# Bataille Ks

## Academy K

### 1NC – Generic

#### The aff is works within the academy, entrapped within the notion of “project” – it functions according to the will to productivity, that which subsumes resistance into the regularity of productive operations

Winters 17 (Joseph Winters is an assistant professor of Religious Studies with a secondary position in the Department of African and African American Studies at Duke University, “Baldwin, Bataille, and the Anguish of the (Racialized) Human,” Journal of Religious Ethics, ///ghs-sc)

Bataille, more than Baldwin, troubles the very logic of futurity. Bataille’s writings underscore both the violence and inescapability of human projects, of our investment in something like a future, duration, and so forth. For Bataille, our necessary commitment to duration enables us to construct meanings in the world, complete tasks, develop identities, and change things. At the same time, this general attachment to a future requires us to eliminate or separate ourselves from that which gets in the way of our future-oriented projects. Any well-intentioned endeavor to imagine and bring into being a better world will require some way of handling or assimilating any impediment to the construction of that world. As Bataille insists, human attachments to progress, development, and growth tend to “regularize ... [and] channel a disorderly effervescence into the regularity of productive operations” (Bataille 1991, 45). Bataille is not saying that we can live without goals or production; he is contending that futurity and the will to production are implicated in the same disciplinary mechanisms that the desire for a different future often challenges. The true ethical moment for Bataille, therefore, happens as an interruption into our project-making inclinations. Along these lines of concern, Bataille might interrogate Baldwin’s “achieving our country” passage and point to the “we” that Baldwin imagines, a “we” that exists within a narrow black/white binary. This all too familiar reduction excludes communities and histories, like indigenous peoples, that have experienced the violence of racial modernity, settler logics, and the strategies of nation-building (in ways that are analogous, but not identical to, the experiences of black people). In addition, Bataille’s provocations draw attention to Baldwin’s eagerness to “create the new consciousness of the others,” to mold and fold others into this project of interracial cooperation and national fulfillment. While Bataille’s reflections on project-making and instrumental violence often remain abstract and untouched by racial difference, this is a moment when his generalizing tendency reveals troubling patterns in even the most promising and inspiring of proposals for racial justice.

#### The theorizing of the aff is meant to produce knowledge, an impossible enterprise – this will to know ignores the impossibility of the aff’s aspirations

DeBoer 14 (Jason DeBoer runs a literary and philosophical publishing house called Trembling Sun Press in Chicago, “Bataille vs. Theory,” ///ghs-sc)

Theory (again, whether it be philosophical, critical, sociological, etc.) can be said to consist of a variety of related movements. It can be thought of as the analyses of givens, predictions for the future, the systematic organization of knowledge, the very path along which thought must follow, or even thought itself. Theory is almost invariably a process that maintains knowledge (guaranteed by certainty) as its end result. Bataille contests the claim that a process of examination leads somehow to knowledge, because for him this external theorizing can only depart from or deny the only certain knowledge that humans may have: “We have in fact only two certainties in this world — that we are not everything and that we will die.” Bataille posits knowledge of death not as the end result of a theoretical operation, but as an inner experience from which everything else radiates. This knowledge of death is in no way an understanding or comprehension of death; it is only the certainty that death will some day consume us, only a knowledge of mortality. Death cannot be regarded as an object of knowledge because it cannot be managed or subordinated by thought. Death is sovereign, hence inconceivable. Knowledge of our own mortality can only be peripheral to death itself. (Bataille’s other certainty, “that we are not everything”, paves the way for his notions of heterology and discontinuity, which I will examine in another essay.) Thus, the supposed end-product of theory, knowledge, is declared impossible by Bataille, except for the certainties of death and the discontinuity of beings. He writes: “we can have no knowledge except to know that knowledge is finite.” Death, in the end, consumes thought. Any truth claims of theory are not sustainable according to Bataille’s rigid criteria for knowledge (namely, that only absolute certainty could guarantee knowledge). Bataille’s thought desires to exceed the very notion that knowledge is possible or that theory produces what it claims: “going to the end means at least this: that the limit, which is knowledge as a goal, be crossed.”

#### This will to know forestalls the radical potential of their politics – we need an not injection of knowledge but an injection of non-knowledge, a process of un-knowing that tears subjectivities apart

Bataille 97 Georges Albert Maurice Victor Bataille was a French intellectual and literary figure working in literature, philosophy, anthropology, economics, sociology and history of art The Bataille Reader (1-2)//SP

'I read the first chapter and felt violently ill.' A colleague returns On Nietzsche. Unread, or read to the limit of tolerance, Bataille's text has nevertheless succeeded in throwing up a 'Bataillean' response. Experiences of nausea, sickness, pain, anguish are among the range of extreme states that conce Bataille precisely to the degree that they are uncontrollable, in so far as they shatter the composed rationality of the isolated individual. In this way, such experiences open on to a mode of communication that exceeds language. Communication, for Bataille, requires 'a being sus­pended in the beyond of oneself, at the limit of nothingness'.1 As reluctant and unappetizing as such an entry into communication with a text may be, the involuntary voidance of one reader amply testifies to the disruptive force of Bataille's writing. While the present reader may judge for him or herself, however, there would appear to be nothing in this chapter from On Nietzsche, notwithstanding the cruci xion of Christ, that is obvi­ ously disgusting at the level of objects represented. Rather, it is perhaps the way that Bataille's writing actively contests systematic codes of academic inscription and takes thought to the limits of comprehension. It is possible that this writing, which attempts to push understanding and empathy to a vertiginous summit, produces the reaction that bypasses or exceeds intel­ lectual appraisal, leaping om reading to feeling in a violent movement that manifests an extreme subjective and corporeal disturbance. The idea of someone throwing up all over one of Bataille's texts is also quite nny, of course. Laughter is frequently a response to repugnance, or to the discomfort of others. As Bataille notes in the Preface to Madame Edwarda, 'laughter is the sign of aversion, of horror' (p. 224). But equally frequently, laughter is a defense mechanism, warding off the horror: 'it is indeed in laughter that we nd the justi cation for a form of castigation, of obloquy' (p. 224). It is quite possible that, in their subjective extremity and their intense seriousness about uncomfortable topics, Bataille's own texts may be subject to laughter, particularly to the derisory mirth of a comfort­ able Anglo-American pragmatic or utilitarian scepticism. But this would be to miss completely the imponance of Bataille's thought - and Bataille's laughter: What the heany laugh screens us from, what fetches up the bawdy jest, is the identity that exists between the utmost in pleasure and the utmost in pain: the identity between being and non-being, between the living and the death-stricken being, between the knowledge which brings one before this dazzling realization and de nitive, concluding darkness . . . our laughter here is absolute, going far beyond sco ing ridicule of something which may perhaps be repugnant, but disgust for which digs deep under our skin . . . the sight of blood, the odour of vomit, which arouse in us the dread of death, sometimes introduce us into a nauseous state-which huns more cruelly than pain. (p. 225) That which is revolting, shocking, that which disarms predictable patte s of thinking and feeling, that which lies at the unhallowed extremes and unavowed interstices of social, philosophical or theoretical frameworks, are the objects of Bataille's fascination. Encounters with horror, violent disgust, that miraculously transform into experiences of laughter, intoxication, ec­ stasy, constitute, for Bataille, inner experiences that overwhelm any sense of the distinction between interiority or exteriority. At the limit of knowledge, un-knowing is activated, a process in which subjectivity is torn apart, unworked at the core of physical and mental being. Bataille's writing strains to evoke such experiences, pushing language to its very limits, seeking the impossible in its re sal to remain contained within discourses predicated on sense, usefulness, responsibility, productiv­ity and positivity. To feel violently ill at the encounter of such writing is perfectly natural in that the 'unnaturalness' of nature is disclosed as uncom­fonable and horriing in its negativity: the homogeneous subject of culture retches in a movement of negation that never quite expends or transcends the force of heterogeneity in which she or he must imminently dissolve. Reading exceeds the economy of ideas and meanings in which subject and addressee exchange sense and knowledge; the gift of writing cannot be retu ed or contained in such a restricted fashion: what arrives is a contes­ tation of and challenge to modes of thinking, an expenditure of signification which consumes existing modes of commodification and exchange, laying waste to them in a waste l presentation of the waste that is their own.

#### Thus the alternative is a process of nonknowledge – an injection of non-meaning in the face of the 1AC. Only through this can we rupture the virtue epistemology.

Lerman 15 (Lindsay Lerman, PhD in Philosophy from The University of Guelph, Ontario, supervised by Shannon Winnubst (yeeee), “Georges Bataille's "Nonknowledge" as Epistemic Expenditure: An Open Economy of Knowledge”, 2015, <https://atrium.lib.uoguelph.ca/xmlui/handle/10214/8994> ///ghs-sc)

\*This was written prior to receiving the PhD

Our explanation of nonknowledge takes place in four major sections, each of which is an “element” of nonknowledge. They are: unstable communicability (element 1), experientiality (element 2), threshold position (element 3), and expenditure (element 4). Each of these four elements (with the exception of element 3) contains a number of “features” that flesh out the element. The features of element 1 (unstable communicability) collectively point to the larger claims that there is something in the experience of nonknowledge that does not comfortably or clearly reduce to language, that language can fail in significant ways, and that experiences of nonknowledge cannot be propositionalized. The features of element 2 (experientiality) highlight its subjectivity and affectivity, its transgressive nature, and its seemingly paradoxical property of leading both somewhere and nowhere. That nonknowledge has no authority other than itself is also emphasized in the features of element 2. The third element (the threshold position) differs from the others because it does not have a number of features, and it is not described in Bataille’s texts. The “element” is in fact my claim about the nature of nonknowledge and its position in relation to the kind of knowledge sought by the virtue epistemology conversation, made explicit through Bataille. Element 4 is expenditure. The features of element 4 stress the unmeasurability, partial uselessness, and destructive facets of nonknowledge. They also stress the non-acquisitive nature of nonknowledge—that as expenditure, it is not clearly creditable, and thus cannot be acquired and stored up. Nonknowledge is thus a kind of thought-play. Today, like other times, I am going to attempt to communicate my experience of nonknowledge to you. Of course, like the other times, I will fail. But first I would like to show you the extent of my failure. I can say precisely that if I had succeeded, the tangible contact between you and me would have the nature not of work but of play. I would have known how to make you perceive what is for me a decisive fact; the only object of my thought is play, and in play my thought, the work of my thought, is annihilated (USN 120). Drawing this out will require explaining all four elements of nonknowledge. We can already see that the features of the four elements of nonknowledge are significantly different from the presumptions made in the virtue epistemology conversation. Taking these differences seriously and making them explicit is the chief aim of this document. By the end of this document, however, I will argue that we can see these elements and features of nonknowledge at play in the virtue epistemology conversation, and that nonknowledge can in fact be seen as a feature of knowledge-creation of the kind we see in the virtue epistemology discussion, as an expression of classical epistemology, and of philosophy. I will argue additionally (in chapter 3) that nonknowledge is best understood as “epistemic expenditure,” and as an open, or general, economy. Building on this, I will return to the virtue epistemology conversation in order to claim that what at first looks like a closed, or restricted economy (viz., the virtue epistemology conversation) is in fact an open, or general economy, with nonknowledge (understood as epistemic expenditure) already occurring within it. This claim requires some additional claims. I will identify them here before discussing them fully in the coming chapters. They are: (1) that the virtue epistemology presumptions are an adaptation to the excess, the waste, that is nonknowledge; (2) that the elements of nonknowledge occur in virtue epistemology, without being recognized or identified; and thus (3) that what the classical presumptions suggest is the entire story—or a complete conversation—is in fact an incomplete story, or conversation.

### 1NC – Virtue Epistemology Thesis

#### The will to productivity subsumes the world, entrapping us within the virtue epistemology, a closed economy of knowledge. This framework limits the potential of life, as we are restricted within the frame of utility.

Lerman 15 (Lindsay Lerman, PhD in Philosophy from The University of Guelph, Ontario, supervised by Shannon Winnubst (yeeee), “Georges Bataille's "Nonknowledge" as Epistemic Expenditure: An Open Economy of Knowledge”, 2015, <https://atrium.lib.uoguelph.ca/xmlui/handle/10214/8994> ///ghs-sc)

\*This was written prior to receiving the PhD

Here are the presumptions of classical epistemology we can see at work in the virtue epistemology cluster: 1. That knowledge is communicable, especially in the form of clear propositions. 2. That knowledge can be continuously acquired, as though it were a good. 3. That the acquisition of knowledge has an aim—that it is a teleological pursuit. 4. That knowledge is valuable. 5. That knowledge is useful. 6. That what counts as knowledge can be objectively determined (and relatedly, that it is measurable as a system of debit and credit.) 7. That virtue epistemology is a distinct community which forms the authority on matters of knowledge (why knowledge is valuable, who gets to be a knower, etc.) 8. That the intellectual character of the knower plays an important role in how and why knowledge is acquired These presumptions demonstrate what I will identify as the “closed” or “restricted” nature of this particular economy of knowledge. What this means is that as an expression of philosophy (more generally), epistemology (more specifically), and the virtue epistemology conversation (even more specifically), that they are limiting. The presumptions patrol the borders of knowledge in a way that is detrimental to the discovery of new knowledge; namely, they cannot see the “waste” that ought to play an integral part in the creation of knowledge. In this particular virtue epistemology conversation, we see this limiting and patrolling happen via a focus on teleology, acquisition, and utility/production. In order to demonstrate that this focus on utility/production, acquisition, and teleology is not unique to our virtue epistemology conversation, we have to move outward, and backward. We can begin by looking to Aristotle, as Zagzebski, Greco, and Sosa all happen to employ some version of an Aristotelian notion of virtue in their respective versions of a proper virtue epistemology.

### 1NC – Impact

#### **Their focus on utility recreates a productive/unproductive binary, a binary that underlies all discriminatory violence**

Winnubst 07 (Shannon Winnubst is a professor of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies at Ohio State University, “Reading Bataille Now,” 2007 ///ghs-sc)

The installation of this fundamental value, utility, allows not only homophobia but also more general forms of xenophobia to emerge: if sexuality is not reproductive, it is perverse (and the person performing it is a pervert); but, more generally, if an act is not useful, it is not properly human (and the person performing it is a beast or monster). In the United States, where the Protestant work ethic reigns supreme, we can see that the site of our humanizing is not merely the abhorrence of animality, but more generally the abhorrence of all that is not useful. This is what finally horrifies us about animality: its useless squandering of life. Why must we, ontologically, distance ourselves from the contact with animality that is at the root of human sexuality? Because it is useless. To abhor squandering uselessness or, at the other end of production, to abhor excessive waste, is to distance oneself from animality: it is to humanize one's self-and to give reason, particularly instrumentality mentality and its expression in utility, its fullest reign over our social and psychic lives. But this larger distancing movement from animality has also been erased from late modernity's consciousness. Bataille argues that this distancing from animality functions as the primary criterion to separate humankind into social classes, races, tribes, groups-into differences. But we late moderns cannot allow for any such "horror [as the horror of animality to enter into consideration" (1985a, 117, his emphasis). We cannot even recognize its domesticated transposition into the horror of uselessness. Bataille argues that we can only recognize "the right to acquire, to conserve, and to consume rationally, but [we must] exclude in principle nonproductive expenditure" (1985, 117).

### 2NC – Alt

#### Nonknowledge is the threshold at which knowledge is exhausted or recognizes its limits. Understanding it is not a matter of finding where knowledge becomes nonknowledge, but is the moment at which we are faced with something that we cannot think or know. This is not the end of our ability to think, but is instead a threshold to a new way of thinking or understanding.

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Element 3: Threshold Position “Bataille envisages the arrival of thought at the gates of nonknowledge only to the extent that thought would have exhausted its ‘resources’” (Robert Sasso, “Georges Bataille and the Challenge to Think,” On Bataille 47). “One side of nonknowledge is chaos; the other, system. Knowledge forms a bridge between the two banks. Knowledge as such is a space of transformation” (Michel Serres, The Parasite 73) The position of nonknowledge in relation to knowledge is what I call a “threshold position.” Important to its threshold position is the “non” in “nonknowledge.” It is not a “non” in the sense of negation or opposition. Ray Brassier has described what he calls the “non-philosophy” of François Laruelle in just such a way, akin to the “non” in “non Euclidean” geometry: […] not as a negation or denial of philosophy, but as suspending a specific structure (the philosophical equivalent of Euclid’s fifth axiom concerning parallels) which Laruelle sees as constitutive of the traditional practice of philosophy. New possibilities of thought become available once that structure has been suspended and non-philosophy is an index of those philosophically un-envisageable possibilities (“Axiomatic Heresy: The non-philosophy of François Laruelle,” Radical Philosophy 121, p. 25). If nonknowledge were “a-knowledge” it would be the absence of knowledge. If it were “ir knowledge” or “un-knowledge,” it would be the negation of knowledge. Sticking with the Latin roots, nonknowledge is closer to “not-knowledge.” But this cannot mean that nonknowledge is strictly not-knowledge. The relationship of nonknowledge to knowledge can be explained with Bataille’s description of what makes excess possible: “[O]nly the impossibility of continuing growth makes way for squander. Hence the real excess does not begin until the growth of the individual or group has reached its limits” (Accursed Share 29). At full epistemic capacity, what could have been useful intellectual activity becomes excessive, wasteful intellectual activity. Nonknowledge is thus not ignorance or total absence of knowledge, but a challenging not-knowing that occurs at a limit—at the continuous and permanent threshold of—knowing. Because in the next chapter we will see that I am calling nonknowledge epistemic expenditure, I maintain that its most easily identifiable incarnations occur when a limit in thought, in thinking, in problem-solving—in 88 “useful” mental activity—is crossed. When thought has “exhausted its resources,” (Sasso ibid) pushed past a limit of usefulness. Nonknowledge is thus an alternate epistemology. Following the “non” of Laruelle, nonknowledge makes “new possibilities of thought” available (Brassier ibid). Bataille did not identify nonknowledge’s position as a threshold position, but he did lay the groundwork for my description. According to Bataille, nonknowledge occurs as a natural, necessary byproduct of the dissolution of knowledge (AC 74), which itself occurs at the height of knowledge, only when the “summit” of knowledge is reached (ibid). [K]nowledge leads to the limit, because knowledge as a willful comportment is motivated by a relation to the limit. Just as the interdit called for transgression, through an intimate accord hidden within its illusory opposition, knowledge calls to non-savoir as its violent complement, its hidden condition, its silent end. ‘The nonessence of the will to know arises’: it is not reason that motivates the desire to know—no more than it was reason that instituted the interdit. The desire to know is violent—is violence […] It is an exigency conditioned by survival and by death. It leads, through its privileged illusion of objectivity and the possession of truth, inexorably to its limit. The experience of this limit is non-savoir” (Joseph Libertson, “Bataille and Communication,” On Bataille 217). Limits can be thresholds. Instead of being final, they are thresholds—a permanent zone of openness to transformation. What we are capable of doing is not once and for all determined. We can experience a limit as a final limit—a necessary stopping-point—or we can see if the limit is not perhaps as final or as real as it seems. Understanding that limits are thresholds is the key. This is a quasi-Deleuzian point. “Deleuze has an almost mathematical definition of the limit, as that which one never really reaches.56” (Rosi Braidotti, “The Ethics of Becoming Imperceptible,” Deleuze and Philosophy 10). Thus understanding the position of nonknowledge in relation to knowledge is not a matter of determining exactly where knowledge “ends” and nonknowledge “begins”; it is a moment when we are faced with something unthinkable, unknowable, un-communicable, or even heretical, and it is a matter of understanding that moment not as a final marker of a limit, but as a threshold. As somewhere between clear thought or discourse (that which can be clearly, reliably communicated, translated into knowledge, or seen as a contribution to the accepted scholarship) and something like a-knowledge or un-knowledge: a wild and entirely indescribable terrain. When we have utterly exhausted or clicked off our thinking and knowing resources, we begin to arrive in the region of nonknowledge. We’ve seen that this is perhaps uniquely possible in erotic experience, but it is not limited to thinking or knowing during, or about, erotic experience. Nonknowledge can occur when we are wondering about the structure of the universe. It can happen when a child asks us what time is. Certain events or experiences can occasion nonknowledge, but they are not the form of nonknowledge. In keeping with the threshold position of nonknowledge, we will see that it is a part of knowledge and knowledge-creation, despite the fact that virtue epistemology—and epistemology in general—seeks to strictly limit what kinds of processes or procedures can result in knowledge, and thereby excludes processes that might be nonknowledge. (And thus cannot ever really or fully be excluded.)

### 2NC – Framework

(Continue? I meant to. But I don't care now. I've lost interest. I put down what oppresses me at the moment of writing: Would it all be absurd? Or might it make some kind of sense? I've made myself sick wondering about it. I awake in the morning - just the way millions do, millions of boys and girls, infants and old men, their slumbers dissipated for ever ... These millions, those slumbers have no meaning. A hidden meaning? Hidden, yes, 'obviously'! But if nothing has any meaning, there's no point in my doing anything. I'll beg off. I'll use any deceitful means to get out of it, in the end I'll have to let go and sell myself to meaninglessness, nonsense: that is man's killer, the one who tortures and kills, not a glimmer of hope left. But if there is a meaning? Today I don't know what it is. Tomorrow? Tomorrow, who can tell? Am I going then to find out what it is? No, I can't conceive of any 'meaning' other than 'my' anguish, and as for that, I know all about it. And for the time being: nonsense. Monsieur Nonsense is writing and understands that he is mad. It's atrocious. But his madness, this meaninglessness - how 'serious' it has become all of a sudden! - might that indeed be 'meaningful'? (No, Hegel has nothing to do with a maniac girl's 'apotheosis'.) My life only has a meaning insofar as I lack one: on, but let me be mad! Make something of all this he who is able to, understand it he who is dying, and there the living self is, knowing not why, its teeth chattering in the lashing wind: the immensity, the night engulfs it and, all on purpose, that living self is there just in order ... 'not to know'. But as for GOD? What have you got to say, Monsieur Rhetorician? And you, Monsieur Godfearer? - GOD, if He knew, would be a swine.4 0 Thou my Lord (in my distress I call out unto my heart), 0 deliver me, make them blind! The story - how shall I go on with it?)

[Georges Bataille, “My Mother, Madame Edwarda and The Dead Man,” 1937]

#### The role of debate is to affirm its own meaninglessness. Any attempt to place broader meaning onto the activity is what destroys the possibility for nonmeaning and nonknowledge

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Bataille claims that the endlessness or goal-lessness of experience leads to nonmeaning, and to the anguish of nonmeaning remaining (at least partially) meaningless. (In a reply to Sartre included in On Nietzsche54). The only other sense Bataille is comfortable associating with nonmeaning is intoxication. The meaning that nonmeaning has, according to Bataille, is the meaning contained in the fact that it (nonmeaning) intoxicates him. This is an affective meaning. Bataille happily concedes to Sartre that (inner) experience is equivalent to “the pleasure of drinking a glass of spirits or feeling the sun’s warmth at the beach,” claiming that inner experience remaining/culminating in such frivolity only produces anguish (ON 173). From this it would seem that Sartre’s criticism of inner experience as mere “emptiness” is a claim that inner experience does not have adequate or satisfactory ends. “Emptiness” in this sense is an accusation of a lack of telos. Bataille is not bothered by this. Bataille wanted inner experience to be aimless but affectively productive. This is significant with regard to knowledge and nonknowledge: Sartre is right in relation to me to recall the myth of Sisyphus, though ‘in relation to me’ here equates to ‘in relation to humanity,’ I suppose. What can be expected of us is to go as far as possible and not to stop. What by contrast, humanly speaking, can be criticized are endeavors whose only meaning is some relation to moments of completion. Is it possible for me to go further? I won’t wait to coordinate my efforts in that case—I’ll go further. I’ll take the risk. And readers, free not to venture after me, will often take advantage of that same freedom! The critics are right to scent danger here! But let me in turn point out a greater danger, one that comes from methods that, adequate only to an outcome of knowledge, confer on individuals whom they limit a sheerly fragmentary existence—an existence that is mutilated with respect to the whole that remains inaccessible (ON 174-5). If inner experience were not aimless—if it had a simple, definitive outcome—the outcome would be knowledge. And experience is necessarily different from methods of contemplation and contestation which set out with knowledge as their outcome. Hence inner experience’s relation to nonknowledge: inner experience produces some absence of knowledge, and it does not seek knowledge or anything in particular as a goal, paving the way for nonknowledge. Inner experience is also different from “methods” which require an individual to live a “fragmentary existence,” separate and apart from some “whole” which remains inaccessible to them. This separation from some whole is a greater danger than the danger of a task as Sisyphean as endless contestation. Bataille’s claim that inner experience is not the kind of method which requires individuals to live fragmentedly, and separate, from some essential whole recalls his distinction between “continuity” and “discontinuity.” Bataille is suggesting that inner experience allows him to live with access to a whole—as part of the whole—that would otherwise (with other methods) remain inaccessible. The method which entails inaccessibility to the whole recalls discontinuity, and the method of being part of or caught up in the whole (inner experience) recalls continuity. It matters little what particular “method” or methods Bataille is using to describe inner experience. What matters in identifying such methods is that they are methods that expect knowledge as the outcome and that they achieve the outcome by limiting individuals to fragmentary existences without access to the whole of which they are seeking part (in the form of “knowledge”). We will not see this concern for continuity in our virtue epistemology conversation, nor will we see knowledge characterized as fragmenting, or splintering. In Sensible Ecstasy, Amy Hollywood offers her analysis of Jean-Paul Sartre’s critique of Bataille in relation to Bataille’s desire for continuity over and above any desire for identifiable outcomes: “Sartre’s and Bataille’s opposing attitudes toward human projects are crucial here. Sartre insists that to be human is to engage in projects; Bataille argues that inner experience is the opposite of project” (30). (And inner experience is especially not a project of self-improvement.) Thus Bataille “generates endlessly recursive negations of his own attempt to provide a method for attaining inner experience” (ibid). According to Hollywood, this is ultimately the problem Sartre has with all of Inner Experience; that is, it has no method, it offers no clear goal, it is useless, it is not a project. “For Sartre, if inner experience does not give rise to new enterprises it is worth nothing more than ‘the pleasure of drinking a glass of alcohol or of warming oneself in the sun at the beach’ [ON 173]. Such experiences are, for Sartre, ‘useless’” (SE 31). Excesses are permissible for Sartre, Hollywood writes, as long as they are channeled fully into project—whether the project is political or personal. “Only if these excesses are contained by project can they be meaningful and useful” (SE 33). However, the intoxication that inner experience and its nonmeaning produce are all we need to reply to Sartre: nonmeaning is not a total absence of meaning. Nonmeaning provides some kind of meaning in the form of intoxication, of affect. We will see that the same is true of nonknowledge: nonknowledge is not a total absence of knowledge, and its clearest meaning is an affective meaning. Nonknowledge does not have a particular kind of recuperable use. Inner Experience, Inner Experience, and Nonknowledge Bataille closes his reply to Sartre with a description of inner experience itself: it is the movement of “willing a knowledge beyond practical ends” (ON 176). Bataille acknowledges that this willing “can’t be indefinitely continued” (ibid). Knowledge “beyond practical ends” is nonknowledge. Inner Experience (the text and the concept) is thus a method and a non-method for arriving at nonknowledge. If reading Inner Experience moves one to pursue experience, it opens up the possibility of arriving at nonknowledge. The “method” inspires anguish because it produces only knowledge beyond practical ends—useless pseudo-knowledge. The method looks, sounds, and seems like mystical ecstasy from the outside, but, according to Bataille, it can be and is understood differently from the “inside55.” The method of inner experience is not just an avenue to nonknowledge; it is partially constitutive of nonknowledge. It is an element of nonknowledge.

#### Our *experience* of nonknowledge necessarily requires breaking normative values and authoritative structures – our jamming of discourse is the only way for communication to occur

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\*\*\*edited for gendered language

Thus, in Inner Experience we find two important claims that can help us define Bataillean communication and determine communication’s relationship to nonknowledge: (1) We cannot find the words to describe experiences of nonknowledge, but we must attempt a description of nonknowledge anyhow. (The “we” here is those willing to join Bataille in “a voyage to the end of the possible” (IE 7). “Anyone may not embark on this voyage,” he says, “but if ~~he does~~[they do] embark on it, this supposes the negation of the authorities, the existing values which limit the possible” (ibid).) We also find (2) that something about the experience of nonknowledge does not allow us to describe it. This “something” is present in all communication, but is emphasized or highlighted in nonknowledge. Discourse Bataille draws a helpful distinction between “discourse” and “communication” in Inner Experience. “Discourse” is the low-level, constant chatter and work we do to evade the helpless foolishness of communication31. “Discourse” is ideology, dogma; any system of utterances we rely on to give us ready-made answers. It is “intellectual operations” (IE 13). If we are operating in our communication efforts according to the rules or in the realm of discourse, we will lack an intimacy in our communication. This matters—and “discourse” matters—because Bataille says that “intellectual operations” must stop in order for communication to occur. The experience of nonknowledge (also) occurs when “intellectual operations” are jammed (IE 13-4).

### AT Perm

#### Inner Experience DA – the experience of nonknowledge is the only way solve – any perm falls into the realm of analysis and therefore fails

Lerman 15 (Lindsay Lerman, PhD in Philosophy from The University of Guelph, Ontario, supervised by Shannon Winnubst (yeeee), “Georges Bataille's "Nonknowledge" as Epistemic Expenditure: An Open Economy of Knowledge”, 2015, <https://atrium.lib.uoguelph.ca/xmlui/handle/10214/8994> ///ghs-sc)

\*This was written prior to receiving the PhD

In terms of this project, Bataille’s stance has significant repercussions. Firstly, what Bataille says of criticism—namely, that it can’t get a foothold regarding his work and thathis work in some ways remains immune to criticism—applies also to commentary and analysis. Since analysis, commentary, and criticism always lead somewhere, or, more importantly, are teleological and utility-oriented pursuits, they will never be “caught in the movement” of inner experience (On Nietzsche 170-3). Thus, they will never be able to adequately explain, represent, or describe “inner experience”25. Maybe knowing is affirmation—after the fact, after recovery from inner experience—of “inner experience.” Secondly, and strangely, if inner experience can only “be grasped by those experiencing it for themselves,” commentary, analysis, or criticism, which are from afar, cannot lead anywhere, just as the experience cannot lead anywhere. Analysis or criticism cannot take the place of experience, and as such, they serve as a kind of dead description. They describe something that must be experienced in order to be “grasped.” In this sense, criticism, analysis, and commentary are not unlike inner experience: they too “don’t lead anywhere” (On Nietzsche 173).

### AT Any DA

#### Their DA is the academy attempting to silence the radical potentiality of Bataille’s work

DeBoer 14 (Jason DeBoer runs a literary and philosophical publishing house called Trembling Sun Press in Chicago, “Bataille vs. Theory,” ///ghs-sc)

The writings of Georges Bataille have recently become the object of a certain resurgence, or rather, a recuperation, within the academy. As Bataille’s death in 1962 recedes into the past, the number of critical essays and articles about him continues to grow at an incredible rate. Most of this criticism has taken the approach of situating Bataille and his ideas into a pre-determined framework of “postmodern” thought, either through the systematic embellishment of his role as an intellectual influence on Foucault, Derrida, and others, or his role as an intermediary figure between Nietzsche and the French postmodernists. While there certainly is merit and validity in linking Bataille intellectually to these writers, it is the radicalness and originality of Bataille’s writing which ultimately becomes lost in these analyses when viewed through such an historical lens. It seems inevitable that Bataille, like Nietzsche, will be subjected to a critical scrutiny, which, in the guise of earnest analyses and close readings, serves foremost to dispel the threat that such writers pose to academia. A calculated process of intellectual taming is deployed against these radical thinkers; this procession of commentaries and dissections nearly always leaves nothing but a dilution of the original work. To avoid this, I will not concern myself with situating Bataille’s writings within the present state of theory (whether it be philosophical, critical, sociological, or psychological). Rather, I think it would be more noble to attempt a critique of the theoretical enterprise by analyzing it through Bataille’s own array of concepts. If the ideas of thinkers like Nietzsche, Sade, or Bataille are to be afforded the credence they deserve, it is only fitting that theory itself be judged according to their claims, which may run in opposition to the claims made by traditional theory

## Death Good K

### 1NC – Generic (No Alt)

#### You are a player in the rigorous game of living.

#### You can’t blame the game if you don’t believe the rules or bother to remember them.

#### The first rule is: every player dies, every player is always already dying; none knows when it’s coming and fails to realize the imperceptible immanence of death in the everyday; the youngest and best always go first.

#### Everyone has to play.

#### The game goes on forever – or until you win.

#### You win by finding death before it finds you.

#### The prize – is life.

[Seeing Through Death, Adapted from Brian Long, 1983]

#### All organisms and system are left with a surplus of energy, which we should squander endlessly. Death is the ultimate form of this unproductive expenditure – an ecological gift to new life.

Rowe 17 (James Rowe is an Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria. “Georges Bataille, Chögyam Trungpa, and Radical Transformation: Theorizing the Political Value of Mindfulness”, The Arrow: A Journal of Wakeful Society, Culture, and Politics ///ghs-sc)

The sun is a centr al force in the philosophies of both Trungpa and Bataille. For Trungpa, the sun is a symbol of basic goodness, and the human capacity to awaken to it, to become enlightened. For Bataille, the sun is the material starting point for earthly life, and thus his phi- losophy. “Solar energy,” writes Bataille, “is the source of life’s exuberant development. The origin and essence of our wealth are given in the radiation of the sun, which dispenses energy—wealth—without any return.”65 The sun offers our planet enough energy in one hour to meet contemporary civilizational needs for an entire year.66 Harnessing this energy, to be sure, is a massive technological challenge. Moreover, biological life only has limited access to the superabundance of solar energy that hits the planet every day. But the amount of energy we can access enables an energetically rich life. Bataille’s materialist analysis of solar lavishness helpfully concretizes Trungpa’s account of basic goodness, what he also referred to as “basic richness.”67 While Trungpa o ers practices for people to feel their inherent goodness and richness, actually experiencing this goodness takes time.68 Without spending hours meditating, and slowly uncovering a tender and radiating heart, Trungpa’s teachings on basic goodness and richness can appear ideal- istic. Bataille’s materialist account of solar generosity further evidences Trungpa’s philosophy; it offers strong conceptual proof that can heighten commitment to the experiential practice of meditation. “ The sun gives without ever receiving,” argues Bataille. “[Humans] were conscious of this long before astrophysics measured that ceaseless prodigality; they saw it ripen the harvests and they associated its splen- dor with the act of someone who gives without receiving.”69At a basic biological level, the sun’s exuberance means that “on the surface of the globe, for living matter in general, energy is always in excess, the ques- tion is always posed in terms of extravagance.”70 Put more succinctly: “We receive more energy than we can use.”71 e basic planetary con- dition is wealth more than poverty. The essential meaning of Bataille’s claim that luxury—not necessity—organizes life on earth is that all organisms have access to more energy than required for subsistence, thanks to the sun’s exuberance, is excess is often invested in biological growth (at the level of an organism, species, or ecosystem). But growth can never fully exhaust the energy available to an individual organism or biological system. All organisms and systems are left with a surplus to spend “willingly or not, gloriously or catastrophically.”72 Evidence of earthly richness includes the ornate colors and plumage of the animal kingdom that seemingly exceed evolutionary use-value. Similarly, consider the capacity for pleasure su using animal life, espe- cially all the sexualized pleasures apparently unrelated to procreation. Even when a sensory pleasure is associated with basic functioning like a good sneeze, excretion, or stretch, there can still be sumptuousness to the sensation (need it feel so good?). A sneeze is arguably basic good- ness at work, a ash of solar exuberance amidst our everyday lives. Consider, also, the ubiquity of queerness across the animal king- dom. According to Bruce Bagemihl, author of Biological Exuberance (a book that draws heavily from Bataille), “homosexuality is found in virtually all animal groups, in virtually all geographic areas and time periods, and in a wide variety of forms.”73 But why, asks Bagemihl, “does same-sex activity persist—reappearing in species after species, generation after generation, individual after individual—when it is not useful” from a strictly evolutionary perspective?74 Bagemihl’s answer is that use and necessity are not life’s sole organizing principles: “Natural systems are driven as much by abundance and excess as they are by limitation and practicality. Seen in this light, homosexuality and non- reproductive heterosexuality are ‘expected’ occurrences—they are one manifestation of an overall ‘extravagance’ of biological systems that has many expressions.”75 For Bataille, our primordial condition is marked by richness thanks to the lavishness of the sun. And then, of course, we die. Death can easily appear as proof of our ultimate poverty; it seemingly mocks attempts to assert the basic richness or goodness of life. But Bataille reads mortality as another marker of life’s luxuriousness. Large mam- mals like us are impressive condensations of energy (we are ourselves only possible given energetic wealth). is energy is then extravagantly squandered upon our necessary deaths. “When we curse death,” argues Bataille, “we only fear ourselves... We lie to ourselves when we dream of escaping the movement of luxurious exuberance of which we are only the most intense form.”76 Death’s energetic squandering is also an ecological gift for the new life arising from decay: “[Humankind] conspires to ignore the fact that death is also the youth of things.”77 Bataille’s reading of death as exemplary of basic goodness supports Trungpa’s encouragement to “make friends with our death,” and to not resentfully cast it as “a defeat and as an insult.”78 Tibetan culture, according to Bataille, is more successful than Euro-American ones at affirming the totality of life. For Bataille, cultur- al forms that communicate this a rmation are glorious expenditures of basic energetic wealth. e resentment that animates so many Eu- ro-American cultural forms is itself enabled by energetic exuberance, a “catastrophic” use of our basic richness.79 And the Euro-American desire to escape our corporeality only intensi es feelings of lack and malaise by disconnecting us from the earthly exuberance alive in our changeful bodies. For Bataille: Anguish arises when the anxious individual is not himself stretched tight by the feeling of superabundance. is is precisely what evinces the isolated, individual character of anguish. ere can be anguish only from a personal, par- ticular point of view that is radically opposed to the general point of view based on the exuberance of living matter as a whole. Anguish is meaningless for someone who over ows with life, and for life as a whole, which is an over owing by its very nature.80 Energetic poverty and lack are realities for life on earth. But they are always felt by particular beings at particular times; energetic lack is not our general or basic condition. And yet the more we separate ourselves from exuberant life energies in attempts to gain dominion over them, the more liable we are to experience lack; we progressively remove our- selves from nature’s over ow. Bataille was interested in nurturing a sovereign—rather than ser- vile—human encounter with existence: “ e sovereignty I speak of has little to do with the sovereignty of states... I speak in general of an aspect that is opposed to the servile and the subordinate.”81 Viewing humans as agents of life’s exuberance, Bataille saw sovereignty as hu- manity’s “primordial condition.”82 We are regal and rich from birth. But this sovereignty is tarnished when we cower before ourselves and the teeming life energies we issue from, return to, and are animated by.

#### Death resides at the center of the general economy – it functions as the ultimate form of expidenture. The cold embrace of death is a pre-requisite for the brilliance of life.

Hegarty 2000(Paul Hegarty is an author and lecturer in aesthetics at University College Cork, “Georges Bataille: Core Cultural Theorist” ///ghs-sc)

Death is a continual concern for Bataille, from the earliest writings, to the last fizzles in and around The Tears of Eros, and arguably sits at the centre of the general economy, as death can be seen as 'the ultimate term of possible expenditure ('Attraction and Repulsion IF, 123; OC II, 332 trans, mod.). Bataille's notion of death is an empty version of Hegel's: it is negativity, but one that cannot be recuperated, even if all our actions can be seen as attempts at such a recuperation. Death is the loss that defines our existence as individuals, since sexual reproduction is absolutely caught up with the death of the individual; unlike amoebae, there is no continuity of Being from one organism to the next (The Accursed Share, 32; OC VII, 39. See also Eroticism, 12-15; OCX, 17-21). Death, then, is as much part of the inherent wastefulness in nature as life. Death seems to us like the most wasteful form, but for Bataille, such a conception is to be left behind (not ignored or overcome): 'the luxury of death is regarded by us in the same way as that of sexuality, first as a negation of ourselves, then - in a sudden reversal - as the profound truth of that movement of which life is the manifestation (The Accursed Share, 34-5; OC VII, 41). Is death then in some way the truth of Bataille's system? At points it recalls Heidegger's notion of 'Being toward death', but as with many of Bataille's notions, the whole issue of centrality is open to question even as it is posed. Bataille argues that it will always be possible to show that whichever primordial fact gets priority presuppose s the existence of anothe r one (The Accursed Share, vol. II, 82; OC VIII, 71). 1 Death features in early writings - 'beings only die to be born', 'Solar Anus', 7; OC I, 84), and become s something that does not transcend the individual so much as lose the individual in a generalized excess. Instead of Hegel's mastery of death, we see that in the fact that life and death are passionately devoted to the subsidence of the void, the relation of master/slave subordination is no longer revealed, but life and void are confused and mingled like lovers, in the convulsive moments of the end. ('Sacrifices', 133; OC I, 93 trans, mod.) Instead of giving in to death, accepting it at a distance, as the distancing that structure s Being (Heidegger), death is to be embraced, as 'it appears that no less a loss than death is needed for the brilliance of life to traverse and transfigure dull existence (Th e Practice of Joy Before Death', 239; OC I, 557). This is not because death is so marvellous, but because it is everywhere, linking the individual to everything else (what Bataille will go on to call the general economy): I can only perceive a succession of cruel splendours whose very movement requires that I die: this death is only the exploding consumption of all that was, the joy of existence of all that comes into the world; even my own life demands that everything that exists, everywhere, ceaselessly give itself and be annihilated. (The Practice of Joy Before Death', 239; OCI, 557) Bataille is not arguing from the perspective whereby the universe only exists in one's own mind, but that even we, pathetic individuals that we are, feature in the ceaseless process of death and destruction. This linkage of the individual, throug h death, to others, to the general economy, is what is pursued in Bataille's connecting of the erotic with death, which is a development of the linkage between sex and death. In Eroticism he uses the term 'continuity to designate both the state of shared existence of asexual reproduction and what lies beyond individuality when individuals lose themselves in sacrifice, erotic activity, laughter, drunkenness and so on (Eroticism, 11-25; OCX, 17-30). These attempts interest him because 'eroticism opens the way to death. Death opens the way to the denial of our individual selves (24; 29). Death 57 The second volume of The Accursed Share, subtitled The History of Eroticism, is often seen as being little more than a draft version of Eroticism, but there are crucial differences in emphasis. The History of Eroticism really is a genuine part of the work on 'the accursed share', whereas such an economy is only implicit in Eroticism. More importantly still, the former seeks to link sexuality to death, and the latter attempts the opposite movement (both movements, for no clear theoretically necessary reason, lead Bataille to associate Woman with death). The second volume of The Accursed Share even starts by stating that it is not really about eroticism, but is instead 'a thinking that does not fall apart in the face of horror', emerging from 'a system of thought exhausting the totality of the possible (The Accursed Share, vol. II, 14; OC VIII, 10). In writing about death as part of the general economy, it also emerges that death is not necessarily literal death. But we should on no account take it as simply a metaphor, as metaphors imply a reality to be represented, and Bataille offers no such real world, existing to be represented in mimesis, metaphor or metonymy. Death and Fear Hegel sees death as the origin of humanity's self-consciousness (this being, initially, consciousness of death), and the rest of time consists of the struggle to master death. Communal existence is also centred around death, and the two combine in the form of architecture. According to Hollier, for Hegel, 'architecture is something appearing in the place of death, to point out its presence and to cover it up: the victory of death and the victory over death' (Against Architecture, 6). For Bataille, however, this is precisely the problem: our society is this fearful covering up of death (whereas the Aztecs, for example, exposed death in the sacrifice - at the top of, rather than inside, the pyramid). 2 In The Accursed Share, vol. II, he argues that all society, all individual existence (as opposed to the restricted economy of modern individualism) emerges from this fear of death - and this fear is at its most creative when it approaches death. 58 Georges Bataille At the same time as humanity is drawn toward death, it pushes it away - this repulsion is what defines humanity. Repulsion is the key word, as death is not simply a negativity, something that happens to the subject, but something that, even when it happens to someone else, provokes disgust. Humanity is defined by its 'repugnance for death/ (The Accursed Share, vol. II, 61; OC VIII, 51). This is hardly a novel or shocking statement, but death is specifically part of what repels us because we repel it, and arguably the (primordial) object of disgust (and only in becoming human does death constitute something disgusting). Humans have a horror of all that threatens their unitary existence: excretions, filth, loss of control through drunkenness, eroticism (61-2; 51-2). More than this, we also have a horror of life, as at some level we are aware of life as a by-product of death, so much so that 'we might think, if need be, that living matter on the very level we separate ourselves from it is the privileged object of our disgust (63; 52). All such disgusts are caught up within taboos, in a relation where it is impossible to ascertain whether the taboo created the disgust, or responds to it. For Bataille, however, death really is at the heart of the existence of taboo, but is not the exclusive centre: since it goes without saying, I will not linger over the possible anteriority of the horror of death. This horror is perhaps at the root of our repugnance (the loathing of nothingness would then be at the origin of the loathing of decay, which is not physical since it is not shared by animals) . It is clear, in any event, that the nature of excrement is analogous to that of corpses and that the places of its emission are close to the sexual parts; more often than not, this complex of prohibitions appears inextricable. (79; 68) This complex marks the line of demarcation between human and other and proximity to these phenomena constitutes the crossing of this line. This crossing and the fear of crossing gives the 'universally human character of the problem of obscenity (54; 45), even if contra Freud and Levi-Strauss, for example, there is no particular taboo that is universal.3 Death is also 'at the beginning insofar as its appearance coincides with labour and utility - this is what makes death a problem for the individual, as the individual conceives of his or her self as something to be maintained, preserved and developed (82; 70) .Death very rapidly becomes the site of prohibition, and takes two principal forms: both murder and 'contact with corpses are forbidden (79; 68). It is not the metaphysical difficulty of impending death that creates this fear, since this arises from an awareness that life is an accident between waste and decay, with only waste and decay in between. As Bataille notes, life is a luxury of which death is the highest degree (85-6; 74) and 'moreover, life is a product of putrefaction (80; 69), so death and decay are linked to conceptions of our birth and origin (for him, this accounts for 'our fear of menstrual blood, for example). Here, as elsewhere, it is striking how far Bataille goes down a road attacking preconceptions only to launch into a restatement of tired cliches about 'woman as other, as death. He simply does not question the taboos around 'woman', and this is why Kristeva's gloss on Bataille (Powers of Horror) and Mary Douglas's Purity and Danger is so successful - it completes the logic already under way. The all-pervasive absence, or denial, of death, through prohibition, is why death is to be approached, and also why we have an attraction to as well as repulsion from death and all that threatens our identity, so that for example, 'eroticism, it may be said, is assenting to life up to the point of death (Eroticism, 11; OCX, 17). Death and eroticism remain charged with danger, and create anguish in individuals as their individuality falls away (The Accursed Share, vol. II, 101; OC VIII, 88) . 5 But as with Hegel's 'facing up to death', Bataille does not limit the notion of death to actual biological death - it comes to include all that undoes the individual, such that the introduction, or irruption, of death into life makes life become exuberant (99; 86). Erotic activity, for example, must be carried out intensely (otherwise it is just sex), for 'if the sensations do not have their greatest intensity, it is possible for us to isolate objects on the field of the totality (118-19; 102). By totality, Bataille does not mean the kinds of ideology that account for everything, but the amorphous sphere beyond subjects, and beyond a simple subject/object divide. Even if death is not real, there is no reduction of the experience of approaching death (we can never attain death - in this Bataille is with Heidegger). If we are instructed that to 'live life to the full we must 'embrace death', what do we gain? Nothing much, except the awareness of an impossibility (we do not even gain nothing, as asceticism would aspire to), but what will have happened is the following: the embrace restores us, not to nature (which is itself, if it is not reintegrated, only a detached part), but rather to the totality in which man has his share by losing himself. For an embrace is not just a fall into the animal muck, but the anticipation of death, and the putrefaction that follows it. (119; 103) There is no why, however, and there can only be Virtuar replies to 'why? - i.e. there can be the project of approaching death, as it enhances subjectivity, but this project is lost at the moment it is attained, whether in actual death or in death-like experience (nonexperience). Note also that the only 'return is to something that is necessarily lost, again and again. Eroticism, then, is one direction waste or excess can take that involves death (itself waste, excess), but Bataille also hints at another level at which death can be approached - a level that really is metaphorical.

#### They ignore that death is the youth of things – the impacts the aff has identified are nothing but a balancing of the disequilibrium of life. Instead of guarding against death, we should embrace it as the birth of new life.

Bataille 86 (Georges Bataille, crazy librarian, “Erotism: Death & Sensuality,” 1986 ///ghs-sc)

AFFINITIES BETWEEN REPRODUCTION AND DEATH Death, Corruption and the Renewal of Life It is clear from the start that taboos appeared in response to the necessity of banishing violence from the course of everyday life. I could not give a definition of violence straight away, nor do I think it necessary to do so. The unity of pleaning of these taboos should finally be clear from studies of their various aspects. We come up against one difficulty at the start: the taboos I regard as fundamental affect two radically different fields. Death and reproduction are as diametrically opposed as negation and affirmation. Death is really the opposite process to the process ending in birth, yet these opposite processes can be reconciled. The death of the one being is correlated with the birth of the other, heralding it and making it possible. Life is always a product of the decomposition of life. Life first pays its tribute to death which disappears, then to corruption following on death and bringing back into the cycle of change the matter necessary for the ceaseless arrival of new beings into the world. Yet life is none the less a negation of death. It condemns it and shuts it out. This reaction is strongest in man, and horror at death is linked not only with the annihilation of the individual but also with the decay that sends the dead flesh back into the general ferment of life. Indeed the deep respect for the solemn image of death found in idealistic civilisation alone comes out in radical opposition. Spontaneous physical revulsion keeps alive in some indirect fashion at least the consciousness that the terrifying face of death, its stinking putrefaction, are to be identified with the sickening primary condition of life. For primitive people the moment of greatest anguish is the phase of decomposition; when the bones are bare and white they are not intolerable as the putrefying flesh is, food for worms. In some obscure way the survivors perceive in the horror aroused by corruption a rancour and a hatred projected towards them by the dead man which it is the function of the rites of mourning to appease. But afterwards they feel that the whitening bones bear witness to that appeasement. The bones are objects of reverence to them and draw the first veil of decency and solemnity over death and make it bearable; it is painful still but free of the virulent activity of corruption. These white bones do not leave the survivors a prey to the slimy menace of disgust. They put an end to the close connections between decomposition, the source of an abundant surge of life, and death. But in an age more in touch with the earliest human reactions than ours, this connection appeared so necessary that even Aristotle said that certain creatures, brought into being spontaneously, as he thought, in earth or water, were born of corruption) The generative power of corruption is a naive belief responding to the mingled horror and fascination aroused in us by decay. This belief is behind a belief we once held about nature as something wicked and shameful: decay summed up the world we spring from and return to, and horror and shame were attached both to our birth and to our death. That nauseous, rank and heaving matter, frightful to look upon, a ferment of life, teeming with worms, grubs and eggs, I That is how Aristotle thought of "spontaneous generation", which he believed to take place. is at the bottom of the decisive reactions we call nausea, disgust or repugnance. Beyond the annihilation to come which will fall with all its weight on the being I now am, which still waits to be called into existence, which can even be said to be about to exist rather than to exist (as if I did not exist here and now but in the future in store for me, though that is not what I am now) death will proclaim my return to seething life. Hence I can anticipate and live in expectation of that multiple putrescence that anticipates its sickening triumph in my person. Nausea and its general field When somebody dies we, the survivors, expecting the life of that man now motionless beside us to go on, find that our expectation has suddenly come to nothing at all. A dead body cannot be called nothing at all, but that object, that corpse, is stamped straight off with the sign "nothing at all". For us survivors, the corpse and its threat of imminent decay is no answer to any expectation like the one we nourished while that now prostrate man was still alive; it is the answer to a fear. This object, then, is less than nothing and worse than nothing. It is entirely in keeping that fear, the basis of disgust, is not stimulated by a real danger. The threat in question cannot be justified objectively. There is no reason to look at a man's corpse otherwise than at an animal's, at game that has been killed, for instance. The terrified recoiling at the sight of advanced decay is not of itself inevitable. Along with this sort of reaction we have a whole range of artificial behaviour. The horror we feel at the thought of a corpse is akin to the feeling we have at human excreta. What makes this association more compelling is our similar disgust at aspects of sensuality we call obscene. The sexual channels are also the bod y' s sewers; we think of them as shameful and connect the anal orifice with them. St. Augustine was at pains to insist on the obscenity of the organs and function of reproduction. "Inter faeces et urinam nascimur", he said-"we are born between faeces and urine". Our faecal products are not subject to a taboo formulated by meticulous social regulations like those relating to dead bodies or· to menstruation. But generally speaking, and though the relationship defies clear definition, there do exist unmistakable links between excreta, decay and sexuality. It may look as though physical circumstances imposed from without are chiefly operative in marking out this area of sensibility. But it also has its subjective aspect. The feeling of nausea varies with the individual and its material source is now one thing and now, another. After the living man the dead body is nothing at all; similarly nothing tangible or objective brings ·on our feeling of nausea; what we experience is a kind of void, a sinking sensation. We cannot easily discuss these things which in themselves are nothing at all. Yet they do make their presence felt and often they force themselves on the senses in a way that inert objects perceived objectively do not. How could' anyone assert that that stinking mass is nothing at all? But our protest, if we make one, implies our humiliation and our refusal to see. We imagine that it is the stink of excrement that makes us feel sick. But would it stink if we had not thought it was disgusting in the first place ? We do not take long to forget what trouble we go to to pass on to our children the aversions that make us what we are, which make us human beings to begin with. Our children do not spontaneously have our reactions. They may not like a certain food and they may refuse it. But we have to teach them by .pantomime or failing that, by violence, that curious aberration called disgust, powerful enough to make us feel faint, a contagion passed down to us from the earliest men through countless generatipns of scolded children. Our mistake is to take these teachings lightly. For thousands of years we have been h~ding them down to our children, but they used to have a different form. The realm of disgust and nausea is broadly the result of these teachings. The prodigality of life and our fear of it After reading this we may feel a void opening within us. What I have been saying refers to this void and nothing else. But the void opens at a specific point. Death, for instance, may open it: the corpse into which death infuses absence, the putrefaction associated with this absence. I can link my revulsion at the decay (my imagination suggests it, not my memory, so profoundly is it a forbidden object for me) with the feelings that obscenity arouse in me. I can tell myself that repugnance and horror are the mainsprings of my desire, that such desire is only aroused as long as its object causes a chasm no less deep than death to yawn within me, and that this desire originates in its opposite, horror. From the outset reflections like these go beyond all reasonableness. It takes an iron nerve to perceive the connection between the promise of life implicit in eroticism and the sensuous aspect of death. Mankind conspires to ignore the fact that death is also the youth of things. Blindfolded, we refuse to see that only death guarantees the fresh upsurging without which life would be blind. We refuse to see that life is the trap set for the balanced order, that life is nothing but instability and disequilibrium. Life is a swelling tumult continuously on the verge of explosion. But since the incessant explosion constantly exhausts its resources, it can only proceed under one condition: that beings given life whose explosive force is exhausted shall make room for fresh beings coming into the cycle with renewed vigour.' I Although this truth is generally ignored, Bossuet expounds it in his Sermon on Death (1662). "Nature" he says "as if jealous of her gifts to us, often declares and makes plain the fact that she cannot leave: us for long in possession of the little substance she lends us, which must not remain always in the same hands but must be kept eternally in circulation. She needs it for other forms, she asks for it to be returned for other works. Those continual additions to humankind, the children being born, seem to nudge us aside as they come forward, saying 'Back now; it is our tum'. So as we see others pass ahead of us, others will see us pass, and themselves present the same spectacle to their successors". A more extravagant procedure cannot be imagined. In one way life is possible, it could easily be maintained, without this colossal waste, this squandering annihilation at which imagination boggles. Compared with that of the infusoria, the mammalian organism is a gulf that swallows vast quantities of energy. This energy is not entirely wasted if it allows other developments to take place. But we must consider the devilish cycle from start to finish. The growth of vegetable life implies the continuous piling up of dissociated substances corrupted by death. Herbivorous creatures swallow vegetable matter by the heap before they themselves are eaten, victims of the carnivore's urge to devour. Finally nothing is left but this fierce beast of prey or his remains, in their tum the prey of hyenas and worms. There is one way of considering this process in harmony with its nature: the more extravagant are the means of engendering life, the more costly is the production of new organisms, the more successful the operation is! The wish to produce at cut prices is niggardly and human. Humanity keeps to the narrow capitalist principle, that of the company director, that of the private individual who sells in order to rake in the accumulated credits in the long run (for raked in somehow they always are). On a comprehensive view, human life strives towards prodigality to the point of anguish, to the point where the anguish becomes unbearable. The rest is mere moralising chatter. How can this escape us if we look at it dispassionately? Everything proclaims it! A febrile unrest within us asks death to wreak its havoc at our expense. We go half way to meet these manifold trials, these false starts, this squandering of living strength in the transition from ageing beings to other younger ones. At bottom we actually want the impossible situation it all leads to: the isolation, the threat of pain, the horror of annihilation; but for the sensation of nausea bound up with it, so horrible that often in silent panic we regard the whole thing as impossible, we should not be satisfied. But our judgments are formed under the influence of recurring disappointments and the obstinate expectation of a calm which goes hand in hand with that desire; our capacity to make ourselves understood is in direct ratio with the blindness we cling to. For at the crest of the convulsion, which gives us shape the naive stubbornness that hopes that it will cease can only increase the torment, and this allows life, wholly committed to this gratuitous pattern, to add the luxury of a beloved torment to fatality. For if man is condemned to be a luxury in himself, what is one to say of the luxury that is anguish? Man's "no" to Nature When all is said and done human reactions are what speed up the process; anguish speeds it up and makes it more keenly felt at the same time. In general man's attitude is one of refusal. Man has leant over backwards in order not to be carried away by the process, but all he manages to do by this is to hurry it along at an even dizzier speed. If we view the primary taboos as the refusal laid down by the individual to co-operate with nature regarded as a squandering of living energy and an orgy of annihilation we can no longer differentiate between death and sexuality. Sexuality and death are simply the culminating points of the holiday, nature celebrates, with the inexhaustible multitude of living beings, both of them signifying the boundless wastage of nature's resources as opposed to the urge to live on characteristic of every living creature. In the long or short run, reproduction demands the death of the parents who produced their young only to give fuller rein to the forces of annihilation (just as the death of a generation demands that a new generation be born). In the parallels perceived by the human mind between putrefaction and the various aspects of sexual activity the feelings of revulsion which set us against both end by mingling. The taboos embodying a single dual purpose reaction may have taken shape one at a time, and one can even imagine a long time elapsing between the taboo connected with death and the one connected with reproduction (often the most perfect things take shape hesitatingly through successive modifications). But we perceive their unity none the less: we feel we are dealing with an indivisible complex, just as if man had once and for all realised how impossible it is for nature (as a given force) to exact from the beings that she brings forth their participation in the destructive and implacable frenzy that animates her. Nature demands their surrender; or rather she asks them to go crashing headlong to their own ruin. Humanity became possible at the instant when, seized by an insurmountable dizziness, man tried to answer "No". Man tried? In fact men have never definitively said no to violence (to the excessive urges in question). In their weaker moments they have resisted nature's current but this is a momentary suspension and not a final standstill. We must now examine the transgressions that lie beyond the taboos.

#### Their project of self-preservation is implicated in the exploitation of others. Our fascination with mortality is the root cause of violence, as we subordinate others to hide from the fungibility of our own existence.

Winters 17 (Joseph Winters is an assistant professor of Religious Studies with a secondary position in the Department of African and African American Studies at Duke University, “Baldwin, Bataille, and the Anguish of the (Racialized) Human,” Journal of Religious Ethics, ///ghs-sc)

To some extent, death and its intimations—loss, suffering, shame, ecstasy, vulnerability—cannot have a place in a world defined by duration and preservation. In other words, even though death is a permanent feature of human life, the order of things must cultivate and imagine ways to diminish, mitigate, and deflect its effects and implications. We feel this pressure in moments when instances of suffering and loss are expected to produce or express some reassuring meaning (everything happens for a reason; that person got what he deserved). This mitigating process typically happens when individuals and communities locate death, suffering, and excessive violence elsewhere, in another place and community—a strategy that often justifies and makes acceptable violent projects to fix or restore that other community. Therefore, when Bataille says that “death means everything” to the world of accumulation and duration, he is thinking about how the anxiety and horror around death is related to our commitment to qpreserving ourselves in the future, a commitment that involves various forms of displacement and deferral. In other words, the will to futurity intensifies the anxiety and anguish that accompany thoughts and images of death, mortality, and vulnerability. Of course, humans are also fascinated with images, and practices, of violence and death, but only if they can experience and view these images from a comfortable distance or participate in these practices in a manner that reduces the risks to the self’s coherence and duration.9 On the duplicity of the self’s relationship to violence, Bataille writes, “Violence, and death signifying violence, have a double meaning. On the one hand the horror of death drives us off, for we prefer life; on the other an element at once solemn and terrifying fascinates us and disturbs us profoundly” (Bataille 1986, 45). What is crucial here is that the order of things, the order of life preservation, is defined over and against death and loss—death means everything to this order. Yet I also take Bataille to be suggesting that everyday projects and strategies of selfpreservation are implicated in the mundane, often undetected, exploitation and suffering of others; again, death means everything to the real world. Therefore, the human self is a site of a paradox: the world of projects, goals, and accumulation “imparts an unreal character to death even though man’s membership in this world is tied to the positing of the body as a thing insofar as it is mortal” (Bataille 2006, 46). According to Bataille, our general commitment to duration, to reproducing life, will always mean that some being, force, or desire will be marked as a threat or danger to that reproduction. And those threats will have to be managed, assimilated, disciplined, or subordinated in some manner. One’s ability to endure in this world, to accumulate recognition, prestige, and various kinds of capital means that one must separate oneself, to some extent, from those qualities and characteristics that endanger self or communal projects and aspirations. To put it differently, life needs to be cordoned off from death and those beings associated with death (even as we know that life and death are always intertwined and that certain kinds of subjects and communities are made more vulnerable to death and its intimations). Here Bataille’s line of thought converges with Baldwin’s point about social life providing a kind of barrier to “menacing” forces, to beings and desires that signify chaos and disorder. If Baldwin and Bataille are right, then racism, which is always about marking, disciplining, and managing “dangerous” bodies and communities, must be confronted alongside fundamental social and human limitations.

#### Recognizing the mortality inherent to human existence is essential to achieve liberation. We can only attain truth through absolute dismemberment.

Bataille 97 (Georges Bataille, crazy libarian, “Hegel, Death and Sacrifice,” in “The Bataille Reader, trans. by Stuart and Michelle Kendall, 1997 ///ghs-sc)

It was precisely the univocal character of death for Hegel that inspired the following commentary from Kojeve, which applies, again, to the passage from the Preface: (K, 549; TEL, 551). 'Certainly, the idea of death does not heighten the well-being of Man; it does not make him happy nor does it give him any pleasure.' Kojeve wondered in what way satisfaction results from a familiarity with the negative, from a tete-a-tete with death. He believed it his duty, out of decency, to reject vulgar satisfaction. The fact that Hegel himself said, in this respect, that Spirit 'only attains it truth by finding itself in absolute dismemberment' goes together, in principle, with Kojeve's negation. Consequently, it would even be superfluous to insist ... Kojeve simply states that the idea of death 'is alone capable if satisfying man's pride' .... Indeed, the desire to be 'recognized', which Hegel places at the origin of historical struggles, could be expressed in an intrepid attitude, of the sort that shows a character to its best advantage. 'It is only', says Kojeve, 'in being or in becoming aware of one's mortality or finitude, in existing and in feeling one's existence in a universe without a beyond or without a God, that Man can affirm his liberty, his historicity and his individuality - "unique in all the world" - and have them be recognized.' (Ibid.). But if Kojeve sets aside vulgar satisfaction - happiness - he now also sets aside Hegel's 'absolute dismemberment': indeed, such dismemberment is not easily reconciled with the desire for recognition.

#### Their obsession with survival negates the possibility of life.

Vaneigem 94 (Raoul Vaneigem is the leader of the Situationist International, The Movement of the Free Spirit, Trans. R. Cherry and I. Patterson, ///ghs-sc)

Many observations that were considered ludicrous in 1967 have now become commonplace. For it is obvious today that "surviving" has so far prevented us from "living"; that man's insistence on making himself useful in his work is actually of little use to him in his own life, and even kills him. It is clear, too, that life usually ends precisely because it has never begun (which most people realize only in their last moments); and that the price of representation is paid for in terms of world-weariness and self-contempt. These ideas are already so deeply entrenched that, in the absence of any real lived experience to dispel them, they still nourish not only nostalgic theorizing but even the most fashionably glib talk. This vicious cycle continues out of an old inertia: the need to work in order to survive compensates for the life lost in wage labor (an even costlier form of survival). The effect on consciousness is fatal, with two sets of prejudices contributing to the mortification: in the first, survival takes precedence over living; and in the second, the exercise of the intellect – through critical analysis of society, of political issues, of cultural decay, of the future of humanity – takes the place of existence, while the body is left to express its discontent through sickness and malaise. And one need not get very close to these ideas to detect a whiff of the cassock. 3 The economy is everywhere that life is not: but however intertwined the two may become, they simply do not meld, and one can never be confused with the other. Most people do not really live: their overly precise calculations about money, work, exchange, guilt and power govern their lives so thoroughly and irremediably that the only thing to escape this bloodlessly cold calculus is the warm pathos of sweat and tears – which is all that is left to take on the aspects of human reality.

### 1NC – Discontinuity – Alt

#### It is now refound!

#### What? eternity.

#### It is the sea commingled

#### With the sun.

[A Season in Hell, Arthur Rimbaud, 1873]

Bataille 45 (Georges Bataille, crazy librarian, 1945, “Sur Nietzsche” or “On Nietzsche,” ///ghs-sc)

"Life," I said, "is bound to be lost in death, as a river loses itself in the sea, the known in the unknown" ( Inner Experience). And death is the end life easily reaches (as water does sea level). So why would I wish to turn my desire to be persuasive into a worry? I dissolve into myself like the sea--and I know the roaring waters of the torrent head straight at me! Whatever a judicious understanding sometimes seems to hide, an immense folly connected with it (understanding is only an infinitesimal part of that folly), doesn't hesitate to give back. The certainty of incoherence in reading, the inevitable crumbling of the soundest constructions, is the deep truth of books. Since appearance constitutes a limit, what truly exists is a dissolution into common opacity rather than a development of lucid thinking. The apparent unchangingness of books is deceptive: each book is also the sum of the misunderstandings it occasions. So why exhaust myself with efforts toward consciousness? I can only make fun of myself as I write. (Why write even a phrase if laughter doesn't immediately join me?) It goes without saying that, for the task, I bring to bear whatever rigor I have within me. But the crumbling nature of thinking's awareness of itself and especially the certainty of thinking reaching its end only in failing, hinder any repose and prevent the relaxed state that facilitates a rigorous disposition of things. Committed to the casual stance--I think and express myself in the free play of hazard. Obviously, everyone in some way admits the importance of hazard. But this recognition is as minimal and unconscious as possible. Going my way unconstrained, unhampered, I develop my thoughts, make choices with regard to expression--but I don't have the control over myself that I want. And the actual dynamic of my intelligence is equally uncontrollable. So that I owe to other dynamics--to lucky chance and to fleeting moments of relaxation--the minimal order and relative learning that I do have. And the rest of the time . . . Thus, as I see it my thought proceeds in harmony with its object, an object that it attains more and perfectly the greater the state of its own ruin. Though it isn't necessarily conscious of this. At one and the same time my thinking must reach plenary illumination and dissolution . . . In the same individual, thought must construct and destroy itself. And even that isn't quite right. Even the most rigorous thinkers yield to chance. In addition, the demands inherent in the exercise of thought often take me far from where I started. One of the great difficulties encountered by understanding is to put order into thought's interrelations in time. In a given moment, my thought reaches considerable rigor. But how to link it with yesterday's thinking? Yesterday, in a sense, I was another person, responding to other worries. Adapting one to the other remains possible, but . . . This insufficiency bothers me no more than the insufficiency relating to the many woes of the human condition generally. Humanness is related in us to nonsatisfaction, a nonsatisfaction to which we yield without accepting it, though; we distance ourselves from humanness when we regard ourselves as satisfied or when we give up searching for satisfaction. Sartre is right in relation to me to recall the myth of Sisyphus, though "in relation to me" here equates to "in relation to humanity," I suppose. What can be expected of us is to go as far as possible and not to stop. What by contrast, humanly speaking, can be criticized are endeavors whose only meaning is some relation to moments of completion. Is it possible for me to go further? I won't wait to coordinate my efforts in that case--I'll go further. I'll take the risk. And the reader, free not to venture after me, will often take advantage of that same freedom! The critics are right to scent danger here! But let me in turn point out a greater danger, one that comes from methods that, adequate only to an outcome of knowledge, confer on individuals whom they limit a sheerly fragmentary existence--an existence that is mutilated with respect to the whole that remains inaccessible. Having recognized this, I'll defend my position. I've spoken of inner experience: my intention was to make known an object. But by proposing this vague title, I didn't want to confine myself sheerly to inner facts of that experience. It's an arbitrary procedure to reduce knowledge to what we get from our intuitions as subjects. This is something only a newborn can do. And we ourselves (who write) can only know something about this newborn by observing it from outside (the child is only our object). A separation experience, related to a vital continuum (our conception and our birth) and to a return to that continuum (in our first sexual feelings and our first laughter), leaves us without any clear recollections, and only in objective operations do we reach the core of the being we are. A phenomenology of the developed mind assumes a coincidence of subjective and objective aspects and at the same time a fusion of subject and object. \* [This is the fundamental requirement of Hegel's phenomenology. Clearly, instead of responding to it, modern phenomenology, while replying to changing human thought, is only one moment among others: a sandcastle, a mirage of sorts.] This means an isolated operation is admissible only because of fatigue (so, the explanation I gave of laughter, because I was unable to develop a whole movement in tandem with a conjugation of the modalities of laughter would be left suspended--since every theory of laughter is integrally a philosophy and, similarly, every integral philosophy is a theory of laughter . . .). But that is the point--though I set forth these principles, at the same time I must renounce following them. Thought is produced in me as uncoordinated flashes, withdrawing endlessly from a term to which its movement pushes it. I can't tell if I'm expressing human helplessness this way, or my own . . . I don't know, though I'm not hopeful of even some outwardly satisfying outcome. Isn't there an advantage in creating philosophy as I do? A flash in the night--a language belonging to a brief moment . . . Perhaps in this respect this latest moment contains a simple truth. In order to will knowledge, by an indirect expedient I tend to become the whole universe. But in this movement I can't be a whole human being, since I submit to a particular goal, becoming the whole. Granted, if I could become it, I would thus be a whole human being. But in my effort, don't I distance myself from exactly that? And how can I become the whole without becoming a whole human being? I can't be this whole human being except when I let go. I can't be this through willpower: my will necessarily has to will outcomes! But if misfortune (or chance) wills me to let go, then I know I am an integral, whole humanness, subordinate to nothing. In other words, the moment of revolt inherent in willing a knowledge beyond practical ends can't be indefinitely continued. And in order to be the whole universe, humankind has to let go and abandon its principle, accepting as the sole criterion of what it is the tendency to go beyond what it is. This existence that I am is a revolt against existence and is indefinite desire. For this existence God was simply a stage and now here he is, looming large, grown from unfathomable experience, comically perched on the stake used for impalement. My method has confusion as a consequence--and in the long run this confusion is unbearable (particularly for me!). This is something to be corrected if possible . . . But for now, I want to elucidate the meaning of the above words. For me nothingness is a limit of an individual existence. Beyond its defined limits--in time and in space--this existence or being no longer exists, no longer is. For us, that nonbeing is filled with meaning: I know I can be reduced to nothing. Limited being is only a particular being. Although, does there exist such a thing as the totality of being (understood as the sum of beings)?

### 1NC – Joy in Death – Alt

#### I abandon myself to peace, to the point of annihilation.

#### The noises of struggle are lost in death, as rivers are lost in the sea, as stars

#### burst in the night.

#### The strength of combat is fulfilled in the silence of all action.

#### I enter into peace as I enter into a dark unknown.

#### I fall in this dark unknown.

#### I myself become this dark unknown.

[Georges Bataille, Erotism: Death and Sensuality, 1957]

Bataille 37 (Georges Bataille, crazy librarian, “The Practice of Joy Before Death,” in “Visions of Excess: Selected Writings 1927-1939,” translated by Alan Stoekl ///ghs-sc)

\*\*\*edited for gendered and ableist language; we do not endorse it

When a ~~man~~ [person] finds ~~him~~[them]self situated in such a way that the world is happily reflected in ~~him~~[them], without entailing any destruction or suffering—as on a beautiful spring morning—~~he~~ [they] can let ~~him~~[them]self be carried away by the resulting enchantment or simple joy. But ~~he~~[they] can also perceive, at the same time, the weight and the vain yearning for empty rest implied by this beatitude. At that moment, something cruelly rises up in him that is comparable to a bird of prey that tears open the throat of a smaller bird in an apparently peaceful and clear blue sky. ~~He~~ [they] recognizes that ~~he~~ [they] cannot fulfill ~~his~~ [their] life without surrendering to an inexorable movement, whose violence he can feel acting on the most remote areas of his being with a rigor that frightens him. If he turns to other beings who do not go beyond beatitude, he experiences no hate, but, on the contrary, he sympathizes with necessary pleasures; he clashes only with those who pretend to attain fulfillment in their lives, who act out a risk-free charade in order to be recognized as having attained fulfillment, while in fact they only speak of fulfillment. But he should not succumb to vertigo. For vertigo swiftly exhausts and threatens to revive a concern for happy leisure or, if that cannot be attained, for a painless emptiness. Or if ~~he~~ [they] does not give in, and if ~~he~~ [they] tear ~~him~~[them]self completely apart in terrified haste, ~~he~~ [they] enters death in such a way that nothing is more horrible. He alone is happy who, having experienced vertigo to the point of trembling in his bones, to the point of being incapable of measuring the extent of his fall, suddenly finds the unhoped-for strength to turn his agony into a joy capable of freezing and transfiguring those who meet it. But the only ambition that can take hold of a man who, in cold blood, sees his life fulfilled in rending agony, cannot aspire to a grandeur that only extreme chance has at its disposal. This kind of violent decision, which disrupts his repose, does not necessarily entail either his vertigo or his fall in sudden death. In him, this decision may become an act and a power by which he devotes himself to the rigor whose movement ceaselessly closes in on him, as cutting as the beak of a bird of prey. Contemplation is only the context, sometimes calm and sometimes stormy, in which the rapid force of his action must one day be put to the test. The mystical existence of the one whose "joy before death" has become inner violence can never attain the satisfying beatitude of the Christian who gives himself a foretaste of eternity. The mystic of "joy before death" can never be seen as cornered, for ~~he is~~ [they are] able to laugh complacently at every human endeavor and to know every accessible enthusiasm: but the totality of life—ecstatic contemplation and lucid knowledge accomplished in a single action that cannot fail to become risk—is, however, just as inexorably ~~his~~ [their] lot as death is that of the condemned ~~man~~[person]. The texts that follow cannot alone constitute an initiation into the exercise of a mysticism of "joy before death." While admitting that a method of initiation might exist, they do not represent even a part of it. Since oral initiation is itself difficult, it is impossible to give in a few pages more than the vaguest representation of that which by nature cannot be grasped. On the whole, these writings represent, moreover, less exercises strictly speaking than simple descriptions of a contemplative state or of an ecstatic contemplation. These descriptions would not even be acceptable if they were not given for what they are, in other words, as free. Only the very first text could be proposed as an exercise. While it is appropriate to use the word mysticism when speaking of "joy before death" and its practice, this implies no more than an affective resemblance between this practice and those of the religions of Asia or Europe. There is no reason to link any presuppositions concerning an alleged deeper reality with a joy that has no object other than immediate life. "Joy before death" belongs only to the person for whom there is no beyond; it is the only intellectually honest route in the search for ecstasy. Besides, how could a beyond, a God or what resembles God, still be acceptable? No words are clear enough to express the happy disdain of the one who "dances with the time that kills him" for those who take refuge in the expectation of eternal beatitude. This kind of fretful saintliness—which first had to he sheltered from erotic excess—has now lost all its power: one can only laugh at a sacred drunkenness allied with a horror of debauchery. Prudery may be healthy for backward souls, but those who would be afraid of nude girls or whisky would have little to do with "joy before death." Only a shameless, indecent saintliness can lead to a sufficiently happy loss of self. "Joy before death" means that life can be glorified from root to summit. It robs of meaning everything that is an intellectual or moral beyond, substance, God, immutable order, or salvation. It is an apotheosis of that which is perishable, apotheosis of flesh and alcohol as well as of the trances of mysticism. The religious forms it rediscovers are the naive forms that antedate the intrusion of a servile morality: it renews the kind of tragic jubilation that man "is" as soon as he stops behaving [weakly]~~like a cripple~~, glorifying necessary work and letting himself be emasculated by the fear of tomorrow.

### 2NC – More Cards

#### Death is the most luxurious form of life. It is death and death alone that ensures the renewal of life.

Bataille 97 (Georges Bataille, crazy librarian, “Death,” from “The Bataille Reader,” translated by Michelle and Stuart Kendall, 1997 ///ghs-sc)

Death Is Finally the Most Luxurious Form of Life What is disconcerting about these movements where opposed forms are interdependent is due to the common misappreciation of death. It calls for us to despise the link associating death with erotIcIsm, regarded as a promise of life. It is easy, but, all in all, it is dishonourable (a lack of intellectual virility) to turn away from the luxurious truth of death: there is no doubt that death is the youth of the world. We don't admit this, we don't want to admit it, for a rather sad reason: we are perhaps young at heart, but this doesn't mean we are more alert. Otherwise, how could we not be aware that death, and death alone, constantly ensures the renewal of life?≥ The worst is that, in a sense, we know this very well, but we are just as quick to forget it. The law given in nature is so simple as to defy ignorance. According to this law, life is effusion; it is contrary to equilibrium, to stability. It is the tumultuous movement that bursts forth and consumes itself. Its perpetual explosion is possible on one condition: that the spent organisms give way to new ones, which enter the dance with new forces.2 We could really not imagine a more costly process. Life is possible at much less expense: compared to that of an infusorian, the individual organism of a mammal, especially a carnivore, is an abyss where enormous quantities of energy are swallowed up, are destroyed. The growth of plants presupposes the amassing of decayed substances. Plant-eaters consume tons of living (plant) substance before a small amount of meat allows a carnivore its great releases, its great nervous expenditures. It even appears that the more costly the life-generating processes are, the more squander the production of organisms has required, the more satisfactory the operation is. The principle of producing at the least expense is not so much a human idea as a narrowly capitalist one (it makes sense only from the viewpoint of the incorporated company). The movement of human life even tends toward anguish, as the sign of expenditures that are finally excessive, that go beyond what we can bear. Everything within us demands that death lay waste to us: we anticipate these multiple trials, these new beginnings, unproductive from the standpoint of reason, this wholesale destruction of effective force accomplished in the transfer of one individual's life to other, younger, individuals. Deep down, we even assent to the condition that results, that is almost intolerable, in this condition of individuals destined for suffering and inevitable annihilation. Or rather, were it not for this intolerable condition, so harsh that the will constantly wavers, we would not be satisfied. (How significant at present that a book3 is entitled, ludicrously, Afin que nul ne meure!...) Today our judgements are formed in disappointing circumstances: those among us who best make themselves heard are unaware (and want at all cost to be unaware) that life is the luxury of which death is the highest degree, that of all the luxuries of life, human life is the most extravagantly expensive, that, finally, an increased apprehension of death, when life's security wears thin, is at the highest level of ruinous refinement ... But oblivious of this, they only add to the anguish without which a life devoted entirely to luxury would be less boldly luxurious. For if it is human to be luxurious, what to say of a luxury of which anguish is the product and which anguish does not moderate?

### 2NC – Winnubst Module

#### **The aff relies on the temporality of anticipation, entrapped within notions of futurity and utility that reduce our lives to nothing but a tool. This form of phallicized whiteness attempts to endlessly project us into the future, grounding itself in the denial of death. Only through an acceptance of our demise can we escape the order of instrumental reason and live sovereignly.**

Winnubst 06 (Shannon Winnubst is a professor of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies at Ohio State University, “Queering Freedom,” 2006 ///ghs-sc)

\*\*\*edited for gendered language

For Bataille, the servility to utility is displayed particularly in the temporality of such a world—the temporality of anticipation. Returning again to the role of the tool, he writes, In efficacious activity ~~man~~ [a person] becomes the equivalent of a tool, which produces; ~~he is~~ [they are] like the thing the tool is, being itself a product. The implication of these facts is quite clear: the tool’s meaning is given by the future, in what the tool will produce, in the future utilization of the product: like the tool, he who serves—who works—has the value of that which will be later, not of that which is. (1988–91, 2:218) The reduction of our lives to the order of utility forces us to project ourselves endlessly into the future. Bataille writes of this as our anguished state, caused by this anticipation “that must be called anticipation of oneself. For he must apprehend himself in the future, through the anticipated results of his action” (1988–91, 2:218). This is why advanced capitalism and phallicized whiteness must ground themselves in a denial of death: death precludes the arrival of this future. It cuts us off from ourselves, severing us from the future self that is always our real and true self. Resisting the existential turn, however, Bataille refuses to read this denial of death as an ontological condition of humanity. For Bataille, this is a historical and economic denial, one in which only a culture grounded in the anticipation of the future must participate. He frames it primarily as a problem of the intellect. In the reduction of the world to the order of utility, we have reduced our lives and experiences to the order of instrumental reason. This order necessarily operates in a sequential temporality, facing forward toward the time when the results will be achieved, the questions solved, the theorems proved—and also when political domination will be ended and ethical an- guish quieted. As Bataille credits Hegel for seeing, “knowledge is never given to us except by unfolding in time” (1988–91, 2:202). It never appears to us except, finally, “as the result of a calculated effort, an operation useful to some end” (1988–91, 2:202)—and its utility, as we have seen, only drives it forward toward some future utility, endlessly. There are always new and future objects of thought to conquer and domesticate. Within this order of reason, death presents the cessation of the very practice of knowledge itself. Severing us from the future objects of thought and from our future selves, “death prevents man from attaining himself” (1988–91, 2:218). As Bataille explains, “the fear of death appears linked from the start to the projection of oneself into a future time, which [is] an effect of the positing of oneself as a thing” (1988–91, 2:218). The fear of death derives from the subordination to the order of utility and its dominant form of the intellect, instrumental reason. While death is unarguably a part of the human condition, for Bataille the fear of death is a historically habituated response, one that grounds cultures of advanced capitalism and phallicized whiteness. In those frames of late modernity, death introduces an ontological scarcity into the very human condition: it represents finitude, the ultimate limit. We must distance ourselves from such threats, and we do so most often by projecting them onto sexualized, racialized, and classed bodies. But for Bataille, servility to the order of knowledge is as unnecessary as servility to the order of utility. To die humanly, he argues, is to accept “the subordination of the thing” (1988– 91, 2:219), which places us in the schema that separates our present self from the future, desired, anticipated self: “to die humanly is to have of the future being, of the one who matters most in our eyes, the senseless idea that he is not” (1988–91, 2:219). But if we are not trapped in the endless anticipation of our future self as the index of meaning in our lives, we may not be anguished by this cessation: “If we live sovereignly, the representation of death is impossible, for the present is not subject to the demands of the future” (1988–91, 2:219). To live sovereignly is not to escape death, which is ontologically impossible. But it is to refuse the fear, and subsequent attempts at disavowal, of death as the ontological condition that defines humanity. Rather than trying to transgress this ultimate limit and prohibition, the sovereign ~~man~~ [person] “cannot die fleeing. ~~He~~ [they] cannot let the threat of death deliver ~~him~~ [them] over to the horror of a desperate yet impossible flight” (1988–91, 2:219). Living in a temporal mode in which “anticipation would dissolve into NOTHING” (1988–91, 2: 208), the sovereign ~~man~~ [person] “lives and dies like an animal” (1988–91, 2:219). He lives and dies [they live and die] without the anxiety invoked by the forever unknown and forever encroaching anticipation of the future. As Bataille encourages us elsewhere, “Think of the voracity of animals, as against the composure of a cook” (1988–91, 2:83).

#### The order of instrumental reason provides the justification for violence – their focus on utility reifies all forms of discrimination

Winnubst 06 (Shannon Winnubst is a professor of women’s, gender, and sexuality studies at Ohio State University, “Queering Freedom,” 2006 ///ghs-sc)

\*edited for ableist language; we don’t endorse it

This is the domination and violence of our historical present, late modernity: to reduce our lives so completely to the order of instrumental reason that we cannot conceive of any political or philosophical problem without reducing it to that narrow conception of reason. This renders us captive to presuppositions which assume that solutions to problems must follow the same temporal register as the posing of the problem itself— i.e., that they must appear immediately effective and useful if we are to recognize them as solutions at all. But what if these are only truncated, shortsighted views? What if a vital resistance to politics of domination comes through freeing ourselves from these closed economies of late modernity and their clearly demarcated, controlled, mastered, and useful ends? What if a vital resistance to politics of domination requires a temporal register other than that of immediate and clear efficacy? As Bataille tells us sympathetically, “It is not easy to realize one’s own ends if one must, in trying to do so, carry out a movement that surpasses them” (1988– 91, 1:21). His orientation toward general economies asks us to think differently from the habituated patterns of our historical present. In his language, this historical present is “characterized by the fact that judgments concerning the general situation proceed from a particular point of view” (1988– 91, 1:39). This particularity can be outlined, described, pinned down, and ~~its blind spots~~ excavated: I attempt to do so in this text. But to think generally from and about the historical present may lead us into different questions and different orientations: it has led me to query systems of domination through the registers of temporality and spatiality, while framing them through the identity categories (race, gender, sexuality, class, religion) that are their most explicit historical tools. For example, how does the temporality of a persistent future orientation ground systems of racism, sexism, and heterosexism? What assumptions about the ontology of space allow for the biological conception of race that groundsracism, or of sex that grounds sexism and heterosexism? Bataille warns us that, if we do not learn to think in this counter-cultural register of general economy, we will always be subordinated to the violent and even catastrophic expressions of the excess, abundant energy of the planet, such as war and imperialist domination. We do have a choice in this matter. But that choice is not one which will derive from calculating our interest, analyzing the specific problem, or charting the solution: it will not derive from the domains of instrumental reason and its persistent mandate of utility. It may, rather, involve recuperating senses of freedom lost to us in late modernity, where nation-states promise freedom as the facile liberation from subservience and mastery as the domination of nature and culture. To think generally may lead toward sensing freedom as “a dangerous breaking loose...a will to assume those risks without which there is no freedom” (1988– 91, 1:38). It is toward recuperating these more general senses of freedom, which Bataille signifies as “sovereign” and I signify as “queer” in this historical period of late modernity and phallicized whiteness, that this text moves.

### 2NC – Nuclear War

#### The lines of hell never stop expanding – the nuclear bomb is indistinguishable from humanity, existing at the sacred core of humanity’s origins. The death by fire they articulate is necessarily unremarkable.

Sivak 15 (Andrew Mark Sivak, Ph.D., is a professor of History of Consciousness UC Santa Cruz, “Destroyer of Worlds: War and Apocalypse in the Nuclear Epoch,” 2015 ///ghs-sc)

The philosophical counter-argument to the theory of Hiroshima as event articulated by Anders was established years prior to this flare up with Jaspers by Georges Bataille, in his critical review of John Hersey's Hiroshima, which opened with a 162 Anders, “Theses,” 494-5. 142 provocative formulation of infernal recurrence. “Let's admit it,” he admonished, “the population of hell increases annually by fifty millions souls . . . A world war may accelerate the rhythm slightly, but it cannot significantly alter it. To the ten million killed in the war from 1914 to 1918 one must add the two hundred million who, during the same period, were fated to die natural deaths.163 Hell did not stop expanding after Hiroshima. Furthermore, there was for Bataille nothing particularly noteworthy about the ways in which the victims at Hiroshima suffered: If the misfortunes of Hiroshima are faced up to freely from the perspective of a sensibility that is not faked, they cannot be isolated from other misfortunes. The tens of thousands of victims of the atom bomb are on the same level as the tens of millions whom nature yearly hands over to death. One cannot deny the differences in age and suffering, but origin and intensity change nothing: horror is everywhere the same. The point that, in principle, the one horror is preventable while the other is not is, in the last analysis, a matter of indifference.164 163 Bataille, “Concerning the Accounts,” 221. 164 Ibid, 228. Emphasis added. However, the human meaning of Hiroshima's burning, as distinct from the animality of bodily suffering and death, was important to Bataille, who in this passage distances himself from the contextualizing moves represented by Churchill and the dehumanizing descriptors used by Truman and Life: “But the death of sixty thousand is charged with meaning, in that it depended on their fellow men to kill them or let them live. The atom bomb draws its meaning from its human origin: it is the possibility that the hands of man deliberately hang suspended over the future. And it is a means of action: the fear produced by a tidal wave or a volcano has no meaning, whereas uranium fission a project whose goal is to impose, by fear, the will of the one who provokes it. At the same time it puts an end to the projects of those whom it strikes. It is by representing possible projects, which in turn are intended to make other projects impossible, that an atom bomb 143 The horrific carnage and mass death had precedent. Arguing for the exceptionality of Hiroshima was, according to Bataille, a cheap form of sentimentality and in the end, dishonest. The cruelties of the Second World War did nothing to alter the underlying situation of death: the lines at the gates of Hell are only getting longer. Death by fire, in whatever form, was in Bataille’s eyes unremarkable, for “each fire is all fires.” What so moved Bataille about atomic bombs and the idea of nuclear war, contra Anders, was not escalating thresholds of death (individual, collective, the end of a world shaped by humanity) and he disdained moralistic critiques, especially those based on a concern for the suffering of others. For Bataille, what the nuclear bomb revealed was the dark truth of human destiny—not what we have since become due to a twist of fate but what we were from the very start, though we could not see it. Over a decade after his review of Hiroshima, revising his earlier interpretation of Hiroshima's bombing being more of the same, he wrote in another article titled, “Unlivable Earth,” that We know that we cannot attain this world without denying, without suppressing what we are. But in catching sight of it, we are led to forget its real takes on a human meaning. Otherwise, it would merely have the animal meaning of smoking out termites.” Ibid, 226-7. 144 spirit, its horrible tribal wars, its tortures, its massacres; or, in a less primitive civilization, the reduction of an unfortunate group of conquered men to slavery, men transported by force, under the lash, toward unspeakable markets. Only by dint of grievous lies can we conceal the accursed truth of history. There is something frightful in human destiny, which undoubtedly was always at the limit of this unlimited nightmare that the most modern weaponry, the nuclear bomb, finally announces.165 And later in the same piece: The first men, as well as some very primitive savages today, think they are really animals: because animals are, in their mind, the most holy, having a sacred quality, which men have lost. Thus, according to the simplest among us, animals, not men, are gods: animals alone have retained these supernatural qualities, which men have lost. Of course it is hard for us to think that we are becoming completely wretched! And yet . . . we might have a sublime idea of the animal now that we have ceased being certain that one day the nuclear bomb will not make the planet an unlivable place for man.166 The deep truth of nuclear war is that it announces the revelation of our lost animality. By contextualizing the atomic bomb in this way, Bataille was not (in the vein of someone like Churchill) attempting to diminish the significance of atomic bombs. To the contrary, driven by “the will to create a force, starting from an awareness of the misery and the grandeur of this perishable existence that has befallen us,” Bataille once 165 Bataille, Cradle of Humanity, 176. 166 Ibid, 178. 145 proclaimed: “STANDING AND FACING DESTINY remains in my eyes the essential aspect of knowledge.”167 For him, the nuclear bomb did not reveal a new situation, as Anders believed, so much as it represented the real of an old situation that seemed preoccupied with continuity but was suicidal from the start. According to Bataille, the nuclear epoch did not threaten humanity so much as it was indistinguishable from humanity. Nuclear war would constitute an infernal return of an animal indifference to death—the sacred core of humanity's origins.

### 2NC – Framework

#### Our act of transgressive eroticism allows for the rawest form of communication – the act of violent unproductivity create continuous acts of shared inner experience

Botting and Wilson 97 (Fred Botting and Scott Wilson, “The Bataille Reader”, 1997 ///ghs-sc)

For Bataille, it is 'the identity of these perfect contraries, divine ecstasy and its opposite, extreme horror' that blows identity apart, unleashes experience from the 'prison' of anguish and establishes continuity with alterity: communication. This statement comes as the 'inevitable conclusion to a history of eroticism'. It is with eroticism that 'the contraries seem visibly conjoined, where the religious horror disclosed in sacrifice becomes linked to the abyss of eroticism'. 21 Two texts written in 1941 exemplify the link between horror and eroticism. 'The torment' from Inner Experience, already cited, is the companion to another text written in a different register, though one concerned, essentially, with the same experience. 'I wrote this slim volume in September and October 1941, just before 'Le Supplice' ['The torment'], which makes up the second part of L'Experience interieure. To my mind the two texts are closely interdependent and one cannot be understood without the other . . . I could not have written 'Le Supplice' if I had not first provided its lewd key.'22 Madame Edwarda has been called by Maurice Blanchot, one of the first persons to read it during the worst days of the Occupation in 1941/3 'the most beautiful narrative of our time'.24 This narrative, like 'The torment', makes the atheological connection between inner experience and eroticism in a horrifyingly literal way:¶ She was seated, she held one long leg stuck up in the air, to open her crack yet wider she used her fingers to draw the folds of skin apart ... 'Why', I stammered in a subdued tone, 'why are you doing that?' 'You can see for yourself ', she said, 'I'm GOD'. (p. 229)¶ As an account of a visit to a brothel, the story is quite banal. The intensity of the experience, however, invests the encounter with the mystico-philosophical significance of 'eroticism', reversing the veiled pornographic flickerings of erotica. The difference Bataille suggests, in his Preface on the intentions of 'Pierre Angelique', pseudonymous author of MadameEdwarda, lies in the unusual 'gravity' with which the matter of sexual life is treated, as opposed to the customary 'making light' of it (p. 223). In eroticism the object of desire radiates with a nocturnal brilliance that reduces the subject to nothing but the infinite movement of desire itself. In the ecstatic movement beyond individual experience, a movement of consumption by an unattainable, impossible object of desire, the hero, as religious ingenu, comes to understand the truth of Madame Edwarda's revelation: she is God, but 'GOD figured as a public whore and gone crazy - that, viewed through the optic of "philosophy", makes no sense at all' (p. 233). The non-sense of the un-knowing that manifests itself in poetic intoxication, laughter's expenditure, or ecstasy's flight, also drives eroti­ cism, dissociating it from the impulses of natural animality or sexuality. 'Eroticism, unlike simple sexual activity is a psychological quest independent of the natural goal.,25 Located in a psychological or psychoanalytical domain, eroticism constitutes one of those experiences in which the fundamental form of the human is brought into question.¶ For Bataille, it is woman that occupies the place where the object of desire exceeds both objectivity and subjectivity with a glimpse of an unknown infinity. That this is so is no doubt an effect of a particular cultural conjuncture: 'a new representation of woman was emerging at the center of the intellectual epic of the interwar years', Elisabeth Roudinesco argues. This representation, for the surrealists, took the shape of the female crimi­ nal. For psychoanalysis it was the 'female ecstatic' (as represented in Bernini's statue of the Ecstasy ofSaint Teresa), culminating with Madame Edwarda herself, 'a triumphant madwoman, capable of inscribing the name of God on the "rags" hanging from her scarlet sex'.26 Woman, in godless modernity, assumes the intermediary function of a discredited priesthood, the impossible object between finite being and infinity that guarantees sacred excess. Woman's proximity to the divine is manifested in her jouissance.

#### The notion of debate as a tool to achieve their standards is emblematic of the will to productivity and is exactly what we’re critiquing

Brewer 13 (Ben Brewer is a Graduate Student of Philosophy at Emory University, “Unsaying Non-Knowledge: Georges Bataille and the Mysticism of Writing,” 2013 ///ghs-sc)

Though the critiques of project and rationality follow similar structures and are equiprimordial, it is easiest to begin with the critique of utility. According to utility, an object must have reference to some external end in order to be considered meaningful. In this mode of being-in-the-world, the tool is the primary example of meaning. Importantly, the tool “has no value in itself” and is only meaningful “in relation to an anticipated result” (Theory of Religion 28). While the truth of the tool lies in its usefulness towards a given end, the end is itself also grounded in utility. The tools of agriculture, to use Bataille’s example from Theory of Religion, are defined in terms of their usefulness to the cultivation of crops: a plow is only a plow so long as it accomplishes the goal of preparing soil for planting. The resulting food is, in turn, only valuable to the end of being eaten, which is only valuable in terms of its ability to sustain human life, which is only valuable in its ability to do work, etc. The absurdity of this “endless deferral” is matched by the equal absurdity of “a true end, which would serve no purpose” (29). Either utility continues indefinitely such that no individual thing is valuable in itself, or the utility is grounded in something which is not itself useful. A “true end,” must be something with no use-value at all. This is true for two reasons. The first is clearly explicit in my preceding explanation: there must be something at the end of the line, so to speak, which grounds meaning. This is a purely logical objection. Meaning based in utility makes impossible the very thing it purports to offer: grounded meaning. The second necessity deals instead with Bataille’s ethical commitment to immanent subjectivity: “What a ‘true end’ reintroduces is the continuous being, lost in the world like water is lost in water” (29). The structure of the tool introduces a break into the continuity of animal experiencing. In order for me to use something as a tool, it must first be distinct from me. Once it is distinct from me, I am no longer in an immanent state of continuity with my world. The introduction of discontinuity into the indiscriminate immanence of existence is the condition of the possibility of a tool. To use a tool, therefore, is already to be in the realm of project.3 Bataille then introduces the dimension of temporality to the critique of utility in order to critique what he calls “project,” though it could easily be referred to as desire. Project denotes a mode of being-in-the-world in which time itself is experienced as an object to be enlisted in the favor of utility. The present becomes meaningful only insofar as its occurrences are useful in relation to the accomplishment of a (future) goal. The critique of this mode of being-in-the-world runs similarly to the critique of utility. First of all, I will never be fulfilled. This is the basic problem of desire or projection: desire is constituted on a lack. I can only desire something I do not have. More importantly, it will not actually fulfill my desire; my desire, instead, will simply reconstitute itself with a new object-cause, which will be equally unsatisfactory upon its acquisition. The infinite regress of utility-based meaning manifests itself here as the impossibility of satisfying desire. The ethical problem of discontinuity, however, also reappears with the introduction of temporality. Right after the above-quoted passage about animality, Bataille also notes that the goshawk eating the hen exists in a way “in which nothing is given in time…in which nothing is given beyond the present” (18). For Bataille, the very division of time into past, present, and future introduces discontinuity and transcendence into the continuous oneness of immanence. This discontinuity is, for Bataille, the underlying problem of utility as well. The idea of discontinuity, either between subject and object or among past, present, and future, is the condition of the possibility of utility’s emergence. Nick Land explains, “Bataille’s thought of discontinuity is more intricate than his fluent deployment of the word might indicate. It is the condition for transcendent illusion” (Land 64). In this way the same critique of deferral applies to discontinuity: “Discontinuity is not ontologically grounded but positively fabricated” (64). The groundlessness of discontinuity is not, then, accidental to the groundlessness of deferral, but rather constitutive of it. Finally, Bataille applies the critiques of utility and project to the practice of discursive reason. Broadly speaking, discursive reason is the practice of philosophy understood as explanation. Insofar as discursive reasoning always occurs within the context of elucidating something for a higher end, usually “truth,” it is based in project and utility. In contradistinction to this approach to philosophy, Bataille poses “sovereign nonknowledge”—a way of philosophizing that does not attempt to elucidate transcendent truths, but rather forces the reader into an experience (“Nonknowledge” 196). Discursive reason also rests on the distinction between subject and object. In order to define something for explication or exploration, one must first delimit it from the manifold. I cannot give an account of what a chair is without first designating that a chair is some object distinct from all other possible objects in the world. This ontological problem of discursive reason points to the role that language plays in Bataille’s thought. Language rests on this same dividing up of the world. It rests on the ability to define a subject as distinct from an object. Even if I proclaim that I am thinking about myself, syntax necessitates that there is an “I” who is thinking (subject) and an “I” which is being thought about (object). This structural necessity is, for Bataille, “one of the most fateful aberrations of language” (Theory of Religion 28). Bataille’s non-knowledge, then, cannot simply be expressed in discursive language. Instead Bataille engages what Michael Sells calls “unsaying,” perverting and twisting language against itself in order to “engage the ineffable” (Sells 3). In these critiques Bataille attempts to elucidate and undermine the very basis of transcendent subjectivity—discontinuity. The calling into question of the structure of discontinuity, between subject and world, between I and thou, undergirds all of Bataille’s thought.

### 2NC – Poetry

#### Solves all your biz

-about poetry in general, but more explicitly about the poem that’s the discontinuity alt so you should probably read this with that

Bataille 57 (Georges Bataille, crazy librarian, “L'Erotisme,” or “Erotism: Death and Sensuality,” originally published in 1957 ///ghs-sc)

I spoke of mystical experience, not of poetry. I could not have talked about poetry without plunging into an intellectual labyrinth. We all feel what poetry is. Poetry is one of our foundation stones, but we cannot talk about it. I am not going to talk about it now, but I think I can make my ideas on continuity more readily felt, ideas not to be fully identified with the theologians' concept of God, by reminding you of these lines by one of the· most violent of poets, Rimbaud. Elle est retrouvee. Quoi? L'eternite. C'est la mer allee Avec Ie soleil. Poetry leads to the same place as all forms of eroticism — to the blending and fusion of separate objects. It leads us to eternity, it leads us to death, and through death to continuity. Poetry is eternity; the sun matched with the sea.

### AT Life Good

#### The question is why? Salvation is only valuable if existence is suffering. Death is the freedom from the horrors of life.

Cioran 49 (Emil Cioran was Romanian philosopher and essayist, “Précti de decomposition,” 1949, translated by Richard Howard, Editions Gallimard ///ghs-sc)

A doctrine of salvation has meaning only if we start from the equation 'existence equals suffering.' It is neither a sudden realization nor a series of reasonings which leads us to this equation, but the unconscious elaboration of our every moment, the contribution of all our experiences, minute or crucial. When we carry germs of disappointments and a kind of thirst to see them develop, the desire that the world should undermine our hopes at each step multiplies the voluptuous verifications of the disease. The arguments come later; the doctrine is constructed: there still remains only the danger of 'wisdom.' But, suppose we do not want to be free of suffering nor to conquer our contradictions and conflicts - what if we prefer the nuances of the incomplete and an affective dialectic to the evenness of a sublime impasse? Salvation ends everything; and ends us. Who, once saved, dares still call himself alive? We really live only by the refusal to be delivered from suffering and by a kind of religious temptation of irreligiosity. Salvation haunts only assassins and saints, those who have killed or transcended the creature; the rest wallow - dead drunk - in imperfection ...

### AT Suffering

#### Existence is horror. Suffering is inevitable – the only question is our orientation to it.

Kain 07 (Phillip J Kain, Ph.D., is a professor of philosophy at the University of California at San Diego, “Nietzsche, Eternal Recurrence, and the Horror of Existence,” 2007 ///ghs-sc)

Knowledge of the horror of existence kills action—which requires distance¶ and illusion. The horror and meaninglessness of existence must be veiled if we¶ are to live and act. What we must do, Nietzsche thinks, is construct a meaning¶ for suffering. Suffering we can handle. Meaningless suffering, suffering for no¶ reason at all, we cannot handle. So we give suffering a meaning. We invent a¶ meaning. We create an illusion. The Greeks constructed gods for whom wars¶ and other forms of suffering were festival plays and thus an occasion to be¶ celebrated by the poets. Christians imagine a God for whom suffering is¶ punishment for sin (GM II:7; cf. D 78).¶ One might find all this unacceptable. After all, isn’t it just obvious that we¶ can change things, reduce suffering, improve existence, and make progress?¶ Isn’t it just obvious that modern science and technology have done so? Isn’t it¶ just absurd for Nietzsche to reject the possibility of significant change? Hasn’t¶ such change already occurred?¶ Well, perhaps not. Even modern environmentalists might resist all this¶ obviousness. They might respond in a rather Nietzschean vein that technology¶ may have caused as many problems as it has solved. The advocate of the¶ perfectible cosmos, on the other hand, would no doubt counter such Nietzschean¶ pessimism by arguing that even if technology does cause some problems, the¶ solution to those problems can only come from better technology. Honesty¶ requires us to admit, however, that this is merely a hope, not something for which¶ we already have evidence, not something that it is absurd to doubt—not at all¶ something obvious. Further technology may or may not improve things. The¶ widespread use of antibiotics seems to have done a miraculous job of improving¶ our health and reducing suffering, but we are also discovering that such antibiotics¶ give rise to even more powerful bacteria that are immune to those¶antibiotics. We have largely eliminated diseases like cholera, smallpox, malaria,¶ and tuberculosis, but we have produced cancer and heart disease. We can cure¶ syphilis and gonorrhea, but we now have AIDS.¶ Even if we could show that it will be possible to continuously reduce suffering,¶ it is very unlikely that we will ever eliminate it. If that is so, then it remains¶ a real question whether it is not better to face suffering, use it as a discipline,¶ perhaps even increase it, so as to toughen ourselves, rather than let it weaken¶ us, allow it to dominate us, by continually hoping to overcome it.¶ But whatever we think about the possibility of reducing suffering, the question¶ may well become moot. Nietzsche tells a story: “Once upon a time, in some out¶ of the way corner of that universe which is dispersed into numberless twinkling¶ solar systems, there was a star upon which clever beasts invented knowing. That¶ was the most arrogant and mendacious minute of ‘world history,’ but nevertheless,¶ it was only a minute. After nature had drawn a few breaths, the star cooled¶ and congealed, and the clever beasts had to die” (TL 1, 79). Whatever progress¶ we might think we are making in reducing suffering, whatever change we think¶ we are bringing about, it may all amount to nothing more than a brief and accidental¶ moment in biological time, whose imminent disappearance will finally¶ confirm the horror and meaninglessness of existence.¶ The disagreement here is not so much about the quantity of suffering that¶ we can expect to find in the world but, rather, its nature. 0 It is not a necessary part of the nature of things. It does not make¶ up the essence of existence. We must develop virtue, and then we can basically¶ expect to fit and be at home in the cosmos. For the proponents of a¶ perfectible cosmos, suffering is neither essential nor unessential. The cosmos¶ is neutral. We must work on it to reduce suffering. We must bring about our¶ own fit. For Nietzsche, even if we can change this or that, even if we can reduce¶ suffering here and there, what cannot be changed for human beings is that suffering¶ is fundamental and central to life. The very nature of things, the very¶ essence of existence, means suffering. Moreover, it means meaningless¶ suffering—suffering for no reason at all. That cannot be changed—it can only¶ be concealed.¶ Nietzsche does not reject all forms of change. What he rejects is the sort of¶ change necessary for a perfectible cosmos. He rejects the notion that science¶ and technology can transform the essence of things—he rejects the notion that¶ human effort can significantly reduce physical suffering. Instead, he only¶ thinks it possible to build up the power necessary to construct meaning in a¶ meaningless world and thus to conceal the horror of existence, which cannot¶ be eliminated.

### AT God

#### God is dead, and we have killed him.

Bataille 38 (Georges Bataille, crazy librarian, “The Obelisk,” in “Visions of Excess: Selected Writings 1927-1939,” translated by Alan Stoekl ///ghs-sc)

"Have you not heard," cried Nietzsche, "of that madman who lit a lantern in the bright morning hours, ran to the marketplace, and cried incessantly: "I seek God! I seek God!' -As many of those who did not believe in God were standing around just then, he provoked much laughter. Has he got lost? asked one. Did he lose his way like a child? asked another. Or is he hiding? Is he afraid of us? Has he gone on a voyage? emigrated? -Thus they yelled and laughed. The madman jumped into their midst and pierced them with his eyes. 'Whither is God?' he cried; 'I will tell you. We have killed him-you and I. All of us are his murderers. But how did we do this? How could we drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now? Whither are we moving? Away from all suns? Are we not plunging continually? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there still any up or down? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing in on us? Do we not need to light lanterns in the morning? Do we hear nothing as yet of the noise of the gravediggers who are burying God? Do we smell nothing as yet of the divine decomposition? Gods, too, decompose. God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. 'How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers? What was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it? THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A GREATER DEED; AND WHOEVER IS BORN AFTER US-FOR THE SAKE OF THIS DEED HE WILL BELONG TO A HIGHER HISTORY THAN ALL HISTORY HITHERTO.' "1

## Death Good Aff – b/c why not?

### Notes

#### Do not read this. You will lose to framework so quick.

### 1AC

#### You are a player in the rigorous game of living.

#### You can’t blame the game if you don’t believe the rules or bother to remember them.

#### The first rule is: every player dies, every player is always already dying; none knows when it’s coming and fails to realize the imperceptible immanence of death in the everyday; the youngest and best always go first.

#### Everyone has to play.

#### The game goes on forever – or until you win.

#### You win by finding death before it finds you.

#### The prize – is life.

[Seeing Through Death, Adapted from Brian Long, 1983]

#### All organisms and system are left with a surplus of energy, which we should squander endlessly. Death is the ultimate form of this unproductive expenditure – an ecological gift to new life.

Rowe 17 (James Rowe is an Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at the University of Victoria. “Georges Bataille, Chögyam Trungpa, and Radical Transformation: Theorizing the Political Value of Mindfulness”, The Arrow: A Journal of Wakeful Society, Culture, and Politics ///ghs-sc)

The sun is a centr al force in the philosophies of both Trungpa and Bataille. For Trungpa, the sun is a symbol of basic goodness, and the human capacity to awaken to it, to become enlightened. For Bataille, the sun is the material starting point for earthly life, and thus his phi- losophy. “Solar energy,” writes Bataille, “is the source of life’s exuberant development. The origin and essence of our wealth are given in the radiation of the sun, which dispenses energy—wealth—without any return.”65 The sun offers our planet enough energy in one hour to meet contemporary civilizational needs for an entire year.66 Harnessing this energy, to be sure, is a massive technological challenge. Moreover, biological life only has limited access to the superabundance of solar energy that hits the planet every day. But the amount of energy we can access enables an energetically rich life. Bataille’s materialist analysis of solar lavishness helpfully concretizes Trungpa’s account of basic goodness, what he also referred to as “basic richness.”67 While Trungpa o ers practices for people to feel their inherent goodness and richness, actually experiencing this goodness takes time.68 Without spending hours meditating, and slowly uncovering a tender and radiating heart, Trungpa’s teachings on basic goodness and richness can appear ideal- istic. Bataille’s materialist account of solar generosity further evidences Trungpa’s philosophy; it offers strong conceptual proof that can heighten commitment to the experiential practice of meditation. “ The sun gives without ever receiving,” argues Bataille. “[Humans] were conscious of this long before astrophysics measured that ceaseless prodigality; they saw it ripen the harvests and they associated its splen- dor with the act of someone who gives without receiving.”69At a basic biological level, the sun’s exuberance means that “on the surface of the globe, for living matter in general, energy is always in excess, the ques- tion is always posed in terms of extravagance.”70 Put more succinctly: “We receive more energy than we can use.”71 e basic planetary con- dition is wealth more than poverty. The essential meaning of Bataille’s claim that luxury—not necessity—organizes life on earth is that all organisms have access to more energy than required for subsistence, thanks to the sun’s exuberance, is excess is often invested in biological growth (at the level of an organism, species, or ecosystem). But growth can never fully exhaust the energy available to an individual organism or biological system. All organisms and systems are left with a surplus to spend “willingly or not, gloriously or catastrophically.”72 Evidence of earthly richness includes the ornate colors and plumage of the animal kingdom that seemingly exceed evolutionary use-value. Similarly, consider the capacity for pleasure su using animal life, espe- cially all the sexualized pleasures apparently unrelated to procreation. Even when a sensory pleasure is associated with basic functioning like a good sneeze, excretion, or stretch, there can still be sumptuousness to the sensation (need it feel so good?). A sneeze is arguably basic good- ness at work, a ash of solar exuberance amidst our everyday lives. Consider, also, the ubiquity of queerness across the animal king- dom. According to Bruce Bagemihl, author of Biological Exuberance (a book that draws heavily from Bataille), “homosexuality is found in virtually all animal groups, in virtually all geographic areas and time periods, and in a wide variety of forms.”73 But why, asks Bagemihl, “does same-sex activity persist—reappearing in species after species, generation after generation, individual after individual—when it is not useful” from a strictly evolutionary perspective?74 Bagemihl’s answer is that use and necessity are not life’s sole organizing principles: “Natural systems are driven as much by abundance and excess as they are by limitation and practicality. Seen in this light, homosexuality and non- reproductive heterosexuality are ‘expected’ occurrences—they are one manifestation of an overall ‘extravagance’ of biological systems that has many expressions.”75 For Bataille, our primordial condition is marked by richness thanks to the lavishness of the sun. And then, of course, we die. Death can easily appear as proof of our ultimate poverty; it seemingly mocks attempts to assert the basic richness or goodness of life. But Bataille reads mortality as another marker of life’s luxuriousness. Large mam- mals like us are impressive condensations of energy (we are ourselves only possible given energetic wealth). is energy is then extravagantly squandered upon our necessary deaths. “When we curse death,” argues Bataille, “we only fear ourselves... We lie to ourselves when we dream of escaping the movement of luxurious exuberance of which we are only the most intense form.”76 Death’s energetic squandering is also an ecological gift for the new life arising from decay: “[Humankind] conspires to ignore the fact that death is also the youth of things.”77 Bataille’s reading of death as exemplary of basic goodness supports Trungpa’s encouragement to “make friends with our death,” and to not resentfully cast it as “a defeat and as an insult.”78 Tibetan culture, according to Bataille, is more successful than Euro-American ones at affirming the totality of life. For Bataille, cultur- al forms that communicate this a rmation are glorious expenditures of basic energetic wealth. e resentment that animates so many Eu- ro-American cultural forms is itself enabled by energetic exuberance, a “catastrophic” use of our basic richness.79 And the Euro-American desire to escape our corporeality only intensi es feelings of lack and malaise by disconnecting us from the earthly exuberance alive in our changeful bodies. For Bataille: Anguish arises when the anxious individual is not himself stretched tight by the feeling of superabundance. is is precisely what evinces the isolated, individual character of anguish. ere can be anguish only from a personal, par- ticular point of view that is radically opposed to the general point of view based on the exuberance of living matter as a whole. Anguish is meaningless for someone who over ows with life, and for life as a whole, which is an over owing by its very nature.80 Energetic poverty and lack are realities for life on earth. But they are always felt by particular beings at particular times; energetic lack is not our general or basic condition. And yet the more we separate ourselves from exuberant life energies in attempts to gain dominion over them, the more liable we are to experience lack; we progressively remove our- selves from nature’s over ow. Bataille was interested in nurturing a sovereign—rather than ser- vile—human encounter with existence: “ e sovereignty I speak of has little to do with the sovereignty of states... I speak in general of an aspect that is opposed to the servile and the subordinate.”81 Viewing humans as agents of life’s exuberance, Bataille saw sovereignty as hu- manity’s “primordial condition.”82 We are regal and rich from birth. But this sovereignty is tarnished when we cower before ourselves and the teeming life energies we issue from, return to, and are animated by.

#### Death resides at the center of the general economy – it functions as the ultimate form of expidenture. The cold embrace of death is a pre-requisite for the brilliance of life.

Hegarty 2000(Paul Hegarty is an author and lecturer in aesthetics at University College Cork, “Georges Bataille: Core Cultural Theorist” ///ghs-sc)

Death is a continual concern for Bataille, from the earliest writings, to the last fizzles in and around The Tears of Eros, and arguably sits at the centre of the general economy, as death can be seen as 'the ultimate term of possible expenditure ('Attraction and Repulsion IF, 123; OC II, 332 trans, mod.). Bataille's notion of death is an empty version of Hegel's: it is negativity, but one that cannot be recuperated, even if all our actions can be seen as attempts at such a recuperation. Death is the loss that defines our existence as individuals, since sexual reproduction is absolutely caught up with the death of the individual; unlike amoebae, there is no continuity of Being from one organism to the next (The Accursed Share, 32; OC VII, 39. See also Eroticism, 12-15; OCX, 17-21). Death, then, is as much part of the inherent wastefulness in nature as life. Death seems to us like the most wasteful form, but for Bataille, such a conception is to be left behind (not ignored or overcome): 'the luxury of death is regarded by us in the same way as that of sexuality, first as a negation of ourselves, then - in a sudden reversal - as the profound truth of that movement of which life is the manifestation (The Accursed Share, 34-5; OC VII, 41). Is death then in some way the truth of Bataille's system? At points it recalls Heidegger's notion of 'Being toward death', but as with many of Bataille's notions, the whole issue of centrality is open to question even as it is posed. Bataille argues that it will always be possible to show that whichever primordial fact gets priority presuppose s the existence of anothe r one (The Accursed Share, vol. II, 82; OC VIII, 71). 1 Death features in early writings - 'beings only die to be born', 'Solar Anus', 7; OC I, 84), and become s something that does not transcend the individual so much as lose the individual in a generalized excess. Instead of Hegel's mastery of death, we see that in the fact that life and death are passionately devoted to the subsidence of the void, the relation of master/slave subordination is no longer revealed, but life and void are confused and mingled like lovers, in the convulsive moments of the end. ('Sacrifices', 133; OC I, 93 trans, mod.) Instead of giving in to death, accepting it at a distance, as the distancing that structure s Being (Heidegger), death is to be embraced, as 'it appears that no less a loss than death is needed for the brilliance of life to traverse and transfigure dull existence (Th e Practice of Joy Before Death', 239; OC I, 557). This is not because death is so marvellous, but because it is everywhere, linking the individual to everything else (what Bataille will go on to call the general economy): I can only perceive a succession of cruel splendours whose very movement requires that I die: this death is only the exploding consumption of all that was, the joy of existence of all that comes into the world; even my own life demands that everything that exists, everywhere, ceaselessly give itself and be annihilated. (The Practice of Joy Before Death', 239; OCI, 557) Bataille is not arguing from the perspective whereby the universe only exists in one's own mind, but that even we, pathetic individuals that we are, feature in the ceaseless process of death and destruction. This linkage of the individual, throug h death, to others, to the general economy, is what is pursued in Bataille's connecting of the erotic with death, which is a development of the linkage between sex and death. In Eroticism he uses the term 'continuity to designate both the state of shared existence of asexual reproduction and what lies beyond individuality when individuals lose themselves in sacrifice, erotic activity, laughter, drunkenness and so on (Eroticism, 11-25; OCX, 17-30). These attempts interest him because 'eroticism opens the way to death. Death opens the way to the denial of our individual selves (24; 29). Death 57 The second volume of The Accursed Share, subtitled The History of Eroticism, is often seen as being little more than a draft version of Eroticism, but there are crucial differences in emphasis. The History of Eroticism really is a genuine part of the work on 'the accursed share', whereas such an economy is only implicit in Eroticism. More importantly still, the former seeks to link sexuality to death, and the latter attempts the opposite movement (both movements, for no clear theoretically necessary reason, lead Bataille to associate Woman with death). The second volume of The Accursed Share even starts by stating that it is not really about eroticism, but is instead 'a thinking that does not fall apart in the face of horror', emerging from 'a system of thought exhausting the totality of the possible (The Accursed Share, vol. II, 14; OC VIII, 10). In writing about death as part of the general economy, it also emerges that death is not necessarily literal death. But we should on no account take it as simply a metaphor, as metaphors imply a reality to be represented, and Bataille offers no such real world, existing to be represented in mimesis, metaphor or metonymy. Death and Fear Hegel sees death as the origin of humanity's self-consciousness (this being, initially, consciousness of death), and the rest of time consists of the struggle to master death. Communal existence is also centred around death, and the two combine in the form of architecture. According to Hollier, for Hegel, 'architecture is something appearing in the place of death, to point out its presence and to cover it up: the victory of death and the victory over death' (Against Architecture, 6). For Bataille, however, this is precisely the problem: our society is this fearful covering up of death (whereas the Aztecs, for example, exposed death in the sacrifice - at the top of, rather than inside, the pyramid). 2 In The Accursed Share, vol. II, he argues that all society, all individual existence (as opposed to the restricted economy of modern individualism) emerges from this fear of death - and this fear is at its most creative when it approaches death. 58 Georges Bataille At the same time as humanity is drawn toward death, it pushes it away - this repulsion is what defines humanity. Repulsion is the key word, as death is not simply a negativity, something that happens to the subject, but something that, even when it happens to someone else, provokes disgust. Humanity is defined by its 'repugnance for death/ (The Accursed Share, vol. II, 61; OC VIII, 51). This is hardly a novel or shocking statement, but death is specifically part of what repels us because we repel it, and arguably the (primordial) object of disgust (and only in becoming human does death constitute something disgusting). Humans have a horror of all that threatens their unitary existence: excretions, filth, loss of control through drunkenness, eroticism (61-2; 51-2). More than this, we also have a horror of life, as at some level we are aware of life as a by-product of death, so much so that 'we might think, if need be, that living matter on the very level we separate ourselves from it is the privileged object of our disgust (63; 52). All such disgusts are caught up within taboos, in a relation where it is impossible to ascertain whether the taboo created the disgust, or responds to it. For Bataille, however, death really is at the heart of the existence of taboo, but is not the exclusive centre: since it goes without saying, I will not linger over the possible anteriority of the horror of death. This horror is perhaps at the root of our repugnance (the loathing of nothingness would then be at the origin of the loathing of decay, which is not physical since it is not shared by animals) . It is clear, in any event, that the nature of excrement is analogous to that of corpses and that the places of its emission are close to the sexual parts; more often than not, this complex of prohibitions appears inextricable. (79; 68) This complex marks the line of demarcation between human and other and proximity to these phenomena constitutes the crossing of this line. This crossing and the fear of crossing gives the 'universally human character of the problem of obscenity (54; 45), even if contra Freud and Levi-Strauss, for example, there is no particular taboo that is universal.3 Death is also 'at the beginning insofar as its appearance coincides with labour and utility - this is what makes death a problem for the individual, as the individual conceives of his or her self as something to be maintained, preserved and developed (82; 70) .Death very rapidly becomes the site of prohibition, and takes two principal forms: both murder and 'contact with corpses are forbidden (79; 68). It is not the metaphysical difficulty of impending death that creates this fear, since this arises from an awareness that life is an accident between waste and decay, with only waste and decay in between. As Bataille notes, life is a luxury of which death is the highest degree (85-6; 74) and 'moreover, life is a product of putrefaction (80; 69), so death and decay are linked to conceptions of our birth and origin (for him, this accounts for 'our fear of menstrual blood, for example). Here, as elsewhere, it is striking how far Bataille goes down a road attacking preconceptions only to launch into a restatement of tired cliches about 'woman as other, as death. He simply does not question the taboos around 'woman', and this is why Kristeva's gloss on Bataille (Powers of Horror) and Mary Douglas's Purity and Danger is so successful - it completes the logic already under way. The all-pervasive absence, or denial, of death, through prohibition, is why death is to be approached, and also why we have an attraction to as well as repulsion from death and all that threatens our identity, so that for example, 'eroticism, it may be said, is assenting to life up to the point of death (Eroticism, 11; OCX, 17). Death and eroticism remain charged with danger, and create anguish in individuals as their individuality falls away (The Accursed Share, vol. II, 101; OC VIII, 88) . 5 But as with Hegel's 'facing up to death', Bataille does not limit the notion of death to actual biological death - it comes to include all that undoes the individual, such that the introduction, or irruption, of death into life makes life become exuberant (99; 86). Erotic activity, for example, must be carried out intensely (otherwise it is just sex), for 'if the sensations do not have their greatest intensity, it is possible for us to isolate objects on the field of the totality (118-19; 102). By totality, Bataille does not mean the kinds of ideology that account for everything, but the amorphous sphere beyond subjects, and beyond a simple subject/object divide. Even if death is not real, there is no reduction of the experience of approaching death (we can never attain death - in this Bataille is with Heidegger). If we are instructed that to 'live life to the full we must 'embrace death', what do we gain? Nothing much, except the awareness of an impossibility (we do not even gain nothing, as asceticism would aspire to), but what will have happened is the following: the embrace restores us, not to nature (which is itself, if it is not reintegrated, only a detached part), but rather to the totality in which man has his share by losing himself. For an embrace is not just a fall into the animal muck, but the anticipation of death, and the putrefaction that follows it. (119; 103) There is no why, however, and there can only be Virtuar replies to 'why? - i.e. there can be the project of approaching death, as it enhances subjectivity, but this project is lost at the moment it is attained, whether in actual death or in death-like experience (nonexperience). Note also that the only 'return is to something that is necessarily lost, again and again. Eroticism, then, is one direction waste or excess can take that involves death (itself waste, excess), but Bataille also hints at another level at which death can be approached - a level that really is metaphorical.

#### Death is the most luxurious form of life. It is death and death alone that ensures the renewal of life.

Bataille 97 (Georges Bataille, crazy librarian, “Death,” from “The Bataille Reader,” translated by Michelle and Stuart Kendall, 1997 ///ghs-sc)

Death Is Finally the Most Luxurious Form of Life What is disconcerting about these movements where opposed forms are interdependent is due to the common misappreciation of death. It calls for us to despise the link associating death with erotIcIsm, regarded as a promise of life. It is easy, but, all in all, it is dishonourable (a lack of intellectual virility) to turn away from the luxurious truth of death: there is no doubt that death is the youth of the world. We don't admit this, we don't want to admit it, for a rather sad reason: we are perhaps young at heart, but this doesn't mean we are more alert. Otherwise, how could we not be aware that death, and death alone, constantly ensures the renewal of life?≥ The worst is that, in a sense, we know this very well, but we are just as quick to forget it. The law given in nature is so simple as to defy ignorance. According to this law, life is effusion; it is contrary to equilibrium, to stability. It is the tumultuous movement that bursts forth and consumes itself. Its perpetual explosion is possible on one condition: that the spent organisms give way to new ones, which enter the dance with new forces.2 We could really not imagine a more costly process. Life is possible at much less expense: compared to that of an infusorian, the individual organism of a mammal, especially a carnivore, is an abyss where enormous quantities of energy are swallowed up, are destroyed. The growth of plants presupposes the amassing of decayed substances. Plant-eaters consume tons of living (plant) substance before a small amount of meat allows a carnivore its great releases, its great nervous expenditures. It even appears that the more costly the life-generating processes are, the more squander the production of organisms has required, the more satisfactory the operation is. The principle of producing at the least expense is not so much a human idea as a narrowly capitalist one (it makes sense only from the viewpoint of the incorporated company). The movement of human life even tends toward anguish, as the sign of expenditures that are finally excessive, that go beyond what we can bear. Everything within us demands that death lay waste to us: we anticipate these multiple trials, these new beginnings, unproductive from the standpoint of reason, this wholesale destruction of effective force accomplished in the transfer of one individual's life to other, younger, individuals. Deep down, we even assent to the condition that results, that is almost intolerable, in this condition of individuals destined for suffering and inevitable annihilation. Or rather, were it not for this intolerable condition, so harsh that the will constantly wavers, we would not be satisfied. (How significant at present that a book3 is entitled, ludicrously, Afin que nul ne meure!...) Today our judgements are formed in disappointing circumstances: those among us who best make themselves heard are unaware (and want at all cost to be unaware) that life is the luxury of which death is the highest degree, that of all the luxuries of life, human life is the most extravagantly expensive, that, finally, an increased apprehension of death, when life's security wears thin, is at the highest level of ruinous refinement ... But oblivious of this, they only add to the anguish without which a life devoted entirely to luxury would be less boldly luxurious. For if it is human to be luxurious, what to say of a luxury of which anguish is the product and which anguish does not moderate?

#### The project of self-preservation is implicated in the exploitation of others. Our fascination with mortality is the root cause of violence, as we subordinate others to hide from the fungibility of our own existence.

Winters 17 (Joseph Winters is an assistant professor of Religious Studies with a secondary position in the Department of African and African American Studies at Duke University, “Baldwin, Bataille, and the Anguish of the (Racialized) Human,” Journal of Religious Ethics, ///ghs-sc)

To some extent, death and its intimations—loss, suffering, shame, ecstasy, vulnerability—cannot have a place in a world defined by duration and preservation. In other words, even though death is a permanent feature of human life, the order of things must cultivate and imagine ways to diminish, mitigate, and deflect its effects and implications. We feel this pressure in moments when instances of suffering and loss are expected to produce or express some reassuring meaning (everything happens for a reason; that person got what he deserved). This mitigating process typically happens when individuals and communities locate death, suffering, and excessive violence elsewhere, in another place and community—a strategy that often justifies and makes acceptable violent projects to fix or restore that other community. Therefore, when Bataille says that “death means everything” to the world of accumulation and duration, he is thinking about how the anxiety and horror around death is related to our commitment to qpreserving ourselves in the future, a commitment that involves various forms of displacement and deferral. In other words, the will to futurity intensifies the anxiety and anguish that accompany thoughts and images of death, mortality, and vulnerability. Of course, humans are also fascinated with images, and practices, of violence and death, but only if they can experience and view these images from a comfortable distance or participate in these practices in a manner that reduces the risks to the self’s coherence and duration.9 On the duplicity of the self’s relationship to violence, Bataille writes, “Violence, and death signifying violence, have a double meaning. On the one hand the horror of death drives us off, for we prefer life; on the other an element at once solemn and terrifying fascinates us and disturbs us profoundly” (Bataille 1986, 45). What is crucial here is that the order of things, the order of life preservation, is defined over and against death and loss—death means everything to this order. Yet I also take Bataille to be suggesting that everyday projects and strategies of selfpreservation are implicated in the mundane, often undetected, exploitation and suffering of others; again, death means everything to the real world. Therefore, the human self is a site of a paradox: the world of projects, goals, and accumulation “imparts an unreal character to death even though man’s membership in this world is tied to the positing of the body as a thing insofar as it is mortal” (Bataille 2006, 46). According to Bataille, our general commitment to duration, to reproducing life, will always mean that some being, force, or desire will be marked as a threat or danger to that reproduction. And those threats will have to be managed, assimilated, disciplined, or subordinated in some manner. One’s ability to endure in this world, to accumulate recognition, prestige, and various kinds of capital means that one must separate oneself, to some extent, from those qualities and characteristics that endanger self or communal projects and aspirations. To put it differently, life needs to be cordoned off from death and those beings associated with death (even as we know that life and death are always intertwined and that certain kinds of subjects and communities are made more vulnerable to death and its intimations). Here Bataille’s line of thought converges with Baldwin’s point about social life providing a kind of barrier to “menacing” forces, to beings and desires that signify chaos and disorder. If Baldwin and Bataille are right, then racism, which is always about marking, disciplining, and managing “dangerous” bodies and communities, must be confronted alongside fundamental social and human limitations.

#### Recognizing the mortality inherent to human existence is essential to achieve liberation. We can only attain truth through absolute dismemberment.

Bataille 97 (Georges Bataille, crazy libarian, “Hegel, Death and Sacrifice,” in “The Bataille Reader, trans. by Stuart and Michelle Kendall, 1997 ///ghs-sc)

It was precisely the univocal character of death for Hegel that inspired the following commentary from Kojeve, which applies, again, to the passage from the Preface: (K, 549; TEL, 551). 'Certainly, the idea of death does not heighten the well-being of Man; it does not make him happy nor does it give him any pleasure.' Kojeve wondered in what way satisfaction results from a familiarity with the negative, from a tete-a-tete with death. He believed it his duty, out of decency, to reject vulgar satisfaction. The fact that Hegel himself said, in this respect, that Spirit 'only attains it truth by finding itself in absolute dismemberment' goes together, in principle, with Kojeve's negation. Consequently, it would even be superfluous to insist ... Kojeve simply states that the idea of death 'is alone capable if satisfying man's pride' .... Indeed, the desire to be 'recognized', which Hegel places at the origin of historical struggles, could be expressed in an intrepid attitude, of the sort that shows a character to its best advantage. 'It is only', says Kojeve, 'in being or in becoming aware of one's mortality or finitude, in existing and in feeling one's existence in a universe without a beyond or without a God, that Man can affirm his liberty, his historicity and his individuality - "unique in all the world" - and have them be recognized.' (Ibid.). But if Kojeve sets aside vulgar satisfaction - happiness - he now also sets aside Hegel's 'absolute dismemberment': indeed, such dismemberment is not easily reconciled with the desire for recognition.

#### It is now refound!

#### What? eternity.

#### It is the sea commingled

#### With the sun.

[A Season in Hell, Arthur Rimbaud, 1873]

Bataille 45 (Georges Bataille, crazy librarian, 1945, “Sur Nietzsche” or “On Nietzsche,” ///ghs-sc)

"Life," I said, "is bound to be lost in death, as a river loses itself in the sea, the known in the unknown" ( Inner Experience). And death is the end life easily reaches (as water does sea level). So why would I wish to turn my desire to be persuasive into a worry? I dissolve into myself like the sea--and I know the roaring waters of the torrent head straight at me! Whatever a judicious understanding sometimes seems to hide, an immense folly connected with it (understanding is only an infinitesimal part of that folly), doesn't hesitate to give back. The certainty of incoherence in reading, the inevitable crumbling of the soundest constructions, is the deep truth of books. Since appearance constitutes a limit, what truly exists is a dissolution into common opacity rather than a development of lucid thinking. The apparent unchangingness of books is deceptive: each book is also the sum of the misunderstandings it occasions. So why exhaust myself with efforts toward consciousness? I can only make fun of myself as I write. (Why write even a phrase if laughter doesn't immediately join me?) It goes without saying that, for the task, I bring to bear whatever rigor I have within me. But the crumbling nature of thinking's awareness of itself and especially the certainty of thinking reaching its end only in failing, hinder any repose and prevent the relaxed state that facilitates a rigorous disposition of things. Committed to the casual stance--I think and express myself in the free play of hazard. Obviously, everyone in some way admits the importance of hazard. But this recognition is as minimal and unconscious as possible. Going my way unconstrained, unhampered, I develop my thoughts, make choices with regard to expression--but I don't have the control over myself that I want. And the actual dynamic of my intelligence is equally uncontrollable. So that I owe to other dynamics--to lucky chance and to fleeting moments of relaxation--the minimal order and relative learning that I do have. And the rest of the time . . . Thus, as I see it my thought proceeds in harmony with its object, an object that it attains more and perfectly the greater the state of its own ruin. Though it isn't necessarily conscious of this. At one and the same time my thinking must reach plenary illumination and dissolution . . . In the same individual, thought must construct and destroy itself. And even that isn't quite right. Even the most rigorous thinkers yield to chance. In addition, the demands inherent in the exercise of thought often take me far from where I started. One of the great difficulties encountered by understanding is to put order into thought's interrelations in time. In a given moment, my thought reaches considerable rigor. But how to link it with yesterday's thinking? Yesterday, in a sense, I was another person, responding to other worries. Adapting one to the other remains possible, but . . . This insufficiency bothers me no more than the insufficiency relating to the many woes of the human condition generally. Humanness is related in us to nonsatisfaction, a nonsatisfaction to which we yield without accepting it, though; we distance ourselves from humanness when we regard ourselves as satisfied or when we give up searching for satisfaction. Sartre is right in relation to me to recall the myth of Sisyphus, though "in relation to me" here equates to "in relation to humanity," I suppose. What can be expected of us is to go as far as possible and not to stop. What by contrast, humanly speaking, can be criticized are endeavors whose only meaning is some relation to moments of completion. Is it possible for me to go further? I won't wait to coordinate my efforts in that case--I'll go further. I'll take the risk. And the reader, free not to venture after me, will often take advantage of that same freedom! The critics are right to scent danger here! But let me in turn point out a greater danger, one that comes from methods that, adequate only to an outcome of knowledge, confer on individuals whom they limit a sheerly fragmentary existence--an existence that is mutilated with respect to the whole that remains inaccessible. Having recognized this, I'll defend my position. I've spoken of inner experience: my intention was to make known an object. But by proposing this vague title, I didn't want to confine myself sheerly to inner facts of that experience. It's an arbitrary procedure to reduce knowledge to what we get from our intuitions as subjects. This is something only a newborn can do. And we ourselves (who write) can only know something about this newborn by observing it from outside (the child is only our object). A separation experience, related to a vital continuum (our conception and our birth) and to a return to that continuum (in our first sexual feelings and our first laughter), leaves us without any clear recollections, and only in objective operations do we reach the core of the being we are. A phenomenology of the developed mind assumes a coincidence of subjective and objective aspects and at the same time a fusion of subject and object. \* [This is the fundamental requirement of Hegel's phenomenology. Clearly, instead of responding to it, modern phenomenology, while replying to changing human thought, is only one moment among others: a sandcastle, a mirage of sorts.] This means an isolated operation is admissible only because of fatigue (so, the explanation I gave of laughter, because I was unable to develop a whole movement in tandem with a conjugation of the modalities of laughter would be left suspended--since every theory of laughter is integrally a philosophy and, similarly, every integral philosophy is a theory of laughter . . .). But that is the point--though I set forth these principles, at the same time I must renounce following them. Thought is produced in me as uncoordinated flashes, withdrawing endlessly from a term to which its movement pushes it. I can't tell if I'm expressing human helplessness this way, or my own . . . I don't know, though I'm not hopeful of even some outwardly satisfying outcome. Isn't there an advantage in creating philosophy as I do? A flash in the night--a language belonging to a brief moment . . . Perhaps in this respect this latest moment contains a simple truth. In order to will knowledge, by an indirect expedient I tend to become the whole universe. But in this movement I can't be a whole human being, since I submit to a particular goal, becoming the whole. Granted, if I could become it, I would thus be a whole human being. But in my effort, don't I distance myself from exactly that? And how can I become the whole without becoming a whole human being? I can't be this whole human being except when I let go. I can't be this through willpower: my will necessarily has to will outcomes! But if misfortune (or chance) wills me to let go, then I know I am an integral, whole humanness, subordinate to nothing. In other words, the moment of revolt inherent in willing a knowledge beyond practical ends can't be indefinitely continued. And in order to be the whole universe, humankind has to let go and abandon its principle, accepting as the sole criterion of what it is the tendency to go beyond what it is. This existence that I am is a revolt against existence and is indefinite desire. For this existence God was simply a stage and now here he is, looming large, grown from unfathomable experience, comically perched on the stake used for impalement. My method has confusion as a consequence--and in the long run this confusion is unbearable (particularly for me!). This is something to be corrected if possible . . . But for now, I want to elucidate the meaning of the above words. For me nothingness is a limit of an individual existence. Beyond its defined limits--in time and in space--this existence or being no longer exists, no longer is. For us, that nonbeing is filled with meaning: I know I can be reduced to nothing. Limited being is only a particular being. Although, does there exist such a thing as the totality of being (understood as the sum of beings)?

#### Our use of poetry is uniquely key to achieve continuity. Only through poesis can we achieve eternity.

Bataille 57 (Georges Bataille, crazy librarian, “L'Erotisme,” or “Erotism: Death and Sensuality,” originally published in 1957 ///ghs-sc)

I spoke of mystical experience, not of poetry. I could not have talked about poetry without plunging into an intellectual labyrinth. We all feel what poetry is. Poetry is one of our foundation stones, but we cannot talk about it. I am not going to talk about it now, but I think I can make my ideas on continuity more readily felt, ideas not to be fully identified with the theologians' concept of God, by reminding you of these lines by one of the· most violent of poets, Rimbaud. Elle est retrouvee. Quoi? L'eternite. C'est la mer allee Avec Ie soleil. Poetry leads to the same place as all forms of eroticism — to the blending and fusion of separate objects. It leads us to eternity, it leads us to death, and through death to continuity. Poetry is eternity; the sun matched with the sea.

\*\*\*Slow down here

(Continue? I meant to. But I don't care now. I've lost interest. I put down what oppresses me at the moment of writing: Would it all be absurd? Or might it make some kind of sense? I've made myself sick wondering about it. I awake in the morning - just the way millions do, millions of boys and girls, infants and old men, their slumbers dissipated for ever ... These millions, those slumbers have no meaning. A hidden meaning? Hidden, yes, 'obviously'! But if nothing has any meaning, there's no point in my doing anything. I'll beg off. I'll use any deceitful means to get out of it, in the end I'll have to let go and sell myself to meaninglessness, nonsense: that is man's killer, the one who tortures and kills, not a glimmer of hope left. But if there is a meaning? Today I don't know what it is. Tomorrow? Tomorrow, who can tell? Am I going then to find out what it is? No, I can't conceive of any 'meaning' other than 'my' anguish, and as for that, I know all about it. And for the time being: nonsense. Monsieur Nonsense is writing and understands that he is mad. It's atrocious. But his madness, this meaninglessness - how 'serious' it has become all of a sudden! - might that indeed be 'meaningful'? (No, Hegel has nothing to do with a maniac girl's 'apotheosis'.) My life only has a meaning insofar as I lack one: on, but let me be mad! Make something of all this he who is able to, understand it he who is dying, and there the living self is, knowing not why, its teeth chattering in the lashing wind: the immensity, the night engulfs it and, all on purpose, that living self is there just in order ... 'not to know'. But as for GOD? What have you got to say, Monsieur Rhetorician? And you, Monsieur Godfearer? - GOD, if He knew, would be a swine.4 0 Thou my Lord (in my distress I call out unto my heart), 0 deliver me, make them blind! The story - how shall I go on with it?)

[Georges Bataille, “My Mother, Madame Edwarda and The Dead Man,” 1937]

#### The role of debate is to affirm its own meaninglessness. Any teleologically oriented goals ruin the potential for radicality.

Lerman 15 (Lindsay Lerman, PhD in Philosophy from The University of Guelph, Ontario, supervised by Shannon Winnubst (yeeee), “Georges Bataille's "Nonknowledge" as Epistemic Expenditure: An Open Economy of Knowledge”, 2015, <https://atrium.lib.uoguelph.ca/xmlui/handle/10214/8994> ///ghs-sc)

\*This was written prior to receiving the PhD

Bataille claims that the endlessness or goal-lessness of experience leads to nonmeaning, and to the anguish of nonmeaning remaining (at least partially) meaningless. (In a reply to Sartre included in On Nietzsche54). The only other sense Bataille is comfortable associating with nonmeaning is intoxication. The meaning that nonmeaning has, according to Bataille, is the meaning contained in the fact that it (nonmeaning) intoxicates him. This is an affective meaning. Bataille happily concedes to Sartre that (inner) experience is equivalent to “the pleasure of drinking a glass of spirits or feeling the sun’s warmth at the beach,” claiming that inner experience remaining/culminating in such frivolity only produces anguish (ON 173). From this it would seem that Sartre’s criticism of inner experience as mere “emptiness” is a claim that inner experience does not have adequate or satisfactory ends. “Emptiness” in this sense is an accusation of a lack of telos. Bataille is not bothered by this. Bataille wanted inner experience to be aimless but affectively productive. This is significant with regard to knowledge and nonknowledge: Sartre is right in relation to me to recall the myth of Sisyphus, though ‘in relation to me’ here equates to ‘in relation to humanity,’ I suppose. What can be expected of us is to go as far as possible and not to stop. What by contrast, humanly speaking, can be criticized are endeavors whose only meaning is some relation to moments of completion. Is it possible for me to go further? I won’t wait to coordinate my efforts in that case—I’ll go further. I’ll take the risk. And readers, free not to venture after me, will often take advantage of that same freedom! The critics are right to scent danger here! But let me in turn point out a greater danger, one that comes from methods that, adequate only to an outcome of knowledge, confer on individuals whom they limit a sheerly fragmentary existence—an existence that is mutilated with respect to the whole that remains inaccessible (ON 174-5). If inner experience were not aimless—if it had a simple, definitive outcome—the outcome would be knowledge. And experience is necessarily different from methods of contemplation and contestation which set out with knowledge as their outcome. Hence inner experience’s relation to nonknowledge: inner experience produces some absence of knowledge, and it does not seek knowledge or anything in particular as a goal, paving the way for nonknowledge. Inner experience is also different from “methods” which require an individual to live a “fragmentary existence,” separate and apart from some “whole” which remains inaccessible to them. This separation from some whole is a greater danger than the danger of a task as Sisyphean as endless contestation. Bataille’s claim that inner experience is not the kind of method which requires individuals to live fragmentedly, and separate, from some essential whole recalls his distinction between “continuity” and “discontinuity.” Bataille is suggesting that inner experience allows him to live with access to a whole—as part of the whole—that would otherwise (with other methods) remain inaccessible. The method which entails inaccessibility to the whole recalls discontinuity, and the method of being part of or caught up in the whole (inner experience) recalls continuity. It matters little what particular “method” or methods Bataille is using to describe inner experience. What matters in identifying such methods is that they are methods that expect knowledge as the outcome and that they achieve the outcome by limiting individuals to fragmentary existences without access to the whole of which they are seeking part (in the form of “knowledge”). We will not see this concern for continuity in our virtue epistemology conversation, nor will we see knowledge characterized as fragmenting, or splintering. In Sensible Ecstasy, Amy Hollywood offers her analysis of Jean-Paul Sartre’s critique of Bataille in relation to Bataille’s desire for continuity over and above any desire for identifiable outcomes: “Sartre’s and Bataille’s opposing attitudes toward human projects are crucial here. Sartre insists that to be human is to engage in projects; Bataille argues that inner experience is the opposite of project” (30). (And inner experience is especially not a project of self-improvement.) Thus Bataille “generates endlessly recursive negations of his own attempt to provide a method for attaining inner experience” (ibid). According to Hollywood, this is ultimately the problem Sartre has with all of Inner Experience; that is, it has no method, it offers no clear goal, it is useless, it is not a project. “For Sartre, if inner experience does not give rise to new enterprises it is worth nothing more than ‘the pleasure of drinking a glass of alcohol or of warming oneself in the sun at the beach’ [ON 173]. Such experiences are, for Sartre, ‘useless’” (SE 31). Excesses are permissible for Sartre, Hollywood writes, as long as they are channeled fully into project—whether the project is political or personal. “Only if these excesses are contained by project can they be meaningful and useful” (SE 33). However, the intoxication that inner experience and its nonmeaning produce are all we need to reply to Sartre: nonmeaning is not a total absence of meaning. Nonmeaning provides some kind of meaning in the form of intoxication, of affect. We will see that the same is true of nonknowledge: nonknowledge is not a total absence of knowledge, and its clearest meaning is an affective meaning. Nonknowledge does not have a particular kind of recuperable use. Inner Experience, Inner Experience, and Nonknowledge Bataille closes his reply to Sartre with a description of inner experience itself: it is the movement of “willing a knowledge beyond practical ends” (ON 176). Bataille acknowledges that this willing “can’t be indefinitely continued” (ibid). Knowledge “beyond practical ends” is nonknowledge. Inner Experience (the text and the concept) is thus a method and a non-method for arriving at nonknowledge. If reading Inner Experience moves one to pursue experience, it opens up the possibility of arriving at nonknowledge. The “method” inspires anguish because it produces only knowledge beyond practical ends—useless pseudo-knowledge. The method looks, sounds, and seems like mystical ecstasy from the outside, but, according to Bataille, it can be and is understood differently from the “inside55.” The method of inner experience is not just an avenue to nonknowledge; it is partially constitutive of nonknowledge. It is an element of nonknowledge.

## Answers

### Bataille’s an Idiot

#### Bataille’s theory is functionally useless (no pun intended) in the era of postmodern consumer capitalism

Yang 2000 (Mayfair Mei-hui Yang is a Professor of Anthropology at the University of California Santa Barbara, “Putting Global Capitalism in Its Place: Economic Hybridity, Bataille, and Ritual Expenditure,” Current Anthropology, University of Chicago Journals ///ghs-sc)

Scholars such as Jean‐Joseph Goux ([1998](http://www.journals.uchicago.edu.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1086/317380?cookieSet=1#rf40)) have pointed to a troubling overlap between Bataille’s views on luxury and sacrificial expenditure and postmodern consumer capitalism. **Consumer capitalism is also predicated on massive consumption and waste rather than on the thrift, asceticism, and accumulation against which Bataille directed his theory of expenditure.** It exhibits potlatch features in the tendency for businesses to give goods away in the hope that “supply creates its own demand”; it collapses the distinction between luxury and useful goods and between need and desire (Goux [1998](http://www.journals.uchicago.edu.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1086/317380?cookieSet=1#rf40)). Unlike modernist capitalism, **postmodern consumer capitalism is driven by consumption** rather than production. Thus, **Bataille’s vision** of the ritual destruction of wealth as defying the principles of accumulative and productive capitalism does not address this different phase of consumer capitalism, whose contours have only become clear since his death in 1962. It seems to me that despite their overt similarities, **the principles of ritual consumption and those of consumer capitalism are basically incompatible. If Bataille had addressed our consumer society today, he would have said that this sort of consumption is still in the service of production and productive accumulation**, since every act of consumptionin the world of leisure, entertainment, media, fashion, and home décor merely feeds back into the growth of the economy rather than leading to the finality and loss of truly nonproductive expenditure. **Even much of modern warfare is no longer truly destructive but tied into the furthering of military**‐**industrial production**. Nor, despite its economic excesses, does our consumer culture today challenge the basic economic logic of rational private accumulation as a self‐depleting archaic sacrificial economy does.[15](http://www.journals.uchicago.edu.proxy.lib.umich.edu/doi/full/10.1086/317380?cookieSet=1#fn15) Furthermore, capitalist consumption is very much an *individual* consumption rather than one involving the whole community or social order.

#### His theory links to itself – valorizing expidenture recreates the order of instrumental reason

Wolin 04 (Richard Wolin is a Distinguished Professor of History and Political Science at the CUNY Graduate Cente, “Left Fascism: Georges Bataille and the German Ideology in ‘The Seduction of Unreason: The Intellectual Romance with Fascism from Nietzsche to Postmodernism,’” 2004 ///ghs-sc)

At times, Bataille's celebration of transgression for its own sake seems woefully simplistic. In lieu of a conceptual framework that would permit one to distinguish between constructive and retrograde instances of transgression, we are left with an ethos of shock, rupture, and disruption simpliciter. Bataille seeks to ground postmodern ethics in the attitudes of a cultural avant-garde (Acephale and the College of Sociology) oriented toward precapitalist life forms that modernity has scorned. Yet the very idea of achieving a conceptual reckoning with Bataille-generated ideals such as "transgression," "heterogeneity," and "expenditure" would seem inimical to their very spirit. In his idiom, to rely on procedures of principled legitimation or a rational accountability would be to succumb to the logic and rhetoric of "productive consumption"—the values of a society predicated on instrumental reason and commodity exchange. (165)

#### Life is a pre-requisite to expidenture – turns all your biz

Itzkowitz 99(Kenneth Itzkowitz is a professor of philosophy at Marietta, “To witness spectacles of pain: The hypermorality of Georges Bataille,” College Literature Vol. 26, No. 1 ///ghs-sc)

Yet in our lives there are also limits. It is unlikely that Bataille would applaud Manson for the same reason he ultimately rejects Sade. They are both indiscriminate; they both go too far. "Continuity is what we are after," Bataille confirms, but generally only if that continuity which the death of discontinuous beings can alone establish is not the victor in the long run. What we desire is to bring into a world founded on discontinuity all the continuity such a world can sustain. De Sade's aberration exceeds that limit. (Bataille 1962, 13) In other words, **our wasteful consumption must also have** limits. To actually **approve of our own self-destruction** goes too far. Later on in Death and Sensuality, Bataille continues, Short of a paradoxical capacity to defend the indefensible, no one would suggest that the cruelty of the heroes of Justine and Juliette should not be wholeheartedly abominated. It is a denial of the principles on which humanity is founded. **We are bound to reject something that would end in the ruin of all our** works. If instinct urges **us to destroy the very thing we are building we must condemn those instincts and defend ourselves from them**. (Bataille 1962, 179-80) This passage is crucial for understanding Bataille's ethics. Usually Bataille writes on behalf of the violence that remains unaffected by absolute prohibitions. Prohibitions cannot obviate this transformative violence. There is always ample motive to produce the experiences of sacred transformation, i.e., to transgress the prohibitions. Yet self-preservation is also a fundamental value for Bataille; there is also ample motive to resist the violence that denies the value of the well being of life itself. As he says in the second of the above passages, **we must condemn what threatens to destroy us**; our sovereign **aspirations can be taken too** far. In another **passage he speaks of our** need "to become **aware of . . . [ourselves] and to know clearly what . . . [our] sovereign aspirations are in order to limit their possibly disastrous consequences**" (1962, 181). **It is when we are ignorant of these aspirations that we are most vulnerable to them, enacting them anyway, albeit** inattentively.

### Productivity Good

#### Productivity is key to improve living standards and accessing luxury

Boundless Economics 16 (Boundless economics, “The Importance of Productivity,” <https://www.boundless.com/economics/textbooks/boundless-economics-textbook/economic-growth-20/productivity-98/the-importance-of-productivity-368-12465/> ///ghs-sc)

\*\*\*edited for clarity

Productivity is essentially the efficiency in which a[n] company or economy can transform resources into goods, potentially creating more from less. Increased productivity means greater output from the same amount of input. This is a value-added process that can effectively raise living standards through decreasing the required monetary investment in everyday necessities (and luxuries), making consumers wealthier (in a relative sense) and businesses more profitable. From a broader perspective, increased productivity increases the power of an economy through driving economic growth and satisfying more human needs with the same resources. Increased gross domestic product (GDP) and overall economic outputs will drive economic growth, improving the economy and the participants within the economy. As a result, economies will benefit from a deeper pool of tax revenue to draw on in generating necessary social services such as health care, education, welfare, public transportation and funding for critical research. The benefits of increasing productivity are extremely far-reaching, benefiting participants within the system alongside the system itself. Productivity Beneficiaries To expand upon this, there are three useful perspectives in which to frame the value in improving productivity within a system from an economic standpoint: Consumers/Workers: At the most micro level we have improvements in the standard of living for everyday consumers and workers as a result of increased productivity. The more efficiency captured within a system, the lower the required inputs (labor, land and capital) will be required to generate goods. This can potentially reduce price points and minimize the necessary working hours for the participants within an economy while retaining high levels of consumption. Businesses: Businesses that can derive higher productivity from a system also benefit from creating more outputs with the same or fewer inputs. Simply put, higher efficiency equates to better margins through lower costs. This allows for better compensation for employees, more working capital and an improved competitive capacity. Governments: Higher economic growth will also generate larger tax payments for governments. This allows governments to invest more towards infrastructure and social services (as noted above).

### Kills VTL

#### Bataille kills VTL

Johnson 03 (David Johnson, Ph.D., “Why View All Time from the Perspective of Time’s End? A Bergsonian attack on Bataillean transience,” in Time and Society, 2003, ///ghs-sc)

Life is a serious business of highly charged temporal stakes, involving a being’s struggle to secure for itself the experience of pleasure time/free time rather than pain time/slave time. Since lived time is a living stake, **death is not the profound phenomenon that Bataille thinks it is. For one who is racked by drawn-out pain, the pain of** death situated at the end of time is an irrelevance. And for one who is caught up in the throes of extended pleasure, the dubious pleasure of death is likewise irrelevant. **Death, far from being profound, may simply provide a pragmatic escape from a life of** pain and toil, or a simple halt to a life of pleasure and freedom. We can see death as important to time in that it is the end of the great game of time, the great flow. **But death is relative in importance to time for the same reason; it is simply the end of the great game of time**, a game without which it would be pure abstraction. **However, we are not suggesting that death has absolutely no importance for living beings. On the contrary. By countering Bataille’s view of death,** which tries to domesticate death through attempting to engage it in ‘intimate’ dialogue, and **which tries to make political gain out of death, we can see death as a real, non-negotiable phenomenon.** Death can no longer be thought of as an ambiguous but essentially accessible deity, but must instead be seen as that which wipes out real substantial time with no hope of appeal. Death can now be viewed as a certain element in the game of time, as something to be dreaded or desired as the end of time, but which has no fixed moral or political meaning in itself. By affirming the reality of time we are in fact affirming the reality of death, and so we are proposing a more tragic philosophy than the one Bataille proposes – which is ironic, given that Bataille is considered by most postmodernist/ post-structuralist philosophers to be perhaps the cruellest thinker.

### Ivory Tower DA

#### The K recreates ivory tower elitism – only the rich can engage

Wolin 04 (Richard Wolin is a Distinguished Professor of History and Political Science at the CUNY Graduate Cente, “Left Fascism: Georges Bataille and the German Ideology in ‘The Seduction of Unreason: The Intellectual Romance with Fascism from Nietzsche to Postmodernism,’” 2004 ///ghs-sc)

One could raise an analogous criticism of Bataille's treatment of potlatch—the public, demonstrative destruction of wealth—as well [end page 170] as gift-giving. In truth, only those who possess great wealth can afford to destroy it. Consequently, the option to engage in potlatch does not exist for society's lower classes. 56 Like sacrifice, potlatch is implicated in the reproduction of social hierarchy. Such acts reinforce the status and prestige of those who destroy their wealth. In nearly every case, the practitioners of potlatch belong to the upper strata of society. Those who are forced to passively endure the potlatch are in effect humiliated. Through such acts, their lowly social rank is reaffirmed.(170-1)

### Fascism DA

#### This dude is literally a fascist

Wolin 06 (Richard Wolin is a Distinguished Professor of History at the [City University of New York](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_University_of_New_York) Graduate Center, “Left Fascism: Georges Bataille and the German Ideology,” in Constellations vol. 2 ///ghs-sc)

In the worldview of both Bataille and that of German young conservatives, war plays an essential, positive role. It serves as a means of dissolving the *principium individuationis*: the principle of a bourgeois subjectivity, on which the homogenous order of society - a world of loneliness and fragmentation – depends. For, according to Bataille, “the general movement of life is... accomplished beyond the demands of individuals.”32 It is in precisely this spirit that he celebrates the non-utilitarian nature of “combat” or “war” as a type of aestheticist end in itself: “*Glory...*expresses a movement of senseless frenzy, of measureless expenditure of energy, which the fervor of combat presupposes. Combat it glorious in that it is always beyond calculation at some moment.”33 For the same reasons, Bataille eulogizes those premodern “warrier societies in which pure, uncalculated violence and ostentatious forms of combat held sway.”34 For under such conditions, war was not made subservient to the vulgar ends of enterprise and accumulation, as is the case for modern-day imperialism, but served as a glorious end in itself. Yet in the early 1930s, it was precisely this aestheticist celebration of “violence for violence’s sake,” or “war for war’s sake,” that Benjamin viewed as the essence of modern fascism. As he remarks in a well known passage: “*Fiat ars – pereat mundus*,” says fascism, and, as Marinetti admits, expects war to supply the artistic gratification of a sense pereption that has been changed by technology...Mankind, which in Homer’s time was an object of contemplation for the Olympian gods, now is one for itself. Its self-alienation has reached such a degree that it can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order. This is the situation of politics which fascism is rendering aesthetic.35 In Bataille’s thought war serves as the harbinger of a cultural transfiguration in which the primacy of self-subsistent subjectivity would be replaced by the values of an “unavowable” or “ecstatic community”: that is, a community that would no longer be governed by the goals of a “visual culture” – transparency, self-identity, etc. – but instead, those of self-laceration, difference, and finitude. In fact this Bataille-inspired program of an ecstatic community has been quite explicitly carried forth and explored in the political writings of Maurice Blanchot (*La Communaute inavouable;* 1983) and Jean-Luc Nancy (*La Communaute desoeuvree;* 1985).

## Check the Death Bad file

### Extra Cards

#### 2AC RESPONSE TO THE NONSENSE OF THE 1NC DEMONSTRATES THE EFFICACY OF OUR APPROACH TO INTELLECTUAL WARFARE. THE PRACTICES OF DECEPTION AND TRICKERY MUST BE USED TO JAM THE BIOPOLITICAL RADAR. THEIR POSITION OF SPEAKING OUT IS TOO RISKY: IT TELLS EVERYTHING WE KNOW TO OUR ENEMIES, RISKING CERTAIN DESTRUCTION.

Mann 1996 (Paul Mann is a professor of English at Pomona College, “THE NINE GROUNDS OF INTELLECTUAL WARFARE,” in Postmodern Culture ///ghs-sc)

Michel de Certeau points out that, for Clausewitz, the distinction between strategy and tactics is determined not only by scales of conflict (war vs. battle) but by relative magnitudes of power. Strategy is for the strong, and it is deployed in known, visible, mapped spaces; tactics is "an art of the weak," of those who must operate inside territory controlled by a greater power**;** it takes place on the ground of the "other," inside alien space.[[35]](http://www.monash.edu.au/journals/pmc/issue.196/mann.196.html#35) It must therefore deploy deception in the face of a power "bound by its very visibility." De Certeau suggests that even in cases where the weak force has already been sighted, it might use deception to great advantage. This is another lesson from Clausewitz: "trickery is possible for the weak**,** and often it is his only possibility, as a 'last resort': The weaker the forces at the disposition of the strategist, the more the strategist will be able to use deception."In the "practice of daily life," in spaces of signification, in the contests of critical argument, such a tactics of the weak would also apply:

1. Lacking its own place, lacking a view of the whole, limited
2. by the blindness (which may lead to perspicacity) resulting
3. from combat at close quarters, limited by the possibilities
4. of the moment, a tactic is determined by the *absence of*
5. *power* just as a strategy is organized by the postulation of
6. power. From this point of view, the dialectic of a tactic
7. may be illuminated by the ancient art of sophistic. As the
8. author of a great "strategic" system, Aristotle was also
9. very interested in the procedures of this enemy which
10. perverted, as he saw it, the order of truth. He quotes a
11. formula of this protean, quick, and surprising adversary
12. that, by making explicit the basis of sophistic, can also
13. serve finally to define a tactic as I understand it here: it
14. is a matter, Corax said, of "making the worse argument seem
15. the better." In its paradoxical concision, this formula
16. delineates the relationship of forces that is the starting
17. point for an intellectual creativity that is subtle,
18. tireless, ready for every opportunity, scattered over the
19. terrain of the dominant order and foreign to the rules laid
20. down and imposed by a rationality founded on established

rights and property. (38)

And yet it is rare that any of this ever occurs to critics, who seem to believe that "subversion" consists of vicarious identification with subversives, and of telling everything one knows to one's enemies. It is nonetheless already the case that, in critical discourse, behind all the humanistic myths of communication, understanding, and interpretive fidelity, one finds the tactical value of misinterpretations. In an argument it is often crucial for combatants not to know their enemy, to project instead a paper figure, a distortion, against which they can conceive and reinforce their own positions. Intelligence, here, is not only knowledge of one's enemies but the tactical lies one tells about them, even to oneself. This is so regular a phenomenon of discursive conflict that it cannot be dismissed as an aberration that might be remedied through better communication, better listening skills, more disinterested criticism. One identifies one's own signal in part by jamming everyone else's, setting it off from the noise one generates around it. There is, in other words, already plenty of fog in discursive warfare, and yet we tend to remain passive in the face of it, and for the most part completely and uncritically committed to exposing ourselves to attack. Imagine what might be possible for a writing that is not insistently positional, not devoted to shoring itself up, to fixing itself in place, to laying out all its plans under the eyes of its opponents. Nothing, after all, has been more fatal for the avant-gardes than the form of the manifesto. If only surrealism had been more willing to lie, to dissimulate, to abandon the petty narcissism of the position and the desire to explain itself to anyone who would listen, and instead explored the potential offered it by the model of the secret society it also hoped to be. Intellectual warfare must therefore investigate the tactical advantages of deception and clandestinity over the habitual, quasi-ethical demands of clarity and forthrightness, let alone the narcissistic demands of self-promotion and mental exhibitionism, from however fortified a position. If to be seen by the enemy is to be destroyed, then intellectual warfare must pursue its own stealth technology. Self-styled intellectual warriors will explore computer networks not only as more rapid means of communication and publishing but as means for circumventing publication, as semi-clandestine lines of circulation, encoded correspondence, and semiotic speed. There will be no entirely secure secrecy, just as there are no impregnable positions -- that too is Virilio's argument -- but a shrouded nomadism is already spreading in and around major discursive conflicts. There are many more than nine grounds, but the rest are secret.

#### VOTE NEGATIVE TO MAKE THE AFFIRMATIVE DISAPPEAR. JAM THE BIOPOLITICAL RADAR BY MAKING YOUR TRUE ALLEGIANCES SECRET. REMAIN WITHIN THE FOG OF WAR TO HONE OUR TACTICS UNTIL THE TIME IS RIGHT.

Mann 1996 (Paul Mann is a professor of English at Pomona College, “THE NINE GROUNDS OF INTELLECTUAL WARFARE,” in Postmodern Culture ///ghs-sc)

The standpoint, identification with and defense of one's own thought, the demand that one be on one's own side, that one stand by one's word, is so standard a feature of intellectual ethics and politics that it has been taken completely for granted.But the entrenched position is a vestige of archaic forms of warfare. The Tofflers argue that the Gulf War demonstrated the failure of entrenchment -- Iraq's older, industrial, sedentary strategy -- against advanced military technologies of speed, stealth, and coordinated intelligence. "[T]he allied force was not a [conventional military] machine, but a system with far greater internal feedback, communication, and self-regulatory adjustment capability. It was . . . a 'thinking system'" (80). For Napoleon as well, Virilio notes, "the capacity for war [was] the capacity for movement" (WC 10). In the same manner, those bound to intellectual positions remain blind to the tactical advantages of mobility and secrecy**,** and the new war studies will be used to suggest strategic figures outside the position's fortified walls.I will return to the *precisely* oxymoronic, self-canceling figure of secrecy in a later section. Here, I will proceed by suggesting that the new war studies should come to quite rigorous and unromantic terms with the nomadology of Deleuze and Guattari.[**[20]**](http://www.monash.edu.au/journals/pmc/issue.196/mann.196.html#20)In their work, the war machine is essentially exterior to the state, even if the state appropriates it. The problem is, therefore, how to pursue exteriority in disciplinary and epistemological structures that are themselves entirely defined by their institutional interiority. It will certainly not be through any of the current specular and spectacular modes of narcissistic identification with the "other." One should treat every text that peddles its vicarious nomadism while elaborating the most conventional analyses with the greatest suspicion, and at the same time with some confidence, perhaps quite groundless, that an intellectual nomadology might still be carried out elsewhere.[**[21]**](http://www.monash.edu.au/journals/pmc/issue.196/mann.196.html#21) It is necessary to comprehend the force of extremely difficult ideas: the nomadic war-machine's exteriority to the state and its precise relation to battle; the nomads' territorial engagement with smooth space, without "striation," interiority, or chrono-historical organization; their indifference to semiological systems and their particular epistemological orientations (ornament instead of sign, ballistics and metallurgical science, numbering, speed, etc.); the strange relation of *A Thousand Plateaus* to texts that would seem to treat the same matters in a more disciplinary way -- its relation, for instance, to psychoanalysis and philosophy (and what is the strategic connection between this book and Deleuze's extraordinary and in many ways quite scholarly treatments of the history of philosophy?); indeed, the very ontology of the nomadic *idea* itself: all of these must be explored in considerable detail, without ever descending to any merely exe getical commentary, and without reducing what is at stake in this book to an intellectual position. Deleuze and Guattari challenge us to rethink our whole relation to books and to writing, to the very order of our thought -- a task in which they themselves often fail. One must begin by reading them at a loss, but a loss that is not only the result of their work's difficulty, which careful analysis would eventually overcome; rather, a loss that reaches down into our deepest epistemological attachments. It will be necessary, for instance,to reconceive the very notion of intellectual rigor (the order of argument, demonstration, proof) and communicative clarity: not to abandon them for the sake of some impressionistic indulgence, but to relocate them outside the striated space of the state apparatus that has always provided their structure. One might find oneself**,** for instance,no longer putting forth positions, outlining, defending, and identifying oneself with them: one might find oneself engaged in an even more severe, more rigorous discipline of affirming ideas without attaching oneself to them, making them appear (as Baudrillard suggested in another context) only so as to make them disappear.

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