Reader Response

Agonizing [With] Chantal Mouffe

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What I most admire about Chantal Mouffe’s work is that it refuses to believe in Paradise, that it refrains from whipping out some Enlightenment bag-o’-tricks and instead attempts to meet postmodern challenges with postmodern politics. I learn a lot from Mouffe, even (perhaps especially) when what she says makes me cringe, which is actually pretty often. After reading the JAC interview, I think I’ve figured out why, despite all my admiration, Mouffe’s work strikes me so frequently as cringe-worthy: when I read her, I hear echoes of Freud. In fact, Mouffe’s politics seems to me to be rooted in a host of Freudian assumptions. That’s fine, of course, except that my own thought, it’s only fair to admit, is rooted in a host of Heideggerian assumptions. And while these two characters, Freud and Heidegger, both struggle with the question of communal relations, they do it in different epistemic universes, evidencing a profound hermeneutic impasse. I think Mouffe and I, to a certain extent, end up mirroring this impasse. So, after a brief contextualization of her work, what I’d like to do here is, (a) trace out, without much resistance, what appears to be the Freudian backdrop for Mouffe’s radical democratic politics, (b) note what it is about that backdrop that concerns me, and (c) attempt a political compromise that would embrace a radically different intersection between rhetoric and politics.

One of the hallmarks of the postmodern age is the so-called “death” of The Subject, who has turned out to be not some unified whole but a “violent disorder of identities, none of which is Identity” (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy 21). This, of course, has implications for community: from here, any articulation of a “social essence” would necessarily deny both the unprecedented multiplicity of singular beings and the radical differences among those singular beings. Calvin Shrag has argued, in fact, that this inability to say “we” is “the principle chink in
the political armor of the new politics of postmodernism" (130). Importantly, however, it is only a "chink" until the notion of "communal relations" also goes "pomo," until it catches up with postmodern notions of the subject by kicking its own addiction to essence. Once community is itself rethought in terms of the postmodern challenge, it makes a comeback as an inessential form of solidarity, and politics takes a different turn. Mouffe's radical democratic politics begins here, inside the communal crisis, with a hope and a plan for a pluralistic and democratic solidarity that has nothing to do with essence.

It has a lot to do with rhetoric, though, with argument and persuasion—and, most importantly, with identification. Mouffe argues that democratic social order requires the forging of a "strong democratic ethos" via "the creation of democratic forms of individuality" ("Deconstruction" 5), "citizens" who identify with the principles of democracy and so commit themselves to supporting and sustaining those principles: "freedom and equality for all" ("Democratic Citizenship" 75). The creation of this democratic ethos, she says, has everything to do with prompting "shared beliefs" via an "identification with democratic values," everything, that is, "to do with the mobilization of passions and sentiments, the multiplication of practices, institutions and language games that provide the conditions of possibility for democratic subjects and democratic forms of willing" ("Deconstruction" 5). Citizenship, she explains, in a "radical and plural democracy" is not a natural or "legal status" but is rather "a form of identification . . . something to be constructed, not empirically given," making the construction of "citizens' identities . . . an important task of democratic politics"—and making Mouffe a Burkean rhetorician par excellence ("Democratic Citizenship" 60, 65-66).

This is where we'll need to dive in a bit because identification, I would argue, is the key to Mouffe's radical democratic politics; it's also her faith in identification, however, that makes me want to apply a bit of braking action, a bit of resistance—but only a little, at least at first. Let's continue at a coast. Mouffe's understanding of identification has its roots in psychoanalysis, as she herself notes: "Only with a non-essentialist conception of the subject which incorporates the psychoanalytic insight that all identities are forms of identification can we pose the question of political identity in a fruitful way" ("Democratic Citizenship" 71). If it seems quite a leap from psychoanalysis to politics, notice that this "insight" about the supposedly individual psyche simultaneously posits the presence of the Other (unconscious) and also of the other(s); that is, it posits the problem of culture, which opens the question of human coexistence.

Indeed, this "insight" suggests that the socius is always already in the ego, that there can be no absolute Narcissus, no "I" that is not already
incised by what Freud calls the “wider stage” of culture. Therefore, paradoxically, the question of psychoanalysis (with which Freud struggled to the end) is not only a question of the Other (in the narcissus) but also of the other narcissi—and psychoanalysis turns out (always already) to have been what Freud, in his Introduction to Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego, calls a “social psychology” (3) and/or what Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy call a “psychosociology” (9). As Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy note in “La Panique Politique,” community is possible only because the “I” is not stable, not self-enclosed, not an “absolute Narcissus”; if it were, then no “we,” strictly speaking, would be possible or necessary (21). And yet, because individual narcissi possess no a priori common essence or common being, social relations must necessarily be forged (double entendre intended), and forged on the basis of a non-relation, an extreme asociality. Relations, that is, are made, not born, and for Freud, identification is their condition of possibility.

Of course, Freud is most noted for his descriptions of social erotics, but he ultimately locates a certain identification as anterior even to libidinal bonds, making identification, for Freud, “the ground of the social,” the very “limitation of the narcissistic non-relation and a (the) fundamental socio-political bond” (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy 12). The conditions of possibility for this “ground,” however, remain somewhat of a mystery for Freud, and in a footnote at the end of the chapter devoted to its examination, he admits that he has not fully “exhausted the nature of identification” and that he has “left part of the riddle of group formations untouched.” A far more “comprehensive psychological analysis” would be required, he says, to uncover just how identification, “by way of imitation [leads] to empathy”—to uncover, that is, the full extent to which identification offers a path outside one’s own head and comes to result, at times, in “a person limiting his aggressiveness towards those with whom he has identified himself, and [to] his sparing them and giving them help.” Though Freud never manages to explain, specifically, what identification is or why it works, he does suggest that it operates as a function of the perception that something is shared. Citing Robertson Smith’s work on “clan feeling,” Freud notes that powerful identifications often “rest upon the acknowledgement of the possession of a common substance, and may even therefore be created by a meal eaten in common” (Group Psychology 53; also Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy, 16-17).

When Kenneth Burke posits identification as the key to rhetoric, redefining the latter as discovering the available means of identification, it’s because, he says, without identification, no persuasion will be possible: to move an audience to action or attitude, a rhetor will first have to prompt listeners to identify with his or her concern as a shared
concern. And, similarly, when Mouffe describes identification as a foundational element of her radical democratic politics, it’s because she, too, recognizes that commitment—to anything/anyone—requires that the originary non-relation be overcome, that a committed identity be fashioned. Mouffe, alongside Freud/Smith, operates on the notion that strong identifications among human beings can result from the perception that they possess something in common. But in the place of a meal, Mouffe posits, as the shared “substance,” a collectively embraced behavioral contract. That is, she suggests that a societas or “civil association” might be prompted through the acceptance of shared rules of behavior: her “citizens” would “possess” a common behavioral ideal rather than common vittles. The relation among participants in this societas would operate via their “acknowledgment of the authority of certain conditions in acting,” via what Michael Oakeshott calls “a practice of civility”: a respublica. Membership in the political community would require only the acceptance of this respublica, an “identification with those rules of civil intercourse,” which would create “a common political identity among persons otherwise engaged in many different enterprises” (“Citizenship” 66-67). Or, as Mouffe notes in the interview: societas is a “bond that links citizens together but which leaves room for dissensus” (183).

And we’ll need to flesh this out a bit, too, since Mouffe’s notion of dissensus within a larger frame of consensus (over democratic values) is what puts the “radical” in her radical democratic politics. Mouffe is extremely suspicious of “total” consensus. She argues, with Richard Rorty and against Jürgen Habermas, that democracy will not be the end result of a widespread rational consensus, as if the whole problem were that a rampant irrationality were impeding reason’s happy harmony. But, against Rorty, she also argues that democratic politics is not simply a matter of “letting an increasing number of people count as members of our moral and conversational ‘we’” (“Deconstruction” 6). Though they pursue it differently, both Rorty and Habermas, Mouffe notes, pin their democratic hopes on a “quest for undistorted communication” (7). What both ignore is the necessity of conflict in any social order that goes by the name “democracy”; indeed, she argues that if the conflict were to stop, we’d have not the liberal utopia Habermas and Rorty imagine but rather the death of democracy itself: an in vogue totalitarianism striking a democratic pose.

Still coasting. Motivating this move is Mouffe’s recognition that identification is an exclusionary process—Judith Butler says it’s excremental—that creates an “I” and a “we” by excluding/excreting whatever can’t be embraced as a constitutive part of the coming identity. The process of identification, in other words, while at least apparently opening the possibility of the social, is also the systematic exclusion/
excretion of otherness. The narcissi can only hate/suppress/exclude that which presents itself as Other. Philosophy has been here most startlingly with Hegel: identity constitutes itself through a negative relation to the other, which suggests, as Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy put it, that “[f]or Narcissus, the good Other is a dead or excluded Other” (11). Or, Butler states it even more bluntly when she notes that this process of identification is “the [very] mode by which others become shit” (Gender 133-34). Burke is within the tradition of Hegel and Freud (among others) when he, in his Rhetoric of Motives, explains congregation as a function of segregation, inclusion as a function of exclusion. And it’s a Burkean Mouffe who explains that the construction of any “we” necessarily posits a “constitutive outside,” a “them” that doesn’t make the cut. This is why she insists that democracy names not some final harmony but rather a continuous, agonistic conflict in which hegemonies (temporary consensus blocs) rise up, get challenged by the voices they exclude, and give way to future hegemonies ... which will constitute different exclusions/excretions.

As Mouffe explains in the interview, a radical democratic politics proceeds from the recognition “that we are not going to realize a fully inclusive society,” and that “exclusion should be constantly contestable because we should constantly wonder if those demands which have been excluded ... should now be included—knowing that you can never reach a point in which all demands are included” (188). In “Democratic Citizenship and the Political Community,” Mouffe notes that the only required consensus for citizenship in this society would entail an agreement to value the principles of democracy, to treat “others as free and equal persons.” And/but Mouffe acknowledges that “there can be as many forms of citizenship as there are interpretations of those principles,” and she argues that because any respublica is “the product of a given hegemony, the expression of power relations, ... it can be challenged.” In fact, the possibility of this “challenge” is, for Mouffe, the very stuff of politics: “Political life concerns collective, public action; it aims at the construction of a ‘we’ in a context of diversity and conflict.” But because Mouffe recognizes that the construction of any “we” also, simultaneously, institutes a “‘constitutive outside,’ an exterior to the community that makes its existence possible,” she argues that there will be no end to diversity and conflict, which turn out not to be roadblocks to a future harmony but rather constitutive aspects of democracy itself. Though “forms of agreement can be reached,” she says, “they are always partial and provisional since consensus is by necessity based upon acts of exclusion” (78-80).

So, where are we? Identification names the opening toward the other in Mouffe’s political vision, and yet identification also names the very process by which the other is, so to speak, dumped and flushed. Identifi-
fication is the process by which the narcissus takes up with other narcissi who are the Same (who share something in common), and it is also the process by which otherness is named and excluded/excreted. One of Mouffe’s most admirable political maneuvers is her affirmation of perpetual conflict in which identification’s “constitutive outside” is continually challenged. And the possibility for this perpetual challenge rests on a distinction she makes between the adversary and the enemy. As she notes in the interview, adversaries “struggle in order to establish a different hegemony,” and they do it while “respect[ing] the right of the opponent to defend his or her point of view.” Enemies, on the other hand, “want to destroy each other in order to establish [their own] point of view and then not allow the other the possibility of coming back democratically” (182). In Return of the Political, she elaborates: An “adversary” signifies an opponent “whose existence is legitimate and must be tolerated”; we might “fight against his ideas,” she says, “but we will not question his right to defend them.” An “enemy,” on the other hand, would signify an opponent who must “be destroyed” (Return 4). The idea, Mouffe explains in the interview, is to try to turn antagonistic enemy-wars into agonistic adversary-struggles.

But, significantly, Mouffe doesn’t completely discard the notion of the enemy. Indeed, she reserves that label for those others who “do not accept the democratic ‘rules of the game’ and who thereby exclude themselves from the political community” (Return 4; emphasis added). Though this detail is mentioned without much ado in the introduction to the interview, for me, it’s a big, flashing red light—I mean, here, I’m not just tapping the brakes, I’m slamming them on. It seems to me that the question of the “enemy” names the very limit of identification’s capacity to function as the ground for a just politics—even as the ground for “sociality.” At this point, all my Heideggerian presumptions collide with all Mouffe’s Freudian ones, and that makes it difficult to continue coasting, reading—*with* her. So let me briefly address now what I consider the two most significant problems associated with Mouffe’s approach, starting from here and working backwards to our more fundamental hermeneutic impasse.

First, once the category of the “enemy” is validated *at all,* the function of the continuous “challenge” becomes suspect. What does it take for this challenge to be considered “legitimate”? Apparently, for one thing, it must be issued by an adversary who may be on an opposing team but who is definitely playing the *same game.* To explain why this raises all sorts of red flags for me, I’ll need to go to Jean-François Lyotard. I understand, however, that it’s risky to bring Lyotard into a discussion of Mouffe, since she explicitly dissociates herself from him, drawing a distinction between her politics and his paganism. Interestingly, though, she never really addresses his concerns, his challenge.
She seems to dismiss him without ever engaging him, perhaps because she doesn’t believe he’s playing the right (democratic) game, and therefore she doesn’t consider his challenge to be legitimate. Still, let’s risk it because Lyotard’s work on “the differend” exposes the danger involved in placing too much faith in the “perpetual challenge.”

Put (too) simply, a differend is an injustice that’s not litigable because the parties in conflict don’t share the same rules of cognition, the same rules for linking (making “sense” of) phrases. You suffer “damages,” according to Lyotard, if your injuries are both signifiable and reparable within the genre of discourse through which your case is judged. You suffer a “wrong,” on the other hand, when your injuries remain inexpressible, unspeakable within the judging genre of discourse. No amount of litigating will resolve a differend; it will only make things worse by further effacing the fact that an injustice has gone unheard and that it remains unhearable within the phrase regimen that’s calling the shots. The very possibility of a differend suggests that any hegemony, even one up for a valid challenge, will be smothering “unknown senses” when it refuses (or forgets) to listen for “what is not presentable under the rules of [its own] knowledge,” its own game. Lyotard suggests that such a listening is imperative, that “every reality entails this exigency,” and I’m going to have to side with Lyotard (57-58).

I’m suspicious that the “challenge” Mouffe lauds as the basis for her agonistic pluralism will show up as legitimate only if it’s issued from within the current hegemony’s privileged phrase regimens—that is, if it’s issued from within the language games that are already running the show. (How else might a kind of “reasonable consensus” be reached?) And if this is the case, what would run the risk of never getting a hearing—ever, at all—even in the flurry of conflict and challenge, would be precisely what most needs a hearing: the (radically) other, the as-yet-unhearable, precisely that which is silenced by the differend. Unless the “hegemony” is committed to straining toward “unknown senses,” what would not get a hearing would be that which would not be iterable within what currently passes as “reasonable” discursive structure. This suggests that the result of any/every conflict would not be, as Mouffe hopes, a new hegemony but only the reproduction of the same one, over and over, which would reappear each time, at best, in a new (sexier) outfit. From here, Mouffe’s plan ends up looking a lot like Rorty’s: to let “an increasing number of people count as members of our moral and conversational ‘we.’”

The second problem I have with Mouffe’s political vision is much more fundamental. And here, let me finally explain Freud and Heidegger’s “reciprocal exclusion.” First, despite all the complexities with which he struggled, when it came down to it, for Freud community was a function of the identified ego, of a narcissus who, through
identification, finds a path outside its own head. Furthermore, this narcissus validates itself (self-same) and those with whom it identifies (as same) by excluding/suppressing whatever is not the Same. In the face of the dead other, the narcissus confirms itself: ecce homo. What I’ve been trying to indicate here is that Mouffe’s politics is Freudian in this regard: locating identification as the key to a more just political community, she describes politics as a product of the us/Them non-relation. Politics is dependent on identification because it’s dependent on a definitive same/other split: a “we” and a “they” must “crystallize” for politics to work. She hopes that her “citizens” can learn to fight against adversaries without killing/“destroying” them, but the adversary isn’t really the other in Mouffe’s plan. Adversaries share a “common substance” through which they identify despite their differences. It’s the real other, the enemy, who must be destroyed. This kind of politics feels familiar and looks mighty good—looks better than it ever has, in fact—decked out in Mouffe’s admirable devotion to plurality and persistent challenge. But any identifying politics both arises out of and gives rise to the political/ethical “panic” that ensues “at the critical moment” when affective bonds dissolve and “the Masse breaks up into what really composes it, into narcissi which are estranged and opposed to each other” (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy 11). Mouffe’s identifying politics necessarily reacts to and (so) perpetuates the panic.

On the other hand, Heidegger (a philosopher and not a psychoanalyst) engages the question of community not from the ground zero of an ego but from the Being-there of Being (Dasein); the difference is significant because Dasein is always already in the world and with others—that is, Mitsein (Being-with) and Dasein (Being-there) co-appear. For Heidegger, this “ego” is a mere function of Mitdasein (Being-there-with) rather than the other way around, so a certain “community” that has nothing to do with “social bonds” always already is and identifications can only efface it. Furthermore, for Heidegger, the experience of the other’s death (or of the other’s relation to mortality) exposes Dasein to its infinite finitude, its infinite lack of an infinite identity by exposing it to its own potential for “no-longer-being-able-to-be-there” (Heidegger #249). In the face of this potential, Dasein experiences the unraveling of any/every identity—experiences identity’s unworking: disidentification.² It is this experience of disidentification that introduces Dasein to itself (as Da-sein) and to community (as Mit-sein) and that confirms for Dasein that what (and all) “we” share is precisely what divides “us”: our finitude, which is both our mortality and our inability to be-One and to be-at-One, even with ourselves. A disidentifying politics, one that begins with an affirmation of finitude and strives for a sharing out of this infinite lack of an infinite identity, would have no faith in the myth of identification and so would have no truck with this panic, either; it would embrace those moments when the supposed “social fabric” slips enough to reveal the Mitsein that it covers over.
Like Mouffe’s, this disidentifying politics would also have a lot to do with rhetoric, but this rhetoric would not be about making arguments and constructing identities so much as it would be about exposing an infinite finitude (non-Identity) as what “we” share. Therefore, unlike Mouffe’s, this politics would have less to do with Aristotle’s persuasion or Burke’s identification than it would with Victor Vitanza’s disidentification; it would operate as what Vitanza calls an “antibody” or “third sophistic rhetoric,” which he defines as “the ‘art’ of ‘resisting and disrupting’ the available means (that is, the cultural codes) that allow for persuasion and identification: the ‘art’ not only of refusing the available (capitalistic/socialist) codes but also of refusing altogether to recode, or to reterritorialize power relations” (“Some More Notes” 133; see also Negation 328). If Burkean and Aristotelian rhetorics hail singularities into subjects, individuals into collectives, Vitanzan rhetoric would operate alongside the others—even within them—hailing multiplicitous singularities as such, and hailing them without panic, inviting them to share their lack (or, really, overflow) of Identity.

So it seems that these two politics are not really mutually exclusive and could not be. In fact, Mouffe’s notion of democracy as continuous challenge explicitly embraces disidentification in at least two forms: it counts on a continual flow of new arguments forceful enough to boot one hegemony and give rise to another; and it counts on members of particular identity groups—“women, blacks, workers, gays and others”—to disidentify enough to band together to “create an equivalent articulation” of demands. It’s because Mouffe doesn’t imagine that identities are essential or stable that she can call for them to be rearticulated, re-identified, with other groups espousing a “common concern” (Mouffe uses Wittgenstein’s term: emitting a “family resemblance”) (“Feminism, Citizenship” 78). But disidentification, for Mouffe, operates always in the service of re-identification; it functions within an operation, as she says, of “decentering/recentering.” I’d cringe less if Mouffe were to “liberate” disidentification a bit, find a way to embrace it as such in/as her radical democratic politics.

And disidentification is itself a politics, though some will say it’s not and will call its proponents nihilistic and/or apolitical. This is not the place for that discussion. But it is the place to suggest that, at the very least, the “soft” totalitarian impulses that democracy harbors and that Mouffe tries (but I don’t think quite manages) to correct with her agonistic pluralism would be (are) checked by this radically other, disidentifying process, which would go (does go) about exposing the originary non-belonging that precedes any/every condition of belonging. What I want to say to Mouffe is that a really radical radical democracy, a democracy able to hold its own against the totalitarian urge, will have been constituted by existents who affirm their own not-
at-oneness without panicking, who are “neither indebted to an identity nor reduced to its opposites, disruption and fragmentation” (Düttmann 25). As Alexander García Düttmann has explained (and this, by the way, is contra Heidegger): “Originary Being-not-one, originary non-belonging does not resist Being-One, identity, belonging; it does not compete with them and does not challenge them. . . . The exhibition of Being-not-one as such is also not an understanding that institutes an (originary) totality, but an exposure without a whole” (25).

Constructing “citizens” who identify with the “principles of democracy” but who do not also embrace their own radical impertinence, it seems to me, will not have led to a radical enough radical democracy. More identification will do nothing to counter the need to excrete that which cannot be embraced. “Hate crimes” (and I mean that in the broadest possible sense), for instance, which are symptoms of strong I-We formations, are often committed in the name of the principles of democracy: freedom and equality for all—for all who count. No new identification would counter this problem. So, to Mouffe’s question, “What kind of political identity does [a radically pluralist democracy] require? . . . What kind of citizen?” (“Democratic Politics Today” 3-4), I’ll respond with a compromise: it may require “citizens” who identify with the democratic principles of equality and freedom, while at the same time, paradoxically, responding to an ethico-political call to disidentify—or, in Butler’s terms, to “desubjectify” (Psychic Life). The success of a pluralist democracy may hinge not (only) on re-identification but (also) on a more mutinous dis-identification, on “citizens” coming to embrace themselves, without panic, as “exposures without a whole,” as not-One and not-at-One with themselves nor, therefore, with (any) others. It may be that a really pluralist democracy will require “citizens” who can abide the incommensurable, who not only respect the life of (radical) others but who also recognize “no identity to vindicate nor any bond of belonging for which to seek recognition” (Agamben 88).

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Notes

'This is important: straining toward “unknown senses” entails not struggling to under/stand but embracing under/standing’s withdrawal—that is, embracing the exposition of this withdrawal as (an)Other kind of) communication. I discuss this idea more explicitly in my essay, “Addicted to Love; Or, Toward an Inessential Solidarity,” and my book, Breaking Up (At) Totality. See also, Ballif’s “What is it that the Audience Wants”; everything by Vitanza; Nancy’s Inoperative Community, and Birth To Presence; Derrida’s The Post Card; and Geoffrey Sirc’s “Godless Composition, Tormented Writing.”
Heidegger's political troubles begin the moment he gives in to the temptation to answer the question of Being, of Identity, of the relation (Geschlecht)—the moment he presumes to answer the question he worked so hard to reopen.

Compare pages 188-89 of the interview, where Mouffe discusses her project as riding the "tension" between pluralism and democracy. For instance: "In order to have a democracy ... you need to have a demos ... and the demos needs to have people who are not part of the demos. That's the logic of exclusion." But, she says, "it is important that this logic of democracy be articulated with the liberal discourse of human rights, of universality. This discourse goes in the opposite direction ... toward what we could call a logic of universal inclusion" (189).

Compare #322 of Being and Time, where Heidegger notes that Dasein's "authentic-potentiality-for-Being" entails a "constancy of the Self," which indicates a "steadiness and steadfastness" that runs counter to the "non-Self-contancy which is characteristic of irresolute falling"—or, that is, of Being in its scattered, inauthentic mode.

Works Cited


—. "Democratic Citizenship and the Political Community." Mouffe, Return of the Political 70-82.
Worrying Democracy: Chantal Mouffe and the Return of Politicized Rhetoric

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I'm worried. As I read over, again, Lynn Worsham and Gary Olson's interview with Chantal Mouffe, I'm worried about the impossibility of responding to a theorist whose work focuses on the concept of democracy, a signifier that circulates so widely in composition studies that it is almost impossible to open a journal or attend a conference without hearing it invoked. My worry is best articulated by John S. Nelson's warning that when a trope "becomes so familiar to researchers that they cease to consider its proper purposes and limitations," it no longer moves an argument forward but functions instead as a mere token (420). Given the ubiquity of the appeal to democracy in composition scholarship, then, I'm worried that each word I write will be drained of meaning at the very moment that it takes shape on the page. My suspicion, my worry, is that democracy has become an overused trope in composition studies, that the moment of invoking it marks the moment that thought stops.

Or, more precisely, invoking democracy marks the moment that thought moves in any number of directions. In a question they put to Mouffe, Worsham and Olson point out that because democracy tends to