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IDENTITY, DIFFERENCE, AND THE GLOBAL: WILLIAM CONNOLLY’S INTERNATIONAL THEORY

David Campbell

WRITING IN THE MID-1990S about the connection between democracy and territoriality, William Connolly surmised the constitutive relationship that bound political theory and international relations. "In late modernity," he wrote, "the nostalgic idealism of territorial democracy fosters the nostalgic realism of international relations. And vice versa. The nostalgia is for a time in the past when the politics of place could be imagined as a coherent possibility for the future." With arguments such as this one, Connolly became one of few North American political theorists to appreciate and engage the critical shift that was under way in the study of international politics.

From the early 1980s onward the likes of Richard Ashley, James Der Derian, Michael Shapiro, and Rob Walker were retheorizing international relations by subjecting what had been an Anglo-American field to an engagement with continental philosophy. Walker's seminal book Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory encapsulated the way this debate constituted a profound shift in the task of international theory as well as a profound shift in the subjects of international theory. In this chapter I want to illustrate how Connolly’s work has offered critical theorists of international politics some of the most significant articulations about the importance of identity and difference to global politics. In large part this is because, as I will demonstrate, the global condition has been an ever-present dimension of Connolly’s thought over the last fifteen or more years. As such, Connolly’s work sets the scene, effectively and productively, for approaching one of the key political conun-
drums of our time—how can we be with others in a period of increasing global tempo?

IDENTITY AND THE INTERNATIONAL

"Identity" has become one of the buzzwords of contemporary international relations theory. Constructivists, critical theorists, poststructuralists, feminists, postcolonial thinkers, and many others have fastened onto and worked with the concept in a number of ways. Many of these efforts leave the larger ontological if not metaphysical issues in abeyance. There is no such forbearance from Connolly, who gets to the heart of the matter when he observes that "there is no identity without difference. Everything, my friends, depends upon how this paradoxical relationship is negotiated."5

Indeed, as both Bonnie Honig and Stephen White have noted in this book, Connolly's *Identity*\|*Difference* (1991) offers an articulation of the problematic of identity/difference that explores the notion of human and social being in a manner productive for a number of fields. The dilemma of identity is that we cannot be without one. As Connolly argues, "it is probably impossible and surely undesirable to be human without some sort of implication in a particular identity."6 Regardless of whether we are dealing with issues of personal identity or social order, for Connolly "identities are always collective and relational," with the fundamental relation being the relation with difference.7 "The definition of difference is a requirement built into the logic of identity, and the construction of otherness is a temptation that readily insinuates itself into that logic."8 Because it is a temptation rather than a necessity, we have the possibility of politics, especially a political imaginary that Connolly styled as "agonistic democracy"—"a practice that affirms the indispensability of identity to life, disturbs the dogmatization of identity, and folds care for the protean diversity of human life into the strife and interdependence of identity\|difference."9

From the outset this political imaginary was formed in a global context. It was designed to disturb the conviction that democracy was a condition achieved only by the institutions of government in a territorial state. This invoked the global because Connolly recognized that "the politics of identity\|difference flows beneath, through, and over the boundaries of the state. It overflows state boundaries when the state constitutes a set of
differences to protect the certainty of its collective identity and whenever
the established identity of a sovereign state itself becomes an object of
 politicization."

Equally, from the outset it was clear that this political
imaginary was not one that could be characterized as an idealism that
seeks to go beyond the state, exceeding sovereignty and valorizing flow at
the expense of fixity. To the contrary, Connolly’s theorizations, rather
than maintaining (as some have characterized it) that “the world is in a
state of constant and unpredictable flux,”3 are fixed firmly on the produc-
tive relationship of identity\difference, where settlements struggle with,
and in, their contingent conditions of possibility.

Although Connolly maintained that his efforts in Identity\Difference to
scramble the academic division of labor between political theory and
international relations were no more than an interim report, with in-
tances of the interstate outnumbered in his argument by a concern for
individual and group examples, the second chapter of the book (“Global
Political Discourse”) offers a major reinterpretation of the international
by foregrounding questions of identity\difference. Seeing Columbus’s
“discovery” of the new world as a paradigmatic encounter with otherness,
Connolly details how this moment in world history, in which the “inter-
national” is produced from within the intertext of encounter, provides an
understanding of how international relations theory comes to be superior
to any social-science account of theory and evidence.4

What Columbus discovered, Connolly argued, was neither a new world
that existed in and of itself (much less did he discover “America”) nor a
new world that was to be imagined from nothing. Rather, Columbus
discovered an enigma—“an enigma that resists straightforward formul-

tion while persistently demanding recognition: an enigma of otherness
and knowledge of it, of otherness and the constitution of personal iden-
tity, of otherness and estrangement from it, of otherness and the consoli-
dation of collective identity, of otherness and dependence on it, of other-
ness and the paradoxes of ethical integrity.”5 Of course, as is common
in such encounters, Columbus and those whom he represented sorted
and secured their cultural identity by concealing these enigmas. Indeed,
through the strategies of military conquest or religious conversion with
which Columbus operated, the enigma of otherness was contained by
“strategies that enable a superior people to maintain its self-assurance by
brining an inferior people under its domination or tutelage.”6

This reading of Columbus’s “discovery,” as a paradigmatic violent nego-
tiation of the paradoxical relationship of identity and difference, established the cost borne by those who failed to engage the enigma of otherness. Although offered as a contestable and indirect insight, Connolly formulated the first lesson of the reading as a statement: "to deny the enigma of external otherness—to treat it simply as the innocent, primitive, terrorist, oriental, evil-empire, savage, communist, underdeveloped or pagan whose intrinsic defects demand that it is conquered or converted—is also to treat radical difference within one’s own church or academy as otherness (as amoralism, confusion, evil or irrationalism) to be neutralized, converted or defeated. The definitions of the internal and the external compound each other, and both eventually seep into the definition given to the other within the interior of the self."15

The ethical consequence of this was equally clear. If a secure identity requires transforming external difference into otherness through the denial of its enigmatic effects on the self, that self will have to treat difference within through similar modalities of conversion or conquest. The result would unlikely be productive for democracy or enhance justice. Accordingly, Connolly formulated what was in effect the second lesson of this reading: "a lived conception of identity that takes itself to be both historically contingent and inherently relational in its definition might create possibilities for the strife and interdependence of identity\difference exceeding the models of conquest, conversion, community and tolerance."16

The significance of identity\difference for the international was further supported in the chapter by a reading of realist and neorealist international relations theory in terms of identity and the enigma of otherness. Through a critical examination of Kenneth Waltz and Robert Keohane—two of realism's avatars—Connolly disclosed the rhetorical strategies of their arguments through which identity and difference were dissolved into "the categories of theory, evidence, rationality, sovereignty and utility."17 With mainstream international relations theory thus conceptually ill-equipped to address ethical issues raised by our inevitable global encounters with otherness, Connolly offered a sympathetic critique of Richard Ashley's deconstruction of sovereignty as an alternative. Although finding Ashley's position in close proximity to his own, Connolly was nonetheless critical of Ashley's comprehensive "postponism"—his fidelity to poststructural concerns with the positing of foundations, which prevented the articulation of alternatives. Arguing that Foucault was a prac-
tioner of general and constructive (but not totalizing) social theories, Connolly saw Ashley's reticence as both misplaced and constraining to the task of formulating a theory of global politics that could address the paradoxical relationship of identity/difference.¹⁸

STATE AND SOVEREIGNTY

Within the problematic of identity/difference, and in common with the dominant perspectives in international relations, the state figures as a central concern. The nature of that concern differs radically, however. In place of the self-certitude of an existing and unitary actor, Connolly's conception of the state (by which he meant the political dimension of social order) placed it at the heart of the relationship between personal and collective identity. But collective identity is not theorized as naturally neat, seamless, and sorted. If successful it presents itself as such, but only after its internal challenges have been externalized. In this context "a collective identity recapitulates the contingent, conflict character of personal identity; it also inflates tendencies in the latter to dogmatize its configuration when confronted by disruptive contingencies."¹⁹ Given the expansive and extensive disruptiveness brought on by the globalization of contingency, the dogmatic inclinations of the state (exemplified in its rendering of terrorism, which Connolly detailed a decade before 9/11) mean that "the state today is a ministry for collective salvation through a politics of generalized resentment. The ministry proceeds by making 'foreign' a variety of 'external' and 'internal' developments that would otherwise constitute signs of disruption within the collective identity."²⁰

Having articulated a critique of the state in these terms, it would not have been surprising if Connolly believed that the state should be bypassed or superseded as one of the primary loci for negotiating personal and collective identity. Instead, and in line with the idea that one has to negotiate through, rather than flee from, the paradoxical relationship of identity/difference, Connolly argued that the issue was one of supplementing rather than supplanting the state as a center of sovereignty. Because late modernity is to be regarded as a "systematic time without a corresponding political place," the challenge is for the state to give ground to other modes of political identification, modes that flow from a globalization of politics to match the globalization of capital, labor, and con-
tingency. The power of the national-territorial political imaginary of the contemporary international order—which Connolly has elaborated as a “territorial unitarianism” in his latest book—means that the state cannot be wished away. Nor is the question one of escaping the logic of territorialization. As Connolly argues, “the upshot is not to demand the deterritorialization of modern life. It is to support a more cosmopolitan, multidimensional imagination of democracy that distributes democratic energies and identification across multiple sites, treating the state as one site of identification, allegiance, and action amongst others.”

It is in this argument that Connolly’s ongoing commitment to retheorizing and reworking pluralism meets the global condition. The renewal of pluralizing energies that Connolly seeks in personal and group relations by foregrounding the paradoxical relationship of identity\difference requires loosening the grip of the national, territorial state as the primary locus of collective identity. Doing so opens the way for and is made possible by the development of a “more diversified, nonnational pluralism” that will “denationalize the democratic state.” Again, this is a strategy of supplementation, one meaning that “we experiment with another image of political attachment and communication within and around the state.”

These experiments are not easily conducted by the liberals who often function as Connolly’s interlocutors. That is because the tendency of states to be presumptive nations means that the “secular ideals of individualism, minority rights, and democracy function simultaneously as important obstacles . . . and problematic sources” of the “cruel and dangerous modes of exclusionary politics” required to secure the nostalgia of bounded, homogeneous communities. With “secular liberalism . . . entangled in the nationalism its most valiant devotees also resist,” the pursuit of what Connolly has most recently called a “deep, multidimensional pluralism” is a substantial ethico-political challenge to liberal theorists coming to terms with the contemporary global order.

Thus the result of Connolly’s state theorizations is the development of a “network image of the democratic state” that stands in contrast to—but is never liberated from—an “arboreal image of the democratic state.” In these terms, “a democratic state now becomes a state with multiple, overlapping lines of identity, allegiance, and communication.” The arboreal image remains, because “we are all governed by states in a world whirling
faster than heretofore." The network image is developed by citizen action undertaken as an ethos of engagement that is generous in its presumptions about others. Citizens would have multiple loyalties, including ones that draw from "multiple constituencies in the same territory honoring different moral sources," as well as those that transcend the boundaries of the state, thereby remaking the categories of both citizenship and cosmopolitanism. The network image is, though, open to action inimical to deep pluralism's ethos of engagement. After 9/11, Connolly notes, perhaps states should be treated as "unstable nodes of power traversed by a perverse anti-cosmopolitan network that subverts and disrupts the world of territorial states?" In this context, those who do not respond to a presumption of generosity or recognize the relational dimension of identity/difference, and who are willing to engage in violence, might be subject to police and military actions designed to forestall violence—while those in home circles who advocate such actions by overstating danger need to be subject to critical work too. Deep, multidimensional pluralists thereby oppose, militantly if necessary, all "counterdrives to unitarianism."

MICROPOLITICS, MARCROPOLITICS, AND THE "NEW INTERNATIONAL"

As the last points demonstrate, Connolly has been attentive to the changing global context, something he thinks that Georgio Agamben has not been. While Agamben's concern with sovereignty, the state, and sacrifice has had a largely positive reception in critical international relations scholarship, Connolly argues that Agamben fails to appreciate how sovereignty has always operated within a global context. To Connolly's mind, Michael Hardt's and Antonio Negri's general formulations in Empire better recognize the current situation. "The idea of Empire—as a loose assemblage of differentiated powers, not entirely under the thumb of a dominant state or a set of supranational corporations—is both timely and in need of further development," Connolly maintains. By detailing how "the elements of sovereignty are distributed in a complex assemblage with multiple sites, not concentrated in the single will of a people, a king or a dictator," Connolly believes that Hardt and Negri have encapsulated key features of the contemporary period. Mainstream international re-
lations theory—still bound by debates between imperialistic and anarchistic readings of international order—cannot grasp what is new about the present. For Connolly the contemporary world assemblage is marked by two tendencies: (1) neither state authorities, corporate elites, market mechanisms, nor international agencies possess sufficient foresight to govern the world intentionally as a system; (2) every state, corporation, labor movement, and supranational movement is nonetheless enabled, contained, and restrained by the larger world assemblage in which it is set. Ambiguities and uncertainties already discernable within sovereignty become magnified as its sites are extended to encompass the world.

However, having gone part of the way with Hardt and Negri, Connolly identifies how their conception of the multitude as the source of resistance—akin to the locus of citizen action in cross-state, non-national, and interfaith contestations that Connolly seeks—undercuts the ambiguities and uncertainties of Empire. By setting multitude against Empire, “rather than locating it ambiguously within and outside Empire and showing how various factions of it do and can act to press this global assemblage in new directions,” Connolly argues that Hardt and Negri have articulated an either/or logic that drains Empire of its most provocative point. In effect, Connolly writes, the notion of the multitude as external to Empire “presupposes an architecture of Empire tighter than that presented in the author’s best descriptions of the assemblage.”

In Connolly’s terms, what Hardt and Negri have failed to allow for with this either/or logic is the relationship between micropolitics and macro-politics that animates large parts of Connolly’s recent writings. Micropolitics—related to arts of the self, and techniques of the self in some formulations—involves those practices that work on us or are drawn on by us to establish us, individually or collectively. They are techniques through which existing identities can be stabilized, new identities permitted, or new formations enabled. They can be located in a multitude of cultural and social sites (clubs, families, neighborhoods, the media, the military, religious groups, and the like) though they always work at numerous “in-between” points, nodes, and lines of the network state. Micropolitics flows from the paradoxical relationship of identity/difference and is vital to a deep, multidimensional pluralism.

Notwithstanding the term and its examples, micropolitics cannot be confined to a sense of the local, regional, or substate. It is not a conception
that translates into the idea of a confined space or particular scale. Instead, micropolitics indicates the significance of the transversal rather than the transnational, highlighting how the global is simultaneously local and the local necessarily global. As Connolly maintains, therefore, there is a constitutive relationship between the micropolitical and the macropolitical, with the latter understood in more formal political and institutional terms. As he writes, "micropolitics operates below the threshold of large legislative acts and executive initiatives, even as it ranges widely and sets conditions of possibility for these more visible actions. Technique and micropolitics form connective links joining practices of memory, perception, thinking, judgment, institutional design and political ethos."34 Although far from being the only transversal links—"market, antimarket practices (such as oligopolies, monopolies, and command systems), state decrees, and interstate agreements also play critical roles"—they do play an especially important role "below the threshold of political visibility inside every domain of life."

What the emphasis on the micropolitical points to is the significance of the visceral for contemporary thought and politics. In contrast to the epistemological register of intellectualism, where a sometimes narrow and shallow conception of reason governs thinking, the visceral is the densely layered register of political thought where affect—those dispositions to perceive, believe, associate, and decide—gives "texture and direction" to the "level of refined intellectuality." Although it is infused with ideas and not antithetical to the intellectual, the visceral register is "not susceptible to modification by argument, dialogue or conversation alone."35 This is why methodological contests are often bitterly fought in the humanities and social sciences—each represents a question of faith as much as it does method.36 Addressing the visceral register therefore means coming to terms with "the importance of relational techniques of the self and micro-politics. Such tactics mix image, movement, posture, concept and argument to new effect, simulating the process by which the habit in question became embodied the first time around."37

Paying attention to the affective and the visceral requires a new understanding of causality. Intellectualism implies a sense of what Connolly calls "efficient causality," in which "you first separate factors and then show how one is the basic cause, or they cause each other, or how they together reflect a basic cause."38 In contrast—though not in place of effi-
cient causality—there is emergent causality, whereby elements have effects at multiple levels, infusing areas and issues beyond their domain, and then, through adaptations, circuits, and feedback, themselves changing in response to these effects. Emergent causality thus refigures *causation* as *resonance*, whereby the elements affected fuse, “metabolizing into a moving complex.” 39

For Connolly this recasting of causation as resonance is the basis for a trenchant political critique of contemporary American politics at home and abroad. Seeing the country governed by a “theo-economopolitical machine”—the result of cowboy capitalism, evangelical Christians, the electronic news media, and the Republican Party forming an assemblage—Connolly offers a radical new way of explaining how (among other degradations) “state practices of torture,” “an international climate of fear and loathing against the Islamic world,” and “the Guantánamo Gulag” have come to be accepted, with lies and distortions about alternatives and those who promote them made equally acceptable. In large part, the power of the “evangelical-capitalist resonance machine” is established by “media presentations [that] do much of their work below the level of explicit attention and encourage the intense coding of those experiences as they do.” 40 So while the objects of concern are micropolitical and American (at least in the first instance), the effects of concern are macropolitical and global.

Connolly’s jeremiad is an appeal to “citizens who refuse to have their thinking placed under the automatic purview of the regime in which they reside, of religious authorities tied to the state, or corporate interests linked to either.” 41 The task for those citizens—both in and beyond America, united in cross-state, non-national movements—is to engage in their own “micropolitical work on the subliminal register.” 42 This is an especially challenging task, because given the idea of emergent rather than efficient causality, and the techniques of the self employed below the level of conscious politics by the evangelical-capitalist resonance machine, it is not clear how this micropolitical resistance can be undertaken consciously and deliberately toward a desired outcome.

As Roland Bleiker argues in his chapter, while Connolly has highlighted the potential contribution of transnational social activism to the micropolitics of democratic disturbance, there is considerable scope for an empirical investigation and extension of this thought. Nonetheless, what
Connolly has arrived at through this argument is an intersection with a number of contemporary thinkers, an intersection that contains the outlines of a new conception for global citizen action. The primary rallying point for this conception is the recognition that “we are all governed”—by states and other sites of sovereignty. Connolly identified this condition in his account of the arboreal image of the state. It resonates also with Stephen White’s insightful argument in this book about the grounds upon which we can animate concern for global justice and human rights for those who live at the greatest distances from us.

White finds liberal justifications concerning the human rights of others to be uncertain and insufficient on a number of accounts. Politically, although they can prefigure our demand for protection, they cannot ground the claims of others. Conceptually, the moral sources for the modern self needed to secure the reasons for our protection cannot escape the deep reflection on their metaphysical and ontological dimensions that many liberals abhor. But White argues that this reflection does not warrant a return to theism. What is required in White’s terms is a persuasive account of “the limits on agents” that nonetheless allows “the connectedness of agents.” Drawing on Connolly’s rendering of being in a world without God, White constructs this account in terms of subjection to a condition (mortality) giving rise to an ethos of finitude. The limits are thus clear, and the connectedness arises from awareness of the way this subjection to a condition of absolute vulnerability is shared. The challenge thus remains one of articulating a bond through the common experience of subjection that will extend this sense of connectedness “beyond cultural borders and across large geographical spaces onto settings which we have little or no experience of chairs at tables in common.”

In this task, both Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida join the gathering at the intersection to move our thinking forward. Foucault’s most obvious articulation of this attitude came through his activism in association with Bernard Kouchner and Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) as part of the committee “Un Bateau pour le Vietnam” in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Kouchner, a founder of MSF and later a French minister for humanitarian affairs in the administration of President Mitterrand, and most recently foreign minister in President Sarkozy’s administration, had sent a team of doctors on board the ship L’Île de lumière to assist the “boat people” fleeing Vietnam. In June 1981, as part of an alliance with
Médecins du Monde and Terre des Hommes under the banner of the Comité International contre le Piraterie, Foucault and others protested the violence of piracy against those who had fled Vietnam but had not yet been embraced by the regime of refugee protection. At a press conference in Geneva, Foucault offered a statement articulating the position of those protesting. At its heart was this claim: "There exists an international citizenry, which has its rights, which has its duties, and which promises to raise itself up against every abuse of power, no matter who the author or the victims. After all, we are all governed and, to that extent, in solidarity."47

This statement was not published until after Foucault's death, and it was the newspaper Libération which in June 1984 gave it the title "Face aux gouvernements, les droits de l'Homme," describing it as a new declaration of the rights of man. Although this would seem to have reduced Foucault's argument to a liberal humanist understanding, the title accurately reflected that the "right" which Foucault theorized as productive came from no one or nothing except a recognition that "we are all governed and, to that extent, in solidarity." As such, it made clear how Foucault's perhaps surprising deployment of a discourse of rights was a revaluation of liberal and humanist terms, enabled by the agonistic and radically interdependent relationship with practices of governmentality rather than the existing character of subjects with inherent rights.

Foucault's argument therefore speaks to the idea of a political bond enabled by government's continuing power, and our implication in those practices of governmentality that traverse our life. It figures a new form of universality which does not rely on any a priori sense of essential sameness. Although it proceeds in the seemingly homogenizing language of a global "we," its emphasis on a common experience of subjection in a biopolitical age does not, as a matter of course, erase the radical asymmetries of power within, through, and across otherwise disparate societies. It is thus a political bond with some similarities to that identified by Derrida as marking "a new International":

There is today an aspiration towards a bond between singularities [not "political subjects" nor even "human beings"]] all over the world. This bond not only extends beyond nations and states, such as they are composed today or such as they are in the process of decomposition, but extends beyond the very concepts of nation or state. For example, if I feel in soli-
darity with this particular Algerian who is caught between F.I.S. and the Algerian state, or this particular Croat, Serbian or Bosnian, or this particular South African, this particular Russian or Ukrainian, or whoever—it's not a feeling of one citizen towards another, it's not a feeling peculiar to a citizen of the world, as if we were all potentially or imaginary citizens of a great state. No, what binds me to these people is something different than membership of a world nation-state or of an international community extending indefinitely what one still calls today "the nation-state." What binds me to them—and this is the point: there is a bond, but this bond cannot be contained within traditional concepts of community, obligation or responsibility—is a protest against citizenship, a protest against membership of a political configuration as such. This bond is, for example, a form of political solidarity opposed to the political qua a politics tied to the nation-state. ⁴⁸

With clear resonances to Connolly's articulation of a non-national pluralism, this political bond recognizes that we are connected by the practices of government, but that we struggle with the strategies of governmentality which discipline freedom, even though the context and content of those strategies of governmentality vary greatly. The claim is not that I am identical to an Algerian, Bosnian, or Darfurian or that our situations are identical (identifications which can elide other differences of race, class, ethnicity, and gender), but that if we think in terms of a form of solidarity organized around a critical engagement with "the political qua a politics tied to the nation-state" then a transversal activism is more readily conceivable. While this rendering recognizes the significant contribution of nonstate actors, it is a political bond that is not inherently anti-state but rather one activated by the reduction of the political to the state, and one that seeks to contest the imperatives associated with all specific political configurations (including, potentially, those of a non-state kind). It is a political bond that draws attention to numerous sites of possible interventions, and requires decisions on the part of individual and collective subjects to be materialized in those sites, even though it cannot legislate for that decision making. In this sense it is a political bond which maintains that resistance is a choice, but only insofar as the sites, strategies, tactics, and techniques of resistance have to be decided upon by any number of potential resisters. What is not a choice is the requirement of resistance once the abundance of life, and its affirmation
contra sovereignty and strategies of governmentality, are recognized. It is a political bond which might offer a more productive predicate for humanitarianism than any of the other codes, norms, or values currently in circulation. Therefore it is a political bond that might be the beginning for more creative practices about how we can be with others in a period of global tempo.

NOTES

4 See David Campbell, Epilogue, Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity, rev. edn (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), for a discussion of these competing strands.
5 Connolly, The Ethos of Pluralization, xx–xxi.
7 Connolly, The Ethos of Pluralization, xvi.
8 Connolly, Identity\Difference, 9.
9 Ibid., x.
10 Ibid., xi.
12 Connolly, Identity\Difference, 38.
13 Ibid., 36.
14 Ibid., 43.
15 Ibid., 40.
16 Ibid., 48.
17 Ibid., 49ff.
18 Ibid., 55ff. Connolly argued that “a constructive theory refuses to confine its task to the deconstruction of the totalitarian moment in established theories” (57). One of the few disagreements I have with Connolly lies in his occasional juxtaposition of construction and deconstruction. In The Ethos of Pluralization (36), Connolly argues that deconstruction, while “a related strategy of disturbance and detachment” which is “first and foremost an ethical project,” nonetheless “refuses to pursue the trial of affirmative possibility
very far, out of a desire to minimize its implication in ontological assumptions it could never vindicate without drawing upon some of the same media it has just rendered ambiguous." I think we can explicate more fully the manner in which deconstruction's affirmations are better developed than is commonly recognized, especially by readings markedly less sensitive than Connolly's. For my attempt to do so see National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity and Justice in Bosnia (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).

Connolly, Identity\r\n\nIbid., 207.
21 Ibid., 215.
23 Connolly, The Ethos of Pluralization, 137.
24 Connolly, Why I Am Not a Secularist (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 88, 91–92.
25 Ibid., 73; Connolly, Pluralism, Prelude.
26 Connolly, Why I Am Not a Secularist, 95.
28 Connolly, Why I Am Not a Secularist, 95.
29 Connolly, Pluralism, 13.
30 Ibid., 35. 41. This builds on Connolly’s earlier caution that “engaging the paradox of ethicality by cultivating the experience of contingency in identity does not entail the celebration of any and every identity. It does not open itself to a politics of racism or genocide, for instance. For identities that must define what deviates from them as intrinsically evil (or one of its modern surrogates) in order to establish their own self-certainty are here defined as paradigmatic instances to counter and contest.” Connolly, Identity: Difference, 14–15.
32 Ibid., 35.
33 Connolly, Why I Am Not a Secularist, 148–49; Connolly, Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 20–21.
34 Connolly, Neuropolitics, 21.
36 Connolly, “Method, Problem, Faith.”
37 Quoted in Macdonald, "Towards an Ethos of Freedom and Engagement.” 169.
38 Connolly, “The Evangelical-Capitalist Resonance Machine;” Political Theory 33, no. 6 (December 2005), 869; Connolly, “Method, Problem, Faith.” 342–43.
40 Ibid., 871, 877, 878, 880.
42 Connolly, Neuropolitics, 130.
46 Ibid., 278–79.
47 Quoted in ibid., 279 n. 67.