to prevent it.

#### The alt reorganizes social and economic life around a new concept of work that doesn’t mandate ableist productivity and creates solidarity.

Slorach ‘15

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Disability, as we have seen, is deeply embedded within capitalism and can be overcome only with a fundamental social and **economic transformation of society**. The need for such change is easily demonstrated. It has been calculated, for example, that as much as half the impairment in the majority world could be prevented by the introduction of **effective policies to reduce poverty and malnutrition and improve sanitation, drinking water and working conditions**.976 /// The question, here, however, is how people view their oppression in relation to wider social change. Writing in 2.011, M Miles argued that: /// The vast majority of the worlds people with disabilities do not read English and have never heard of any kind of [social model of disability], and probably never will... Even in [the] UK, 'recent research from the Office for Disability issues has shown that only six per cent of disabled people know about the social model of disability', a rise of three per cent since 2003.977 /// It is true that many people—disabled or non-disabled—have never heard of the social model, but many nevertheless believe that disabled people experience discrimination. Disability, as we have seen, is based on the fact that the **labour of people with impairments is less profitable for capitalism**. To overcome this form of oppression, workers need to break from the common sense ideas associated with this society— such as a "fair day's work for a fair day's pay" or "what's good for the boss is good for me"—which make it easier for employers to intensify exploitation. Accepting this common sense also implies acceptance of the notion that disabled people are an economic burden. On the other hand, many large workplaces now include some disabled workers and most major trade unions in Britain have policies opposing disability discrimination. There is, therefore, at least the potential to win the majority of workers to such a position, as well as to actively fight for it. /// Those who suffer the greatest oppression in society have often emerged to play a central role in revolutionary movements. Irish immigrants and the children of black slaves were among those who led the great Chartist revolt in Britain during the 1830s. Jewish people in Russia, subjected over decades to violent racism including mass pogroms, saw activists such as Trotsky, Zinoviev and Sverdlov elected to the leadership of the revolutions of 1905 and 1917. More recently, gays and lesbians targeted by media hysteria over AIDS made common cause with 120,000 miners in the UK, raising money for and promoting solidarity with them during their epic year-long battle with the Thatcher government in 1984-1985. The mass entry of black people and women into the US and UK workforces has strengthened the fight against racism and women's oppression. From a situation where the early craft-based trade unions often opposed equal pay and status for black people and women in the workplace, it is now commonly expected that trade unions will resist and organise against racism, sexism and homophobia in the workplace. /// The position Marx took in relation to anti-Irish racism (discussed in the previous chapter)—that it undermined the potential strength and unity of the working class movement in England—is true of all forms of oppression. A brief survey of the dominant political climate in many countries today confirms how well this applies to Islamophobia and anti-immigrant racism. It also confirms there is nothing inevitable about the labour movement (broadly conceived of as the trade unions and the political left) taking a consistent position in opposition to all forms of oppression. This is instead a matter of a clear and principled political analysis. /// The Russian revolutionary Lenin, referring to Tsarist Russia as the "prison house of nations", described the need for **revolutionaries to be "tribunes of the oppressed**"—fighting all forms of national, religious and other forms of oppression as a matter of political principle. The decline and defeat of the 1917 Russian Revolution can be seen from the way in which its historic gains—for example, equality for women and homosexuals, as well as for national, ethnic and religious minorities—were reversed with the rise of Stalinism, which among its many other crimes, ruthlessly incorporated other countries into a new imperial "prison house". /// Many people oppose capitalism because it is a system of production which exists not to meet the needs of society, but to provide profits for a tiny minority. As we have seen, it is this factor which is largely responsible for the exclusion of so many disabled people from the workforce. What part, then, could they play in a future society based first and foremost on meeting human need? /// The negation of the negation /// Alongside his highly effective arguments in relation to impairment and disability (discussed in chapter 2), Paul Abberley also argued that while "Marxism has provided effective tools" to explain the nature of disability discrimination in capitalist societies, its vision of a future "Utopia" presented "profound difficulties for impaired people": /// In the 1875 Critique of the Gotha Programme Marx makes the well known statement that 'in a more advanced phase of communist society... when labour is no longer just a means of keeping alive but has itself become a vital need (we may then have) from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.' But this implies that impaired people are still deprived, by biology if not by society. Impairment, since it places a limit upon creative sensuous practice, is alienatory...the ability to labour in some socially recognised sense still seems a requirement of full membership of a future good society based upon Marxist theory.978 /// In Abberley’s view, a small number of people with impairments in a "Marxist Utopia" would remain excluded from the system of production and as a consequence "would still occupy the essentially peripheral relationship to society we do today". /// Marx in fact wrote very little on the nature of post-revolutionary society and was thoroughly dismissive of "Utopian Socialists" who spent their time imagining what such a society would look like. There is good reason, however, to reject Abberley s view that disabled people would continue to be marginalised in a socialist society. As he concedes, a socialist society based on a new and **emancipatory concept of labour** could and would provide work for the vast majority of people with impairments. Such a society would also have an interest in promoting the fullest possible participation of all its members, **enabling each "according to their abilities"** to make a contribution. Marx's meaning in the famous "from each/to each" quote differs to that attributed to it by Abberley. This is made clearer in the immediately preceding paragraphs where Marx discusses the concept of equal rights in the context of labour. They are worth quoting in full: /// But one man is superior to another physically, or mentally, and supplies more labour in the same time, or can labour for a longer time; and labour, to serve as a measure, must be defined by its duration or intensity, otherwise it ceases to be a standard of measurement. This equal right is an unequal right for unequal labour...it tacitly recognizes unequal individual endowment, and thus productive capacity, as a natural privilege. It is, therefore, a right of inequality, in its content, like every right. Right, by its very nature, can consist only in the application of an equal standard; but unequal individuals (and they would not be different individuals if they were not unequal) are measurable only by an equal standard insofar as they are brought under an equal point of view, are taken from one definite side only— for instance, in the present case, are regarded only as workers and nothing more is seen in them, everything else being ignored. Further, one worker is married, another is not; one has more children than another, and so on and so forth. Thus, with an equal performance of labour, and hence an equal in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on. To avoid all these defects, right, instead of being equal, would have to be unequal. /// But these defects are inevitable in the first phase of communist society as it is when it has just emerged after prolonged birth pangs from capitalist society. Right can never be higher than the economic structure of society and its cultural development conditioned thereby. /// In a higher phase of communist society, after the enslaving subordination of the individual to the division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour has become not only a means of life but life's prime want; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-around development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be crossed in its entirety and society inscribe on its banners: **From each according to** his **[their] ability, to each according to** his **[their] needs!**979 /// This concept of rights is vital to any discussion of how disability would be addressed in a socialist society. **Marx's recognition of differing human abilities** formed the very basis of his analysis of capitalism, including how competition at every level of society divides workers. The **basis for disability under capitalism** is the identification of a distinct layer of people with certain impairments judged to have a substantial impact on their ability to labour. With the use of the social surplus generated by this labour also subject to all manner of disputes, rights can never be truly equal—either in how they are implemented or exercised. /// In seeing **[understanding]** **impairment as a continuum, instead of as the crude "them" and "us" dichotomy of capitalism, a socialist society would take account of differing ability** and levels of skill based on a form of democracy incomparably more extensive than anything experienced under capitalism. /// The "negation of the negation" involves **overthrowing a system of production** which systematically deprives human beings of any control over the manner, nature and product of their labour, the key means through which they affirm their humanity: /// The capitalist mode of appropriation...produces capitalist private property. This is the first negation of individual private property, as founded on the labour of the proprietor. But capitalist production begets...its own negation. It is the negation of negation. This does not re-establish private property for the producer, but gives him individual property based on the acquisitions of the capitalist era: ie, on co-operation and the possession in common of the land and of the means of production.980 /// Revolution, therefore, requires not just the reorganisation of work, but reclaiming it as something workers do for themselves because they see [understand] it overwhelmingly as a social good rather than something alien and hostile to them. The concentration of workers in large workplaces and the integrated nature of production under capitalism means that this can only be achieved by **collective action to seize control of the productive process** and everything associated with it. /// Finally, a socialist society would provide a basis to overcome and dismantle all artificial barriers between work, leisure and education, nourishing and promoting creativity and individuality. In a formulation expressive of its time but whose deeper meaning is nevertheless hugely appealing, Marx described a communist society as one: /// where nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he wishes, society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic.981 /// In contrast to the systematic division and competition characteristic of capitalist society, socialism would promote a **collective and co-operative culture based on common interest**. Democratic planning would promote the interests of teachers and students, **service providers and users, doctors and patients**, architects and the occupants of city and countryside **as mutual, interdependent and complementary to each other**. Such a society would therefore promote genuine individuality, cultivating rounded human growth in place of a one-sided and fragmented development of skills. /// What force, then, has the power to achieve that change ? /// Agency /// The austerity offensive, under whose impact social and economic inequality has hugely increased, has prompted the development of new political movements. Broadly identifying themselves as anti capitalist, these tend to embrace some variant of autonomist ideas. Current demands for change on the left tend to be couched in terms of "social movements" centred on the vague but powerful notion of unity against the "one per cent" who rule the world. In terms of understanding the current economic crisis, Marxism itself has seen something of a renaissance. The idea of revolution, once seen as the preserve of those on the far left, has become commonly discussed— even if the return of dictatorship in Egypt dampened the optimism of the Arab Spring of zon. /// Increased awareness of a predatory and ruthless international ruling class, however, has also been accompanied by a widespread common sense view that identifies the working class as a spent force, its power fragmented under the impact of globalisation and restructuring. /// As ubiquitous as such ideas are, they are also demonstrably false. As we have seen, capitalism involves a continual reshaping of the working class. The proportion of workers engaged in manufacturing in the advanced countries, for example, has declined significantly for the last two generations. In Britain in the 1970s, workers' power was epitomised by strikes of tens of thousands of car workers. Today's workforce in the car industry is a fraction of what it was then, but investment in automation and robotics has led to hugely improved productivity: /// Overall auto production in the UK has not fallen. The UK remains home to over 30 manufacturers building more than 70 models. Similarly the volume of autos produced in the UK is set to reach an all time high in 2017. Restructuring has enabled increases in productivity to compensate for labour shedding.982 /// This pattern can be shown in every other area of the economy. The power of collective action also extends beyond the manufacturing sector, as demonstrated by the impact of strikes by, for example, oil tanker drivers or transport workers. Prior to the turn of the 20th century, dockers and textile workers were seen as temporary and disposable sections of the workforce—but their militancy inspired the subsequent rapid spread of trade unions in the period known as New Unionism. The "precarious workers" often identified as typical of today's economy can similarly be inspired by modern examples of "new unionism". Walmart is the world's biggest corporation, with US$160 billion in assets and an annual turnover similar in size to the GDP of Norway.983 In September 2012, 38 workers at its largest US distribution centre in Elwood, Illinois, won a three-week strike against their employer, a temping agency subcontractor. Despite the absence of union recognition, they not only won their key demand—reinstatement of all those sacked or suspended for trade union activity—but also full back pay for everyone who participated in the action.984 /// The problem is not that the social and economic power of workers has declined. Rather, it is that an historically low level of strike action has led to a corresponding decline in the belief that workers have or are able to exercise that power. /// Conclusion /// Oxfam reported in January 2014 that 85 billionaires have the same wealth as the bottom half of the worlds population. Its website predicts that the wealth of the 1 percent will overtake that of the othei 99 percent in 2016. This inequality is an inevitable consequence of an entirely unnatural and maddening society. There is nothing natural about oppression, war and environmental destruction; it is all part of "a very capitalist condition". /// Throughout their history, human beings have shown immense adaptability—in the diversity of their living and working environments, in their occupations, social beliefs and customs and even in their more biological functions, such as sleeping or eating. This is also true of living with impairment. /// In one of his fascinating books, Oliver Sacks discusses achromatopsia, or colour blindness. Most people with this very rare condition grow up without knowing (or even knowing of) anyone else who also has it. Sacks tells the story of Knut and his brother and sister, who by a rare genetic chance, were all achromatopic and have reacted and adapted to this in very different ways. Knut, the firstborn, was diagnosed as an infant. As it was felt that he would never see well enough to learn to read, he (and later his siblings) were sent to the local school for the blind: /// Knut rebelled at being regarded as disabled, and refused to learn Braille by touch, instead using his sight to read the raised dots, which cast tiny shadows on the page. He was severely punished for this and forced to wear a blindfold in classes. Soon after, Knut ran away from the school, but, determined to read normal print, taught himself to read at home. Finally, having convinced the school administrators that he would never make a willing student, Knut was allowed to return to regular school. /// Knut's sister, Britt...flourished at the school for the blind as much as Knut hated it, becoming fluent in Braille; and she has spent her professional life as an intermediary between the blind and sighted worlds, supervising the transcription and production of books into Braille at the Norwegian Library for the Blind. Like Knut, Britt is intensely musical and auditory and loves to close her eyes and surrender herself to the nonvisual domain of music; but equally, she relaxes by doing needlework, using a jeweller's loupe attached to her glasses, to keep her hands free.985 /// This kind of individual choice—whether to embrace or reject a "disability identity"—is distorted in current society by discrimination. In a society where such oppression is absent, both of these decisions would be equally valid and unremarkable, informed wholly by individual preference. While this story illustrates how individuals can adapt differently to the presence of a particular impairment, another more celebrated example shows how this can also happen on a social level. /// The island of Martha's Vineyard, off the eastern coast of the US, is today known as a retreat for the rich. For over 250 years beforehand, however, it was a relatively isolated fishing community with an unusual distinction—a strikingly high incidence of hereditary deafness. This originated with families from The Weald, a remote part of Kent in England, who had emigrated and settled there in the 1630s. A recessive deafness gene spread through inbreeding, both in The Weald and on the Vineyard. The probability of an island inhabitant having more than one Kentish ancestor rose with each new generation, with the number of deaf people reaching a peak in the 1840s (after which it rapidly declined).986 /// Nora Ellen Groce, in her classic 1980s study Everyone Here Spoke Sign Language, shows how the presence of deaf people on the Vineyard was taken for granted, with most hearing people fluent in sign language. One older man remarked to her: "I didn't think about the deaf any more than you'd think about somebody with a different voice". When Groce asked another woman in her eighties about those "handicapped" by deafness, she replied emphatically: "these people weren't handicapped. They were just deaf".987 /// As the gene was recessive, deafness could skip one or more generations. Its seemingly random appearance in the population led to deafness being viewed as something that could happen to any family—which it usually did at some point. Hearing people often used sign language even when deaf people were not present and never perceived deafness as an impairment. As another islander said to Groce: "You know, we didn't think anything special about them. They were just like anyone else. When you think about it, the Island was an awfully nice place to live".988 /// This striking—and rather beautiful—example shows that it is entirely possible to create a society where disability is unknown and genuine individuality can flourish. A society which harnessed the latest scientific and technological knowledge to the creative capacities of its citizens, who would debate and decide what is produced and how and for what purpose, would be far more likely to nourish and promote true human potential. /// As capitalism compels its rulers to push for ever-greater profits, so workers are similarly compelled to resist. It is in the course of this resistance that people can discover new truths about themselves and their comrades in struggle and discard the common sense notions of capitalism. Ever since the French Revolution of 1789, apologists for the status quo have associated the spontaneity and intensity of revolt with crazed mobs and irrationality. In words that bring to mind the counter-revolution in Egypt, Laure Murat asks a pertinent question: /// Whether pilloried or tacitly praised, why is the violence of insurrection always associated with madness, whereas the violence of repression never is ? Blanqui was a madman who should be 'put away', whereas Louis Eugene Cavaignac, who turned the events of June 1848 into a bloodbath, was hailed as the savior of the nation. It is singularly crazy to castigate popular uprisings but reward massacres; this weird rule systematically relegates revolution to insanity but attributes to reaction all the virtues of common sense.989 /// This approach has been adopted in the case of other more modest threats to our rulers' interests. Shortly after his election as leader of the Labour Party in autumn 2015, the Daily Mail awarded members of Jeremy Corbyn's new shadow cabinet with a "looney left rating".990 This was an attempt to revive the press campaigns of the 1980s which sought to represent left wing.individuals and ideas "as so deranged and psychotic that they represented a danger to society".991 /// As Marx put it, socialists must prove the "this-sidedness" of their thinking in practice. In other words, the truth or otherwise of the idea that the working class is a force which can transform the world can only be demonstrated by real events. The Russian Revolution of October 1917 provided a unique, if all too brief, example of what a successful workers' revolution could achieve. The preamble of its Education Act of 1918 expressed its spirit and ideals: /// The personality shall remain as the highest value in the socialist culture. This personality however can develop its inclinations in all possible luxury only in a harmonious society of equals. We do not forget the right of an individual to his own peculiar development. It is not necessary for us to cut short a personality, to cheat it, to cast it into iron moulds, because the stability of the **socialist community is based not on the uniformity of the barracks, not on artificial drill, not on religious and aesthetic deceptions, but on an actual solidarity of interests**.992 /// Tragically, despite inspiring huge struggles across Europe, that revolution did not spread. There is good reason, however, to believe that **next time we can win**. The sense of a single global enemy is widely shared. On a single day on 15 February 2003, 30 million people around the world marched against imperialist war, sparking a chain of events that led to the Arab Spring and the end of the Mubarak dictatorship in Egypt—an event itself celebrated around the world within minutes.993 In today's more interconnected and globalised economy there is no question that **a workers' revolution would have a rapid and inspiring impact**. /// This is not an academic question. Capitalism continues its relentless pillage of global resources, **hurtling humanity toward self-destruction**. An appeal made by Jules Valles after his participation in the Paris Commune in 1871 needs little amending almost 150 years later: ///

## 1NC – Case

### 1NC – Presumption

#### Frame the 1AC through solvency, not impacts – any attempt to filter offense through the RotB or the speech act of the aff is an arbitrary goalpost that only serves to insulate it from criticism and nuanced testing – forcing us to negate the efficacy of personal strategies is at best impossible and at worst violent – the aff can’t change the material structures that produce ableism – no warrant for how the aff spills up to impact structures of electoral politics writ large or out of debate means you vote neg on presumption.

### 1NC – Silver

#### Liberalism and futurity don’t inevitably exclude the disabled – ontological claims about the unchangeability of liberalism doom social inclusiveness.

Silvers ‘9

Anita Silvers, Professor of Philosophy at San Francisco State University; and Leslie Pickering Francis, Professor and Chair of Philosophy, University of Utah, July 2009, “Thinking About The Good: Reconfiguring Liberal Metaphysics (Or Not) For People With Cognitive Disabilities,” Metaphilosophy, Vol. 40, No. 3-4, p. 475-498 rc/pat

We now have expanded prospects for full inclusion by liberal theory of people with cognitive disabilities through a practice of assistive thinking. This prosthetic practice differs in extent and implementation, but not in nature, from commonplace social interactions that facilitate people's development of their notions about the good. We have proposed that trustees' cognitive skills can be deployed prosthetically to enable conceptualizing and communicating an idea of the good by and for cognitively disabled subjects. To do so, the trustee interacts with the subject, enabling or facilitating exercise of self-determinative or self-controlling powers crucial to liberal thinking about the good. The account contributes to a solution to exclusions advanced under the umbrella of liberalism by showing how cognitively disabled individuals may participate in certain kinds of processes related to cognition, and why liberal theory thus should not deny them full theoretical considerability. Our solution does not depend on the outcome of arguments for attributing moral personhood to them. Nor have we ventured into revising liberal metaphysics ourselves, although our approach at the very least introduces complexities and nuances into traditional views about how certain cognitive processes are at the core of human nature and are essential to moral personhood.20 While we describe some duties that accrue to those who accept or are thrust into the role of trustee, we refrain from proposing a further level of obligation that requires people to fulfill the functions of trustees. Some philosophers have argued that such a duty accrues to individual citizens and to society as a whole because all biological humans, including those with cognitive disabilities, possess personhood. Other philosophers, adopting instead a psychological criterion, have contended that serious deficit in the cognitive powers we have discussed disqualifies individuals for moral or political personhood. Pressing metaphysical claims has the enormous attraction of appearing to provide a decisive a priori resolution for moral or political problems. And there is no doubt that metaphysical commitments can motivate social movements. What appears equally clear, however, is that in this case there is insufficient metaphysical momentum to move social change either way. To the contrary, debates about ontological groundedness tend to anchor the movement toward justice for cognitively impaired people in place, depleting progress toward inclusiveness. We have tried to avoid metaphysical assumptions that cut either way, given what we have seen about both their intended and their inadvertent exclusionary effects. Rather, our focus is to show how people presumed to lack the requisite powers nevertheless might exercise them, even if not exactly in the usual way. As partial compliance theorists, we do not think we need to enter this metaphysical fray. Our question is how to build justice in the circumstances of the actual world, taking individuals as they are in all their variety. As we have pointed out elsewhere, realizing justice is an incremental process.

### 1NC – A2 Impact

#### Not all judgements about well-being are rooted in pathologization – they are often critical to stopping material harm

Vehmas and Watson ‘13

Simo and Nick, Disability Studies at the Universities of Helsinki and Glasgow respectively, “Moral wrongs, disadvantages, and disability: a critique of critical disability studies”, Disability & Society (2013), http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09687599.2013.831751)

Impairment sometimes produces practical, difficult ethical choices and we need more concrete viewpoints than the ideas provided through ableism, which offers very little practical moral guidance. It is questionable whether the notion of ableism would help the parents in deciding whether to have a child who has a degenerative condition that results in early death. Campbell (2009a, 39, 149 and 159), for example, discusses arguments about impairments as harmful conditions, the ethics of external bodily transplants as well as wrongful birth and life court cases (whether life with an impairment is preferable to non-existence), and how ableism impacts on discourse around these issues. Whilst her analysis of such ableist discourses suggests ethical judgements, she provides no arguments or conclusions as to whether, for example, external bodily transplants are ethically wrong or whether impairment may or may not constitute a moral harm. Under the anti-dualistic stance adopted by CDS, even the well-being/ill-being dualism becomes an arbitrary and nonsensical construct. Under ableism it can be constructed as merely maintaining the dominance of those seemingly faring well (supposedly, ‘non-disabled’ people), and labels those faring less well as having lesser value. There may not be a clear answer to what constitutes human well-being or flourishing, but in general we can and we need to agree about some necessary elements required for well-being. Also, as moral agents we have an obligation to make judgements about people’s well-being and act in ways that their well-being is enhanced (Eshleman 2009). This is why we have, for example, coronary heart disease prevention programmes because the possible death or associated health problems are seen as harms. Possibly these policies are based on ableist perspective, but if that is the case then the normative use of ableism is null; eradicating supposedly ableist enterprises such as coronary heart disease prevention would be an example of reductio ad absurdum. Denying some aspects of well-being are so clear that their denial would be absurd, and simply morally wrong. CDS raises ethical issues and insinuates normative judgements but does not provide supporting ethical arguments. This is a way of shirking from intellectual and ethical responsibility to provide sound arguments and conceptual tools for ethical decision-making that would benefit disabled people. If we are to describe disability, disablism, and oppression properly, we have to explicate the moral and political wrong related to these phenomena. Whilst CDS has produced useful analyses, for example, of the cultural reproduction of disability, it needs to engage more closely with the evaluative issues inherently related to disability. As Sayer has argued (against Foucault): while one could hardly disagree that we should seek to uncover the hidden and unconsidered ideas on which practices are based, I would argue that critique is indeed exactly about identifying what things ‘are not right as they are’, and why. (Sayer 2011, 244) By settling almost exclusively to analyses of ableism without engaging properly with the ethical issues involved, CDS analyses are deficient. The moral wrongs related to disablism or ableism are matters of great concern to disabled people, and CDS should in its own part take the responsibility of remedying current wrongs disabled people suffer from.

### 1NC – Infrapolitics

#### The politics of localized refusal are a disaster – they assume a transformative potential from small moments of resistance that simply does not exist.

Reed 16 (Adolph, Jr., Prof. of Political Science @ Penn., “Splendors and Miseries of the Antiracist “Left”” *Nonsite*, http://nonsite.org/editorial/splendors-and-miseries-of-the-antiracist-left-2)

More than a decade and a half ago I criticized similar formulations of a notion of “infrapolitics,” understood as the domain of pre-political acts of everyday “resistance” undertaken by subordinated populations, which was then all the rage in cultural studies programs. Proponents of the political importance of this domain insisted that, because insurgent movements emerge within such cultures of quotidian resistance, a) examining them could help in understanding the processes through which insurgencies develop and/or b) they therefore ought to be considered as expressions of an insurgent politics themselves. Several factors accounted for the popularity of that version of the argument, which mainly had to do to with the political economy of academic life, including the self-propulsion of academic trendiness and the atrophy of the left outside the academy, which encouraged flights into fantasy for the sake of optimism. The infrapolitics idea also resonated with the substantive but generally unadmitted group essentialism underlying claims that esoteric, insider knowledge is necessary to decipher the “hidden transcripts” of the subordinate populations; put more bluntly, elevating infrapolitics to the domain on which the oppressed express their politics most authentically increased its interpreters’ academic capital.8

I discussed those factors in my critique. However, the point in that argument most pertinent for evaluating Birch and Heideman’s confidence that the contradictions they acknowledge in BLM should be seen only as growing pains of a “new movement” is the following:

At best, those who