# Hobbes AC:

## Framework:

#### Normative rules can only guide action if applied to like situations consistently, since this establishes a connection between moral categories, i.e. shooting someone at gunpoint is different than homicide. But we can’t only care about categories, since we act as agents within them. Morality therefore can’t be about only categories or only agents.

#### Thus, only a theory that connects the abstract categories of rules can allow action. Saying “I” or implying self-control doesn’t just refer to us as individuals, but refers to taking the discursive position as a subject within these categories. However, “I” doesn’t say anything about me – all you know is that I am one of many who can act. This process of taking up a subject position makes us violently categorize and objectify Others instead of being independent creators of value. PARRISH 1:

Derrida`s Economy of Violence in Hobbes` Social Contract, Richard Parrish

But this argument already approaches the more common, derivative conceptions of violence. **Before** any common **ethical violence, there** already **exists** within **an "irreducible** zone of factuality, an original, transcendental violence, previous to every ethical choice, even supposed by ethical nonviolence."4 This **arche-violence**, as Derrida calls it, "is tied to phenomenality itself, and to the possibility of language." Arche-violence, the most primordial violence, "appears with articulation,"6 which itself is **opened by the discourse that originally constitutes** the **relationship** among persons. This discursive arche-violence, "**the violence of difference**, of classification, and of the system of appellations"7 **is inescapable because articulation requires a positioning by those within discourse**. "A **[S]peech** produced **without** the least **violence**," without the least articulation, "would determine nothing," not even self-identity. It "**would say nothing"**8 **because such speech would not take a position** or make a determination, and would hence be outside of discourse. It would not be speech at all. A "transcendental origin of an irreducible violence" is constituted in "the necessity of speaking of the other as other, or to the other as other, on the basis of its appearing-for-me-as-what-it-is: the other,"9 the additional. **Because** "the absolute form of **experience**"10 **is** egoity -- a **perspectival** finitude that, to use a banal philosophical analogy, is best thought in terms of the limited perspective afforded by the sight organs embedded within the human face -- **one can only conceive of the other from a position of one's** egoity, one's **finite perspective**. As irreducibly perspectival, **one's conception of the other is as an-other-to-oneself**, as an entity constituted primarily vis-à-vis oneself, **such that oneself is the ontologically primary term of the binary**. **This "reduction of the other** to a real moment of my life, its reduction **to the state of empirical alter-ego**, is an empirical possibility, or rather eventuality, which **is** called **violence**." By this necessary move, the other, which, "interrupting all historical totalities through its freedom of speech . . . is not 'of this world'"12 is reduced to mere phenomenality. The person, grounded in its own perspective, can only perceive the phenomenality of the other in reference to itself. The person is therefore "incapable of respecting" the Other's "Being,"13 as an independent creator of meaning, instead reducing it "to intrawordliness," which "is the origin and very meaning of what is called violence, making possible all straitjackets." From a grammatical angle, "the dative or vocative dimension which opens the original direction of language, cannot lend itself to inclusion in and modification by the accusative or attributive dimension of the object without violence."15 Language that attempts to respect the other as value-creating "ego, the origin of the world" (and here I already preview Justice) rather than doing violence to it by conceiving of it as merely phenomenal, as "entirely in the world,"16 would occur in the dative or vocative. The other would be addressed as the recipient of an action. In this situation, the other is conceived as more than merely phenomenal -- the other is recognized as a subject, an alter-ego that is to be addressed and called to through language, and is capable of a response. The other is understood to be an indirect object of any action, such that he or she is the personal recipient of an address or an action. But because of the person's necessarily egoistic, perspectival nature that cannot help but conceive of others as phenomenal objects, this peaceful vocative is always tarnished by the accusative or attributive. In the attributive, **the other is conceived of as fundamentally my other, as** an attribute of oneself, as an adjective attached to one's own proper noun. In this accusative dimension one conceives of the **other as properly a direct object of one's own actions, so that things are said or done to the other as an object, rather than given or presented to the other as a Face.**

#### Three impacts: a) violence is impossible to avoid so attempting for it is pointless - instead we have to find ways to deal with it, which turns Ks and state bad args premised on the idea that violence isn’t inevitable b) ethics based in the intrinsic value of other people fail since it’s impossible to treat the Other as such and still act if ethics and discourse are themselves violent and c) because we are bound by perspectival experiences, any claim of justice must be created by humans, not systems of duties. PARRISH 2:

Derrida`s Economy of Violence in Hobbes` Social Contract, Richard Parrish

Perhaps the single most telling quote from Hobbes on this point comes from The Philosophical Rudiments Concerning Government and Society (usually known by its Latin name, De Cive), in which he states that “to know truth, is the same thing as to remember that it was made by ourselves by the very usurpation of the words.” “For Hobbes **truth is a function of** logic and **language, not** of **the relation between language and some extralinguistic reality”** so **the “Connections between names and objects are not natural.” They are** artificially **constructed by persons,** based on individual psychologies and desires**. These** individual **desires are** for Hobbes **the only measure of good and bad, because value terms “are ever used with relation to the person that used them,** there being nothing simply and absolutely so,nor **[there is not] any common rule of good and evil to be taken from the nature of objects themselves.**” Since “there are no authentical doctrines concerning right and wrong, good and evil,” these labels are placed upon things by humans in acts of creation rather than discovered as extrinsic facts.

#### If there is no sovereign, we can’t understand any relevant assertions of language, so all assertions would be true.

#### And, we must always be aware that there is a radical possibility of failure and violence inherent in the heart of identity and responsibility. Denying this denies the basis of morality itself. HAGGLUND:

Hagglund, Martin. 2006. “The Necessity of Discrimination: Disjoining Derrida and Levinas.” diacritics 34 (1): 40–71.

The utopian dream of peace pervades Cornell's book and is symptomatic of her misconception of the deconstructive thinking of alterity. As I have argued, **the notion of a nonviolent relation to the other is based on a suppression of alterity, since it must presuppose that the other is not violent in** its **[re]turn and consequently denies the radical unpredictability of the other**. Only if one assumes that the other is primarily peaceful does it make sense to prescribe a nonviolent relation, since the command to "respect" the alterity of the other does not make any sense if the other wants to destroy me. More? over, **the dream of a community without violence is the dream of a community in which there would be nothing other than peace, excluding anyone or anything that does not want to engage in the "ethical" relation. Hence, the supposedly ethical dream is unethical on its own terms, since it dreams of eliminat[es]ing the susceptibility to radical alterity, which cannot be dissociated from the susceptibility to violence and the concomitant attempts to combat it.** It is only by coming to terms with the deconstructive "logic" of violence that one can assess the ethico-political significance of deconstruction**. The deconstructive logic of violence does not prevent one from criticizing social injustices or any other forms of violence, but it exposes the internal contradictions of the doctrines that hold it to be desirable to eliminate exclusion once and for all. Discrimination is a constitutive condition.** The negotiation of it cannot be governed by a regulative idea or harbor any assurance of its own legitimacy. For precisely this reason it will always be urgent to reflect on ethico-political questions, to work out strategies for a "lesser violence" that is essentially precarious. Those who, like Levinas, proceed from metaphysical premises of how things ought to be will in one way or another attempt to deny this predicament for the benefit of one ideal or another. But the argument here is that one thereby blinds oneself to the condition that makes responsibility possible, while at the same time making it impossible to sustain the metaphysical values and ethico-theoretical decisions by which Levinas lets himself be guided.

#### Two impacts: a) completely stable notions of fair and ethical rules are impossible, since any logic of completely fair contains inherent discrimination and contradicts itself and b) Ks that rely on the purification dynamic, i.e. trying to purify the world of evil to create absolute peace just perpetuate absolute violence.

#### However, individual people can’t truly define meaning because anyone solving for violence defines terms to help themself, but doesn’t allow for communal norms sharing. The responsibility to reconcile different ideologies of just and unjust falls onto the most powerful entity. This sovereign must reconcile differences and dictate the normative system. PARRISH 3:

Derrida`s Economy of Violence in Hobbes` Social Contract, Richard Parrish

All of the foregoing pints to the conclusion that in **the commonwealth the sovereign’s** first and **most fundamental job is to be the ultimate definer.** Several other commentators have also reached this conclusion. By way of elaborating upon the importance of the moderation of individuality in Hobbes’ theory of government, Richard Flathman claims that **peace “is possible only if the ambiguity and disagreement that pervade general thinking and acting are eliminated by the stipulations of a sovereign.”** Pursuant to debunking the perennial misinterpretation of Hobbes’ mention of people as wolves, Paul Johnson argues that“one of **the primary functions of the sovereign is to provide** the necessary **unity of meaning** and reference **for the‘ primary terms in which [people]** men try to **conduct their social lives.” “The** whole **[purpose]** raison d’entre of sovereign helmsmanship lies squarely in the chronic **[is to] defus[e]**ing of **interpretive clashes,” without which humans would “fly off in all directions” and fall** inevitably **into the violence of the natural condition.**

#### Therefore, the standard is promoting the will of the sovereign. Prefer it additionally, 3 reasons:

#### 1) It’s impossible to escape the aff framework, because whenever a sovereign is removed, each person becomes their own sovereign and must attempt to force others under their will until someone prevails and becomes the sovereign. PARRISH 4:

Derrida`s Economy of Violence in Hobbes` Social Contract, Richard Parrish

But even more significantly for his relationship with Derrida, Hobbes argues **that in the state of nature persons must** not only try to control as many objects as possible -- they must also **try to control as many persons as possible**. "There is no way for any man to secure himself so reasonable as anticipation, that is, **by force** or wiles **to master the persons of all men he can**, so long till he see no other power great enough to endanger him. And this is no more than his own conservation requireth, and is generally allowed."37 While it is often assumed that by this Hobbes means a person will try to control others with physical force alone, when one approaches Hobbesian persons as meaning creators this control takes on a more discursive, arche-violent character. First," says Hobbes, "among [persons in the state of nature] there is a contestation of honour and preferment,"38 a discursive struggle not over what physical objects each person will possess, but over who or what will be considered valuable. **Persons,** as rationally self-interestedbeings **who** "measure, not only other men, but all other things, by themselves,"39 and **value themselves above all others, attempt to force that valuation on others.** "**The human desire for 'glory'**, which in today's language translates not simply as the desire for prestige, but also the desire to acquire power over others," **is** therefore primarily **about subsuming others beneath one's own personhood, as direct objects** or merely phenomenal substances. As above, the inevitability of this situation is given by the fact that the primarily egoistic nature of all experience renders the other in a "state of empirical alter-ego"41 to oneself. Those who prefer a more directly materialistic reading of Hobbes may attempt to bolster their position by pointing to his comment that "the most frequent reason why men desire to hurt each other, ariseth hence, that many men at the same time have an appetite to the same thing; which yet very often they can neither enjoy in common, nor yet divide it; whence it follows that the strongest must have it, and who is strongest must be decided by the sword."42 This quote also supports my reading of Hobbes, because quite simply the primary thing all persons want but can never have in common is the status of the ultimate creator of meaning, the primary personhood, from which all other goods flow. Everyone, by their natures as creators of meaning whose "desire of power after power . . . ceaseth only in death,"43 tries to subsume others beneath their personhood in order to control these others and glorify themselves. As Piotr Hoffman puts it, "every individual acting under the right of nature views himself as the center of the universe; his aim is, quite simply and quite closely, to become a small "god among men," to use Plato's phrase."Hobbes argues that **this discursive struggle rapidly becomes physical** by writing that "every man thinking well of himself, and hating to see the same in others, they must needs provoke one another by words, and other signs of contempt and hatred, which are incident to all comparison, till at last they must determine the pre-eminence by strength and force of body."45 **The ultimate violence, the surest and most complete way of removing a person's ability to create meaning, is to kill that person, and the escalating contentiousness of the state of nature makes life short in the war of all against all**. But this does not render the fundamental reason for this violence any less discursive, any less based on "one's sense of self-importance in comparison with others"46 or human nature as a creator of meaning.

#### Three impacts: a) Ks outside of the perspective of the sovereign can’t solve since the sovereign is inevitable b) the aff framework solves skep because even if skep is true, our pre-normative desires assert themselves to form a sovereign anyway and c) the aff turns rights-based NC that rely on rights being possible, but absent a sovereign, we just exist in the state of nature with no rights whatsoever.

#### 2) Rights require assurance that others will respect my rights as well, since otherwise I would be constrained irreciprocally as a means to the others’ ends instead of a rights-holder. Individuals don’t have moral claims without a sovereign that provides this assurance. But, this is the only system that enables rights in the first place so it’s nonsensical to have a moral claim against that system since that presupposes an external standard of evaluation. This means that any rights NC must will a sovereign to will any enforcement whatsoever.

#### 3) People must be motivated to actually follow morality. Other standards might give moral reasons to do things, but people would have no reason to be moral agents. The only means of requiring acceptance of morality constraints is through a sovereign – otherwise there’s no guarantee others will reciprocate. And, the sovereign itself is not the subject of constraints since that implies a metasovereign more powerful than the state but such an order of sovereignty doesn’t exist.

## Offense:

#### I advocate that the maxim of banning private handgun ownership in the United States and all relevant territories ought to be adopted generally. I defend the intent of banning handguns, so consequences are irrelevant, but I will accept neg preferences on specificity and implementation if you ask in CX or prep as long as it doesn’t abandon the maxim of the 1AC.

#### First, the sovereign needs to have a monopoly on violence to remove internal and external enemies – which means that giving private individuals lethal power like handguns is inconsistent with the nature of the sovereign. VINX:

LARS VINX (2013). Carl Schmitt and the analogy between constitutional and international law: Are constitutional and international law inherently political?. Global Constitutionalism, 2, pp 91-124 doi:10.1017/S2045381712000202

Schmitt claims that one cannot judge, from an **external[ly]** perspective, **that a group is morally unjustified in** defining its own identity in a certain way and to introduce political enmity, with the attendant possibility of killing, to preserve that identity. Only members of a group are in a position to **decid[ing]**e, from the perspective of an existentially affected participant, **whether the otherness of another group amounts to a threat** to their own form of life **and** thus potentially **requires to be fought** (CP 27; See also CT 76–7, 136). Schmitt's reasoning implicitly relies on a collectivist version of the logic of self-defence. The decision whether someone else's behaviour constitutes a threat to one's own life, in some concrete situation, and the decision whether it is necessary to use reactive or even pre-emptive violence to remove or to escape that threat, cannot be delegated to a third person. A group that perceives its own existence to be threatened by some other group, Schmitt argues, finds itself in an analogous position. The possibility of third-party mediation is therefore ruled out in a truly political conflict (CP 45–53). **A political community exists**, then, **wherever a group of people are willing to** engage in political life by distinguishing themselves from outsiders through the drawing of a friend-enemy distinction (CP 38, 43–4). A group's capability to **draw the distinction between friend and enemy** does not require, Schmitt holds, that the group already possess a formal organization allowing for rule-governed collective decision-taking. **A people**, thus, will **have an existence prior to all legal form as long as there is a sense of shared identity strong enough to motivate its members to fight and die** for the preservation of the group. And **as long as a people exists in this way it is capable**, through its support, **to sustain a sovereign** dictatorship exercised **in its name** (CT 126–35). Of course, Schmitt's analogy between the collective and the individual interest in self-preservation papers over an important difference between the two cases. **A political community does not enjoy simple biological existence. It might die though all of its individual members continue to live.** The drawing of a friend-enemy distinction, therefore, is never a mere reaction to a threat to a form of existence that is already given (but see Mouffe 1999, 49–50). Rather, it actively constitutes the political identity or existence of the people and determines who belongs to the people. To belong one must identify with the substantive characteristic, whatever it may be, that marks the identity of the people, and one must agree that this characteristic defines a form of life for the preservation of which one ought to be willing to sacrifice one's own life, in the fight against those who don't belong (CP 46). Schmitt realizes, of course, that it is possible for people who are not willing to identify in this way to be legally recognized as citizens, and to live law-abidingly, under the norms authorized by some positive constitution. Liberal states, in Schmitt's view, have a tendency to fail to distinguish properly between friends and enemies, and thus to extend rights of membership to those who do not truly belong to the political nation. In a liberal state, Schmitt fears, the political nation will slowly whither and die as a result of spreading de-politicization, it will succumb to internal strife, or it will be overwhelmed by external enemies who are more politically united (CP 69–79; L 31–77). To avert these dangers, Schmitt suggests, it is necessary to make sure that the boundaries of the political nation and the boundaries of citizenship coincide. This demand explains Schmitt's claim, in the first sentence of The Concept of the Political, that the concept of the state presupposes the concept of the political (CP 19). The point of this remark is that a state can only be legitimate if its legal boundaries embody a clear friend-enemy distinction. In order to achieve this aim, Schmitt clearly implies, **a sovereign** dictator, acting in the interstices between two periods of positive constitutional order, **must homogenize the community by appeal to a clear friend-enemy distinction, as well as through the suppression, elimination, or expulsion of internal enemies who do not endorse that distinction** (CP 46–8). In so doing, **the sovereign** dictator **expresses the community's understanding of what is normal or exceptional and of who belongs**, and he creates the homogeneous medium that Schmitt considers to be a precondition of the legitimate applicability of law. Schmitt observes that his concept of the political is not belligerent. **It does not glorify war, but merely claims that a community that is interested in living politically needs to be willing to go to war if it perceives its political existence to be threatened** (CP 32–5). But the intended analogy with self-defence seems to make little moral sense, given that Schmitt's conception of political existence demands the active elimination of those whom a majority perceives as internal enemies, and even celebrates that elimination as the essential activity of the popular sovereign.

#### Therefore, absent a monopoly on force, the sovereign would fail to be sovereign, as they wouldn’t be able to unify the state and act as the ultimate definer of meaning, moving us back to the state of nature even if the state still exists in name. To clarify, it’s not the end states of violence that are relevant but rather their opposition to the sovereign. Even if a gun ban causes more violence, that still requires consenting to a sovereign who can then eliminate the resistance.

#### Second, even if the sovereign doesn’t need a monopoly on force, it still requires a prohibition of absolute rights like private ownership. FEINBURG:

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Surely, **one might ask**, rights have to come in somewhere, if we are to have even moderately complex forms of social organization. Without **rules that confer** rights and impose obligations, **how can** we [can] have ownership of property, bargains and deals, promises and contracts, appointments and loans, marriages and partnerships? Very well, let us introduce all of these social and economic practices into Nowheresville, but with one big twist. With them I should like to introduce the curious notion of a "sovereign right-monopoly." You will recall that the subjects in Hobbes's Leviathan had no rights whatever against their sovereign. He could do as he liked with them, even gratuitously harm them, but this gave them no valid grievance against him. The sovereign, to be sure, had a certain duty to treat his subjects well, but this duty was owed not to the subjects directly, but to God, just as we might have a duty to a person to treat his property well, but of course no duty to the property itself but only to its owner. Thus, while the sovereign was quite capable of harming his subjects, he could commit no wrong against them that they could complain about, since they had no prior claims against his conduct. The only party wronged by the sovereign’s mistreatment of his subjects was God, the supreme lawmaker. Thus, in repenting cruelty to his subjects, the sovereign might say to God, as David did after killing Uriah, "to Thee only have I sinned."4 Even in the Leviathan, however, ordinary people had ordinary rights against one another. They played roles, occupied offices, made agreements, and signed contracts. In a genuine "sovereign right-monopoly," as I shall be using that phrase. they will do all those things too, and thus incur genuine obligations toward one another; but the obligations (here is the twist) will not be owed directly to promises, creditors, parents, and the like, but rather to God alone, or to the members of some elite, or to a single sovereign under God. Hence, the rights correlative to the obligations that derive from these transactions are all owned by some "outside" authority. As far as I know, no philosopher has ever suggested that even our role and contract obligations (in this, our actual world) are all owed directly to a divine intermediary, but some theologians have approached such extreme moral occasionalism. I have in mind the familiar phrase in certain widely distributed religious tracts that "it takes three to marry." which suggests that marital vows are not made between bride and groom directly but between each spouse and God, so that if one breaks his vow, the other cannot rightly complain of being wronged, since only God could have claimed performance of the marital duties as his own due; and hence God alone had a claimright violated by nonperformance. If John breaks his vow to God, he might then properly repent in the words of David: "To Thee only have I sinned."

#### Therefore, states define moral force, so, conditions that restrict sovereign choice are bad by definition since whenever they would come up they would be defined as wrong. But that’s just what rights are, so my framework means we can’t have any property rights against the sovereign without making all rights arbitration impossible.