**Aff Answers**

**2ac death drive**

**There’s no utility in embracing the death drive—it just reinforces things that already suck**

**Robinson 5** [Andrew, PhD in political theory at the University of Nottingham, Theory and Event, 8/1, “The Political Theory of Constitutive Lack: A Critique”, projectmuse]

Guattari's critique of psychoanalysis makes clear the myths which underlie it.  'Psychoanalysis transforms and deforms the unconscious by forcing it to pass through the grid of its system of inscription and representation.  For psychoanalysis, the unconscious is always already there, genetically programmed, structured, and finalized on objectives of conformity to social norms'104.  Similarly, Reich has already exposed a predecessor of the idea of "constitutive lack" - the Freudian "death instinct" - as a denial that "I don't know".  It is, he says, a metaphysical attempt to explain as yet inexplicable phenomena, an attempt which gets in the way of fact-finding about these phenomena105.  He provides a detailed clinical rebuttal of the idea of the "death instinct" which is equally apt as an attack on Lacanians (who seem unaware of Reich's intervention).  In Reich's view, the masochistic tendencies Freud associates with the "death instinct" are secondary drives arising from anxiety, and are attributable to 'the disastrous effect of social conditions on the biopsychic apparatus.  This entailed the necessity of criticizing the social conditions which created the neuroses - a necessity which the hypothesis of a biological will to suffer had circumvented'106.  The idea of the "death instinct" leads to a cultural philosophy in which suffering is assumed to be inevitable, whereas Reich's alternative - to attribute neurosis to frustrations with origins in the social system - leads to a critical sociological stance107.  The relevance of Reich's critique to the political theory of constitutive lack is striking.  The "death instinct" is connected to an idea of primordial masochism which, in the form of "aphanisis" or "subjective destitution", recurs throughout Lacanian political theory.  Zizek in particular advocates masochism, in the guise of "shooting at" or "beating" oneself, as a radical gesture which reveals the essence of the self and breaks the constraints of an oppressive reality108, although the masochistic gesture is present in all Lacanian theorists.  The death instinct is typified by Zizek as a pathological (in the Kantian sense), contingent attitude which finds satisfaction in the process of self-blockage109.  It is identical with the Lacanian concept of jouissance or enjoyment.  For him, 'enjoyment (jouissance) is not to be equated with pleasure: enjoyment is precisely "pleasure in unpleasure"; it designates the paradoxical satisfaction procured by a painful encounter with a Thing that perturbs the equilibrium of the pleasure principle.  In other words, enjoyment is located "beyond the pleasure principle"'110.  It is also the core of the self, since enjoyment is 'the only "substance" acknowledged by psychoanalysis', and 'the subject fully "exists" only through enjoyment'111.  Primordial masochism is therefore central to the Lacanian concept of the Real, which depends on there being a universal moment at which active desire - sometimes given the slightly misleading name of the "pleasure principle" - is suspended, not for a greater or delayed pleasure, but out of a direct desire for unpleasure (i.e. a primary reactive desire).  Furthermore, this reactive desire is supposed to be ontologically prior to active desire.  Dominick LaCapra offers a similar but distinct critique to my own, claiming that Lacanian and similar theories induce a post-traumatic compulsion repetition or an 'endless, quasi-transcendental grieving that may be indistinguishable from interminable melancholy'112. Reich has already provided a rebuttal of "primordial masochism", which, paradoxically given Zizek's claims to radicalism, was denounced by orthodox Freudians as communist propaganda.  In Reich's view, masochism operates as a relief at a lesser pain which operates as armouring against anxiety about an underlying trauma113.  Regardless of what one thinks of Reich's specific account of the origins of masochism, what is crucial is his critique of the idea of a death drive.  'Such hypotheses as are criticised here are often only a sign of therapeutic failure.  For if one explains masochism by a death instinct, one confirms to the patient his [sic] alleged will to suffer'114.  Thus, Lacanian metaphysics conceal Lacanians' encouragement of a variety of neurosis **complicit with oppressive social realities**.  Politically, **the thesis of primordial masochism provides a mystifying cover** for the social forces which cause and benefit from the contingent emergence of masochistic attachments (i.e. sadistic power apparatuses).  One could compare this remark to Butler's claim that Zizek 'defends the trauma of the real... over and against a different kind of threat'115.

**Studies don’t support death drive—replicable tests are impossible, variables are too vague to operationalize**

**Holowchak 12** [Andrew, teaches Philosophy at Rider University. When Freud (Almost) Met Chaplin: The Science behind Freud's "Especially Simple, Transparent Case" Project Muse]

The problem is that psychoanalytic concepts (e.g., "super-ego," "Oedipus complex," and "death drive"30 ), unlike them of say physics ("electron," [End Page 67] "muon," and "quark"), are logical constructs that have not been corroborated by **precise observations** and **replicable tests**. Hence Freud's logical constructs as proto-concepts are not even adequate as working hypotheses. As early as 1934, J. F. Brown, who claimed he was in sympathy with Freud's new science, urged, "But, and here almost all critics of psychoanalysis are in agreement, the theory has never been precise enough to allow formulation of working hypotheses for which adequate experimental situations **could be found"** (1933, p. 333). He went on to acknowledge, perhaps somewhat prophetically, given the amount of attention Freud gets today in philosophy of mind, "Freud's discoveries probably are the most striking and original contributions made to the science of mind in our time." He added, in a manner that vitiates the compliment, that Freud is more prophet than scientist—more Bruno than Galileo (1933, p. 226).

Freud was aware of that. His own view of the concepts of psychoanalysis is ambivalent. At times, he shows impatience and becomes intolerant of his critics. "Only in psychology [is obscurity not tolerated]; here the constitutional incapacity of men for scientific research comes into full view. It looks as though people did not expect from psychology progress in knowledge, but some other kind of satisfaction; every unsolved problem, every acknowledged uncertainty is turned into a ground of complaint against it" (1916–7, S.E., XXII: 6). At other times, Freud seems to agree with his critics. In "Autobiographical Study," when he mentions difficulties with "compulsion to repeat," he adds:

Although it arose from a desire to fix some of the most important theoretical ideas of psycho-analysis, it goes far **beyond psychoanalysis**. I have repeatedly heard it said contemptuously that it is impossible to take a science seriously **whose most general concepts are as lacking in precision as those of libido and of drive** in psychoanalysis.

(1925, S.E., XX: 57)

In "Why War?," Freud writes to Einstein in a manner to explain his ambivalence: "It may perhaps seem to you [Einstein] as though our theories are a kind of mythology and, in the present case, not even an agreeable one. But does not every science come in the end to a kind of mythology like this?" (1933, S.E., XXII: 211)

In sum, the bedrock concepts of Freudian psychoanalysis are conceptually indeterminate. That means that the fundamental principles of Freudian psychoanalysis are conceptually indeterminate and, thus, **obscure or meaningless**. Unfortunately, as we have seen, Freud was evasive when it [End Page 68] came to the question of the status of the bedrock concepts of psychoanalysis and even said that psychoanalysis, with the exception of "repression" and "unconscious," could do just as well without them31 (1914, S.E., XIV: 16; 1925, S.E., XX: 32–3). Without referents to the concepts he employs so significantly, **Freud is writing gobbledygook.**

A related difficulty is conceptual change. Freud, as a scientist, was committed to conceptual flexibility, insofar as his postulates were avowedly data-driven. Nonetheless, many of the conceptual changes he made—e.g., his rejection of his Seduction theory and his adoption of the death drive and structural model—were prompted more by theoretical difficulties than they were driven by observational data. In addition, Freud **surrounded himself** with **lackeys**, albeit intelligent lackeys, that allowed him, **as founder** of psychoanalysis, the **privilege** of being final arbiter on issues of **conceptual change** within psychoanalysis.32

**2ac death k**

**Affirming survival doesn’t devalue life – life is complex and malleable and can be celebrated even when it seems oppressive**

**Fassin, 10** - James D. Wolfensohn Professor in the School of Social Science at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, as well as directeur d’études at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris. (Didier, Fall, “Ethics of Survival: A Democratic Approach to the Politics of Life” Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development, Vol 1 No 1, Project Muse)

Conclusion

Survival, in the sense Jacques Derrida attributed to the concept in his last interview, not only shifts lines that are too often hardened between biological and political lives: it **opens an ethical space for** **reflection and action**. Critical thinking in the past decade has often taken biopolitics and the politics of life as its objects. It has thus unveiled the way in which individuals and groups, even entire nations, have been treated by powers, the market, or the state, during the colonial period as well as in the contemporary era.

However, through indiscriminate extension, this powerful instrument has lost some of its analytical sharpness and heuristic potentiality. On the one hand, the binary reduction of life to the opposition between nature and history, bare life and qualified life, when systematically applied from philosophical inquiry in sociological or anthropological study, erases much of the complexity and richness of life in society as it is in fact observed. On the other hand, the normative prejudices which underlie the evaluation of the forms of life and of the politics of life, when generalized to an undifferentiated collection of social facts, end up by depriving social agents of legitimacy, voice, and action. The risk is therefore both scholarly and political. It calls for ethical attention.

In fact, the genealogy of this intellectual lineage reminds us that the main founders of these theories expressed tensions and hesitations in their work, which was often more complex, if even sometimes more obscure, than in its reduced and translated form in the humanities and social sciences today. And also biographies, here limited to fragments from South African lives that I have described and analyzed in more detail elsewhere, suggest the necessity of complicating the dualistic models that oppose biological and political lives. Certainly, powers like the market and the state do act sometimes as if human beings could be reduced to “mere life,” but democratic forces, including from within the structure of power, tend to produce alternative strategies that escape this reduction. And people themselves, even under conditions of domination, [End Page 93] manage subtle tactics that transform their physical life into a political instrument or a moral resource or an affective expression.

But let us go one step further: ethnography invites us to reconsider what life is or rather what human beings make of their lives, and reciprocally how their lives permanently question what it is to be human. “The blurring between what is human and what is not human shades into the blurring over what is life and what is not life,” writes Veena Das. In the tracks of Wittgenstein and Cavell, she underscores that the usual manner in which we think of forms of life “not only obscures the mutual absorption of the natural and the social but also emphasizes form at the expense of life.”22 It should be the incessant effort of social scientists to return to this inquiry about life in its multiple forms but also in its everyday expression of the human.

**Death reps cause an empathic shift---this is especially crucial in the context of policy advocacy simulations**

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Perhaps, then, what distant consumers express when they sit glued to the television **watching a disaster** replayed over and over, when they buy t-shirts or snow globes, when they mail teddy bears to a memorial, or when they tour a disaster site, is a deep, maybe **subconscious, longing for those age-old forms of community** and **real human compassion** that emerge in a place when disaster has struck. It is a longing in some ways so alien to the world we currently live in that it **requires catastrophe to call it forth**, even in our imaginations. Nevertheless, the actions of **unadulterated goodwill** that become commonplace in harrowing conditions represent the **truly authentic form of humanity** **that all of us**, to one degree or another, **chase after** in contemporary consumer culture every day. And while it is certainly a bit foolhardy to seek authentic humanity through disaster-related media and culture, **the sheer strength of that desire has been evident in the public’s response to all the disasters,** crises and catastrophes to hit the United States in the past decade. The millions of television viewers who cried on September 11, or during Hurricane Katrina and the Virginia Tech shootings, and the thousands upon thousands who volunteered their time, labor, money, and even their blood, as well as the countless others who created art, contributed to memorials, or adorned their cars or bodies with disaster-related paraphernalia— despite the fact that many knew no one who had been personally affected by any of these disasters—all attest to a **desire for real human community and compassion** that is woefully unfulfilled by American life under normal conditions today. ¶ In the end, **the consumption of disaster doesn’t make us unable or unwilling to engage with disasters on a communal level, or towards progressive political ends**—it makes us feel as if we already have, simply by consuming. It is ultimately less a form of political anesthesia than a simulation of politics, a Potemkin village of communal sentiment, that fills our longing for a more just and humane world with disparate acts of cathartic consumption. Still, the positive political potential underlying such consumption—the desire for real forms of connection and community—remains the most redeeming feature of disaster consumerism. Though that desire is frequently warped when various media lenses refract it, diffuse it, or reframe it to fit a political agenda, its overwhelming strength should nonetheless serve notice that people want a different world than the one in which we currently live, with a different way of understanding and responding to disasters. They want a world where risk is not leveraged for profit or political gain, but sensibly planned for with the needs of all socio-economic groups in mind. **They want a world where preemptive strategies are used to anticipate the real threats posed by global climate change and global inequality, rather than to invent fears of ethnic others and justify unnecessary wars**. They want a world where people can come together **not simply as a market, but as a public**, **to exert real agency over the policies made** in the name of their safety and security. And, when disaster does strike, they want a world where the goodwill and compassion shown by their neighbors, by strangers in their communities, and even by distant spectators and consumers, will be **matched by their own government**. **Though this vision of the world is utopian, it is not unreasonable**, and if contemporary American culture is ever to give us more than just an illusion of safety, or empathy, or authenticity, **then it is this vision that we must advocate on a daily basis, not only when disaster strikes.**

**2ac falsifiability**

**Psychoanalysis is a pseudoscience ---**

**1---Belief in Authority**

**Ferreira 21** (Clarice de Madeiros Chaves Ferreira - Vice-President of the Brazilian Association of Evidence-Based Psychology and holds a degree in psychology from FUMEC University and Scientific Initiation at the Clinical Neuroscience Investigation Laboratory of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, “Is psychoanalysis a pseudoscience? Reevalutating the doctrine using a multicriteria list”, Brazilian Psychiatric Association, September 2021, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355493559_Is_psychoanalysis_a_pseudoscience_Reevaluating_the_doctrine_using_a_multicriteria_list#:~:text=Karl%20Popper%20was%20one%20of,address%20the%20issue%20are%20available>., MG)

**Belief in Authority**

Psychoanalysis is a “testimonial science” [4]; its theoretical concepts rely on its major proponents' clinical case interpretations. However, the authority argument is **not sound** if the authors do not have **sufficient proof about what they say.** Freud did not make use of systematic and controlled scientific investigations and not even statistics to achieve his conclusions [9], making it imperative for the reader that consults the foundations of the theory to trust that he possessed both different and special capabilities to find out the truth about how human psychology works. However, there are **no reasons to believe** that a human being that resorts only on his personal experience and decides not to use scientific tools would have the means to formulate the most epistemically warranted psychological theory. The other major psychoanalytic authors have also followed Freud's steps. For one to believe in Lacan's discourse, for example, it is necessary to first **take it as true and attribute him an authority role**, since the reader has neither a way to verify its claims independently, nor the resources to explicitly understand its meanings [10]. Besides that, in the founder's case, reasons to take his narratives into consideration **might not even exist**. When the topic is psychoanalysis, its proponents' honesty is an important aspect to be observed, precisely because the theory is based on their authority [4]. If there is no honesty, there should not be any reasons, even for those unaware of the problems related to anecdotal evidence, to continue adopting their assumptions.

Dersken [11] demonstrates that Freud frequently used a variety of rhetorical strategies to avoid criticism and keep his theory's good appearance in front of the public, and he succeeded. The psychoanalyst affirmed several times that his theory did not consist of speculation, in an attempt to convince his reader that a solid empirical basis supported his conclusions, even while having none. To deal with the most severe counterarguments, he inverted the speech roles: Freud himself presented objections to his own doctrine in the most threatening way possible, and by doing so, it sounded like he was aware of the problems and would know how to reply to them. What other reason would he have to bring up all the criticism without knowing how to defend his theory from it? Even so, at the end of his discourse, the supposed reply was **only evasive**, the original topic was altered, **the burden of proof was inverted**, or absolutely no answer was given, maintaining the original critiques still untouched.

Crews [9] argues that during several moments Freud adjusted his narratives in order for them to fit in the result he previously aimed to achieve, no matter if what he was saying was really true. Many of his clinical cases developed in ways that were distinct from what was declared by him, went through a **biased interpretative process**, or **did not obtain promising results**. Anna O. was not someone with hysteria; in fact, she suffered from a chemical dependency of substances like morphine and chloral hydrate, and all her symptoms could be listed as possible effects of these [9, p. 354-360]. Dora, a young victim of sexual harassment, was reported as a protagonist of a hysteria case for not desiring to be involved with her abuser and feeling repulsed by his advances [9, p. 590-600]. In the Little Hans case, a five-year-old, Freud did not hesitate to give him a diagnosis even before knowing him personally: his fear of horses was in fact a fear of being castrated by his father, since Freud believed he sexually desired his mother [9, p. 645]. The Wolf Man was declared as cured by Freud; however, he kept being treated by several different analysts for decades, not obtaining any results [9, p. 651; 12].

Those are just some examples of famous clinical cases, but others suffer from the same problem [9]. The success of these kinds of adulterations and other rhetorical strategies contributed to the building and widespread recognition of Freud's authority role, as well as masking how fragile his proposal was.

**2---Unrepeatable Experiments**

**Ferreira 21** (Clarice de Madeiros Chaves Ferreira - Vice-President of the Brazilian Association of Evidence-Based Psychology and holds a degree in psychology from FUMEC University and Scientific Initiation at the Clinical Neuroscience Investigation Laboratory of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, “Is psychoanalysis a pseudoscience? Reevalutating the doctrine using a multicriteria list”, Brazilian Psychiatric Association, September 2021, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355493559_Is_psychoanalysis_a_pseudoscience_Reevaluating_the_doctrine_using_a_multicriteria_list#:~:text=Karl%20Popper%20was%20one%20of,address%20the%20issue%20are%20available>., MG)

**Unrepeatable experiments**

As discussed earlier, the theoretical concepts in psychoanalysis are sustained by Freud and the other major proponents’ clinical case reports, who also followed his tradition of producing anecdotal evidence. Until today, they maintain their authority over contemporary analysts:

“André Green, when asked about what was new in psychoanalysis, answered: Freud. To this playful, but nonetheless very accurate answer, we could add the list of the great thinkers and practitioners of psychoanalysis who were essential to the several traditions in which the psychoanalytic movement was divided since the '40s. Decades after their deaths, they continue to be what exists of new, as long as we know how to read them” [13, p. 10].

Although anecdotal evidence is still being used, in most cases, as the major means of psychoanalysis dissemination and production [14], important obstacles are placed when they are employed. A psychoanalytical clinical case is a type of process that **cannot be replicated** because it addresses a single subject individually. However, as Schmidt [15] argues, replication is one of the most **central processes within empirical sciences**, and sadly not even psychology gives proper attention to the matter. It possesses five major functions: **control sampling errors,** by verifying if the results obtained happened by chance alone; **control internal validity**, that is, if the procedures adopted were adequate to answer the research’s question; **control the possibility of scientific fraud**; allow a generalization of the findings to a larger/different population; and finally, verify if the first hypothesis of the experiment was correct. In the case of an unrepeatable experiment, the possibility of performing these analyses is thrown away.

Besides the impossibility of replication, there are other problems, now related to human psychology: People are commonly victims of **cognitive bias** that distorts their judgment and leads to irrational interpretations more frequently than they usually notice [16], and therapists are not immune. An example could be **confirmation bias**: someone’s initial belief significantly impacts how they remember situations and how they interpret them, giving more importance to what apparently confirms their world view rather than paying attention to what could contradict it. In the case of a psychoanalyst, this could bring them to understand exactly what they yearned to, that is, what would supposedly confirm the analytic hypothesis, regardless if that was or was not the case [14, p. 139-140]. Even if a case report is not a good evidence, it would sound like a source of theoretical confirmation for an adept, as it is expected that it would reflect their own preconceptions.

As Spence [17] shows, even if someone wished to analyze the veracity of the reported clinical phenomena, the person still has to face the fact that they are **frequently replaced by fictional narrative**. Their contents could be partially reported, omitted, distorted, and mixed with other case contents, even in a non-intentional way, precisely because they are based on the therapist's memory. Psychoanalytical clinical case reports are **not sufficiently controlled**, so when they aim to support a human psychological theory, they end up being just **fuel for a system of self-confirmations**. There is no way to generalize a human psychological theory based on anecdotal clinical evidence, neither to guarantee its reliability, because a nonsystematized process does not aim to control variables that can interfere with the conclusions. At the same time, there are reasons to expect that distortions are going to happen.

**3---Handpicked Examples**

**Ferreira 21** (Clarice de Madeiros Chaves Ferreira - Vice-President of the Brazilian Association of Evidence-Based Psychology and holds a degree in psychology from FUMEC University and Scientific Initiation at the Clinical Neuroscience Investigation Laboratory of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, “Is psychoanalysis a pseudoscience? Reevalutating the doctrine using a multicriteria list”, Brazilian Psychiatric Association, September 2021, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355493559_Is_psychoanalysis_a_pseudoscience_Reevaluating_the_doctrine_using_a_multicriteria_list#:~:text=Karl%20Popper%20was%20one%20of,address%20the%20issue%20are%20available>., MG)

**Handpicked examples**

As already discussed in previous sections, the widespread use of anecdotal evidence would be an excellent example to fulfill this third criterion, precisely because those cases are **isolated** and **exposed to bias**. However, along with them, another endeavor of contemporary psychoanalysis is neuropsychoanalysis. Neuropsychoanalysis is a movement that looks for an integration between neuroscience and psychoanalysis, and despite being rejected by part of the psychoanalytic community that wants no part in it, some others consider it to be a contemporary version of the theory.

Callegaro [18, p. 207-20] argues that, instead of what the neuropsychoanalytical movement declares, the scientific literature shows something opposite to union: The evidence from neuroscience either refutes or directly conflicts with psychoanalysis. It is not as if it was plausible to use psychoanalysis as a reference model; it is in the new unconscious model that neuroscientists rely on, and not on the psychodynamic one.

Paris [14, p. 94-99] argues that neuropsychoanalysis is not operating in order to evaluate Freudian and neuroscientific theories in an unbiased way, but rather **starts from the principle of validating Freud's model beforehand**, even though it showed not to have a consistent hypothesis with modern neuroscience. The author lists some reasons that show why **neuropsychoanalysis is far from science**: In this doctrine, it is previously assumed that Freud was right, and research would serve the only purpose of proving what was already obvious from the psychoanalytic point of view; the majority of neuropsychoanalysis papers do not present concrete data, but theoretical speculations; methods used to measure basic psychoanalytic concepts are **still pretty rudimentary**; and, finally, there are many difficulties and problems, even in neuroscience itself, to adequately locate mental functions in specific brain areas.

In the end, it is noticeable that neuropsychoanalysis consists in a **great cherry picking of data**, in which its proponents “attempt to systematically associate almost every neuroscientific concept or finding with a quote from Freud” [19, p. 170], giving the impression that when neurological phenomena such as anosognosia, memory problems, brain damage and others are associated with concepts from the Freudian model, that would mean that they were, from the beginning, an adequate theoretical explanation given by its founder, but that is not the case.

**4---Unwillingness to Test**

**Ferreira 21** (Clarice de Madeiros Chaves Ferreira - Vice-President of the Brazilian Association of Evidence-Based Psychology and holds a degree in psychology from FUMEC University and Scientific Initiation at the Clinical Neuroscience Investigation Laboratory of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, “Is psychoanalysis a pseudoscience? Reevalutating the doctrine using a multicriteria list”, Brazilian Psychiatric Association, September 2021, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355493559_Is_psychoanalysis_a_pseudoscience_Reevaluating_the_doctrine_using_a_multicriteria_list#:~:text=Karl%20Popper%20was%20one%20of,address%20the%20issue%20are%20available>., MG)

**Unwillingness to Test**

Most psychoanalysts assume as true that human subjectivity is above all possible scientific analysis [20-21]. Thus, since the foundation of psychoanalysis and until the present day with its contemporary version, psychoanalysts **carry on the tradition** of being resistant to testing their hypothesis, whether they are about clinical effectiveness or theoretical constructs. Melanie Klein, for example, can be “dismissed (…) from the point of view of empirical science (…) while many of Klein’s ideas were based on what she called ‘infant observation’, they actually consisted only of speculations about what infants might be thinking” [14, p. 55]. Also, “there has **never been empirical research** on any of the constructs that Lacan proposed” [14, p. 122], and “**neither neo-Freudian models**, nor ego psychology, **nor relational psychoanalysis**, nor self-psychology, **have ever conducted empirical investigations** of their theories, or of the process and outcome of the treatment approaches derived from these ideas” [14, p. 55-56].

Despite the different opinions in the psychoanalytic community about the scientific status of the doctrine, it is possible to observe that the majority of adepts have great resistance towards the adoption of systematized tools and processes for data collection, under the argument that their object of study, humans, are too singular and unique to be understood by a supposed “positivistic science”, in which only empirical experiments are allowed [22]. It is explicitly said by psychoanalysts, for example, that they believe “that today it is essential to demonstrate that psychoanalysis does not need new scientific foundations that would be provided in a 'systematic' and 'safe' way” [23, p. 15], that the psychoanalytic cure could not be apprehended in terms of efficacy criteria, as would be done in psychiatry [24], and that the establishment of criteria for assessing psychotherapeutic effectiveness would be considered a threat to subjectivity [20]. There is even a clear opposition to those who seek these objectives:

“What we can perceive in contemporary times, is that many professionals in the psi field, when they come across the symptom presented by the individual, seek to annihilate it, not taking into account the ethical dimension through which the symptom manifests itself. This means that the vast contemporary psychotherapeutic proposals that announce to the world a way of treatment increasingly supported by science, in addition to the current proposal in the field of mental health that plays insistently with the possibility of defining a common norm, are not committed to the experience revealed by psychoanalysis (...). We will see that psychoanalysis poses itself as an obstacle to this psychological and medical attitude” [25, p. 242].

As previously seen, using the broad definition of science, disciplines such as philosophy, history, linguistics, and other humanities can be considered sciences, even without using traditional experimentation, because the most adequate methods to look for truth in those particular circumstances are being employed. However, **psychology and psychiatry are not in the same situation**: There is **no reliable way** to acquire the most epistemically justified beliefs about human behavior without resorting to systematic empirical methodologies. Humans **do not have the ability to**, using only speculation, develop reliable enough beliefs about these topics. Therefore, while psychoanalysis rejects those methods, it cannot be the most reliable psychological doctrine of our time.

Instead, some of its adepts are aligning it to relativistic positions. This fuels the notion that science is only one more discourse, and it could not claim to have better interpretations about reality than any other:

“The fact remains that **science is a discourse**. As banal as that statement may seem, it implies a dethroning of Science and a reassessment of science as one discourse among many. Freud may be interpreted as translating ‘rationality’ into ‘rationalization’, and Lacan's discourse theory suggests that there are as many different claims to rationality as there are different discourses” [26, p. 138].

Science is accused of being the real dogma, and psychoanalysis then comes to break it [27]. Therefore, it does not have to bow to its methods, including systematic testing [22]. In fact, some aspects of the psychanalytic doctrine have the stated purpose of serving “as an epistemological obstacle to the attempt of scientifically addressing the psyche” (p. 237), and also to the evidence based treatments of mental health disorders [25]. **Psychoanalysis requires the unreasonable**: it demands special protection and would not admit being judged like any other scientific doctrine should be, while also aims to have a similar status that any other would have. However, if the same level of recognition and appreciation is demanded, then it **must be evaluated by similar requirements** for rigor and presentation of evidence.

Despite the majority of the community being averted to hypothesis testing, there are some exceptions to this rule. Attachment theory is probably the most promising contemporary revision of psychoanalytic theory, for being the only one that is more open to the testing of hypothesis and empirical research [14, p. 62], and for the same reason it is rejected by other psychoanalysts as something that is not legitimately part of the doctrine [14, p. 56-57]. Unfortunately, attachment theory does not consider genetic and temperamental aspects [14, p. 58], and its predictions between child attachment patterns and adulthood are very weak [28], while psychoanalysis places the major causes of adult psychopathologies precisely in the childhood.

About psychoanalysis as a treatment: even though there was great resistance from the community, some studies on its psychotherapeutic efficacy were conducted. Nowadays, long-term psychotherapies usually **do not have convincing evidence** for their effectiveness, and in this category long-term psychodynamic psychotherapy is included [14]. One example can be observed with the Leichsenring and Rabung meta-analysis [29]. Despite being one of the most cited works done to evaluate this kind of psychotherapy, it was severely criticized for failing in all the quality criteria required of meta-analyses [30]. One of the common strategies that psychoanalysts adopt to deal with the lack of good evidence is turning to their personal experiences, and this can be observed in the following report published by the International Psychoanalytical Association:

“It is easy to be critical of psychoanalytic studies. There are no definitive studies which show psychoanalysis to be unequivocally effective relative to an active placebo or an alternative method of treatment. There are **no methods available** that might definitively indicate the existence of a psychoanalytic process. Most studies have major limitations which might lead critics of the discipline to discount their results. Others have limitations that are so grave that even a sympathetic reviewer might be inclined to discount the findings. (...) As psychoanalysts we all know that psychoanalysis works. Our own analytic experience is probably sufficient in most instances to persuade us of its effectiveness” [31, p. 283].

When compared to long-term psychodynamic psychotherapy, the shortterm psychodynamic one has a higher number of studies reported in the literature, with mostly favorable results [14]. However, psychotherapy in general faces problems with higher complexity than this article can cover. The majority of results on the topic, no matter what type of psychotherapy is investigated, tend to show positive effects, with few exceptions. Although, there is evidence that, in many cases, those results are biased or have questionable methodology.

Dragioti [32] conducted an umbrella review of meta-analyses about various types of psychotherapy (including psychodynamic). They realized that only **16** of **247 meta-analyses** (7%) were capable of providing good evidence without bias, and **none were from psychodynamic or psychoanalytic approaches**. Besides the discussion about psychoanalysis's scientific status, this is undoubtedly a topic that requires more attention from clinical professionals, psychologists and psychiatrists.

**5---Disregard of Refuting Information**

**Ferreira 21** (Clarice de Madeiros Chaves Ferreira - Vice-President of the Brazilian Association of Evidence-Based Psychology and holds a degree in psychology from FUMEC University and Scientific Initiation at the Clinical Neuroscience Investigation Laboratory of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, “Is psychoanalysis a pseudoscience? Reevalutating the doctrine using a multicriteria list”, Brazilian Psychiatric Association, September 2021, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355493559_Is_psychoanalysis_a_pseudoscience_Reevaluating_the_doctrine_using_a_multicriteria_list#:~:text=Karl%20Popper%20was%20one%20of,address%20the%20issue%20are%20available>., MG)

**Disregard of refuting information**

There is evidence that many of the key concepts of psychoanalysis are **wrong**, but notwithstanding, they keep being adopted in Brazilian universities and as a theoretical basis for clinical practice. The empirical literature **did not support the psychoanalytical theory about dreams** [33], **memory or repression** [34]. The brain does not work making permanent recordings about situations that are then repressed [14, p. 30]. Despite recognizing that unconscious processes exist and significantly impact human beings, the psychodynamic unconscious that is governed by repressed desires and drives **does not receive empirical support** [14, p. 29- 30]. As an alternative, the new unconscious theory is more coherent with contemporary discoveries in the field of neuroscience [14, p. 29-30; 18].

**Psychoanalysis ignores other possible variables**, like genetics, social class, and more, treating a single and specific traumatic event that happened during the subject’s childhood as the causation of present disorders. However, there is **no good evidence** of causal links between specific, traumatic childhood experiences and disorders in adult life [35]. Other stressing events that happen during an individual's life are much more impactful than the infancy ones, and social disadvantages could better explain the worse mental health outcomes of these groups [35]. There is **no good evidence that remembering past events would be a good route** to cure psychopathological symptoms, despite it being the usual route of analysis [14, p. 107]. Even with all those disparities between scientific data and the analytic view, those concepts are kept alive until the present day.

**6---Built-in Subterfuge**

**Ferreira 21** (Clarice de Madeiros Chaves Ferreira - Vice-President of the Brazilian Association of Evidence-Based Psychology and holds a degree in psychology from FUMEC University and Scientific Initiation at the Clinical Neuroscience Investigation Laboratory of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, “Is psychoanalysis a pseudoscience? Reevalutating the doctrine using a multicriteria list”, Brazilian Psychiatric Association, September 2021, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355493559_Is_psychoanalysis_a_pseudoscience_Reevaluating_the_doctrine_using_a_multicriteria_list#:~:text=Karl%20Popper%20was%20one%20of,address%20the%20issue%20are%20available>., MG)

**Built-in subterfuge**

This item covers similar aspects to Popper’s criticism. However, it is not the same as the falsifiability criterion, since what matters for falsifiability is the possibility of a given theory to be proven false. For Popper, there is no such thing as “confirmation” by induction. This item proposed by Hansson better encompasses theory designs that are always confirming, or that can only confirm the original hypothesis, in which alternative outcomes are not possible. About the topic, Rillaer [36] provides a group of examples of why psychoanalysis **cannot be disconfirmed**, only continuously confirmed. With it, **everything could be explained in the light of unconscious processes**, and finding contrary evidence would be **inconceivable**:

“Have you forgotten your umbrella in a friend's house? You want to come back to his house. (…) Does he react badly to your interpretation? ‘He is defending himself’, he is resisting to the ‘id’ that talks inside him, ‘without the ego noticing’. Does he criticize Freud or Lacan? He is revolting against the Father. (…) Does your son fear horses? He fears being castrated by his father because he desires his mother. Does your analysis make you suffer more each day? You are finally entering the deepest layers of your unconscious. Do the analyst's prices seem excessive? You are having a ‘negative transference’ or a ‘regression to the analsadistic stage’. After five years of analysis, do you still feel painful symptoms? You have not dug deep enough, you desire to suffer because your superego is excessively strong” [36, p. 154].

A psychoanalyst could counterargue that this would be a case of wild psychoanalysis, and within the clinical context they would not impose interpretations, but instead would build them in a unique relationship between therapist and client, reserved for the clinical environment [37]. However, this does not refute the objection that psychoanalysis is a system that operates by those rules. It is not for the depth of the dialogue or the time of interaction that it would happen differently.

Boudry and Buekens [38] argue that **psychoanalysis operates similarly to a conspiracy theory**, in which criticism can always be labeled as derived from resistance, and in the case of psychoanalysis, it is an unconscious resistance. Not even a critic or patient’s rejection of the analytic explanations could be seen as a possible counterexample: It would only be a major confirmation that unconscious and unobservable processes are happening. Also, if they agree with the offered interpretations, the explanation stays the same: It was a process originated from the unconscious. In the end, when dealing with the psychodynamic unconscious, there is no possibility to accept contrary evidence. In relation to psychoanalysis, for all circumstances “interpretation can be a weapon” [39, p. 12].

Therefore, the excessive number of explanations that would fit all the possible cases is **not really explicative**; it only seems to be. The chosen interpretations to deal with the variety of human psychological phenomena are **not based on good and carefully collected scientific evidence**. Instead, those are concepts that **lack empirical support**, used to explain every behavior and also its opposite. "Psychoanalysis is indeed irrefutable, because it can say everything and its opposite — summoning up the 'servile' unconscious testimonial is enough, as it is always ready to bow to the circumstances’ demands" [40, p. 140].

**7---Explanations are Abandoned without Replacement**

**Ferreira 21** (Clarice de Madeiros Chaves Ferreira - Vice-President of the Brazilian Association of Evidence-Based Psychology and holds a degree in psychology from FUMEC University and Scientific Initiation at the Clinical Neuroscience Investigation Laboratory of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, “Is psychoanalysis a pseudoscience? Reevalutating the doctrine using a multicriteria list”, Brazilian Psychiatric Association, September 2021, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355493559_Is_psychoanalysis_a_pseudoscience_Reevaluating_the_doctrine_using_a_multicriteria_list#:~:text=Karl%20Popper%20was%20one%20of,address%20the%20issue%20are%20available>., MG)

**Explanations are abandoned without replacement**

The definitions given to the concepts of "cure", "health" and "disease" in psychoanalysis fit this criterion. Neves [23] says that the discussion about the cure in contemporary psychoanalysis cannot occur if it does not start with a **critique of the traditional meaning of the term**, and the same goes for the other two concepts. The author argues that psychoanalysis understands that, according to medical point of view, which adopts the traditional use of these, a state of health should refer to a harmonious state, completely free of diseases and pathologies. In addition, unlike medical objectives, Priszkulnik [41] states that "psychoanalysis is opposed to the objective of mental health to reintegrate the individual into the social community". Still according to Neves [23], psychoanalysts understand that in medicine “cure” would mean conforming to an idealized mode of operation based on ideas of normality that are socially accepted and expected, starting from the elimination of diseases and the reestablishment of the previously present health state. Or, more succinctly, it would be "the realization of an experience that leads the individual to health through the elimination of the disease" [23, p. 33].

Considering the traditional definition, psychoanalysis would **accuse the existence of hidden intentions behind the goal of curing people in distress**: this would, in reality, be an attempt to exert social control [23, p. 16]. Therefore, it would make more sense to be **helpless instead of cured**, since: “We must not forget that being helpless, from both psychoanalytic and political points of view, means to a large extent having crossed the ghost of infinite protection by the instituted power. To be helpless (...) is to sustain the political action as an action that forces the impossible not to cease not writing itself in the situation" [23, p. 28].

For some, like Nasio, it would **not even make sense to conceive healing as a concept**:

“We cannot say that the cure, understood as a reduction or disappearance of suffering linked to symptoms, is a psychoanalytic concept. We also cannot say it is an objective towards which the treatment should aim, or a criterion that allows us to evaluate its progress (...) we cannot make cure a concept, or an objective, or a criterion, and that is equivalent to not giving in to the influence of the medical model, which tends to hypostasize this cure, to give it a status, to elevate it to the dignity of a concept (...) there is **no psychoanalytic concept of cure**, and that cannot be a goal that the analyst should pursue in their practice, differently from how it happens in medicine” [42, p. 160].

Even with these considerations, some proposals for new definitions were supposedly made, in order to replace the traditional ones; however, they are usually empty and worse than the previous ones. "Health in psychoanalysis can only be understood as a normativity that becomes individualized, so it is impossible to think of it as the expression of an absolute value, that is, of a general norm" [23, p. 28]. It could also be added the observation that "it is true that psychoanalysis does not take health as a constitutive element of its ethics and cure policy" [43, p. 23]. Regarding the definition of disease, we can understand it in psychoanalysis as being "a productive experience of indeterminacy" [23, p. 18], while also considering that "the disease, whether it be psychic or organic, does not mean anything other than the reduction of the tolerance margin for changes in the environment" [23, p. 28]. In fact, they affirm that there is something special within the field of disease: "being sick is, initially, assuming an identity with great performative force" [44, p. 293], and the curative ideal "aims to weaken the power that inhabits the experiences of the pathological, the abnormal, the inhuman and of helplessness" [23, p. 21].

As for the cure, several options are offered in psychoanalysis. Some of them are as follows: "getting cured is, therefore, to build and experience a new order, that is, the cure involves experiencing unprecedented ways of adjusting to the environment" [23, p. 18]. Or also, “to carry out an experiment that is nowhere and cannot be registered in the situation” [23, p. 8]. For psychoanalysts, "the cure in psychoanalytic experience can be defined, fundamentally, by the idea of transformation, that is, the realization of a subjective experience that is not the reestablishment of the norm nor the expected result of performing a treatment method" [23, p. 84]. Dunker and Peron [24, p. 89] argue that the concept of cure can have different interpretations based on Freud's work, in addition to not being related to traditional medicine. One of them could be that the "cure coincides with the knowledge of the causes of the symptoms" [24, p. 86]. In Neves's [23] view, Freud and Lacan's works have as their legacy the definition of cure as an experience that touches the impossible [23, p. 25]. According to Nasio “the cure is an imaginary value, an opinion, a prejudice, a preconception, just as nature, happiness or justice are” [42, p. 160]. Not only that, but according to the definitions given in psychoanalysis, "the cure as the realization of a singular experience will not be identical to anything" [43, p. 24]. In any case, it is important to be aware of the fact that even if it is understood in these ways adapted by the doctrine and even by Freud himself as a “reorganization of the Ego”, it remains as an ideal that is “harmful to the analysis and to the psychoanalyst” [42, p. 167]: a therapist who seeks the cure of his patient would possibly be under the influence of feelings of pride and narcissism [42, p. 168]. Psychoanalysis, even though it is treated as a psychotherapy, does not have curing as a goal as seen in Lacan’s words, quoted by Nasio:

"(...) the mechanism (of analysis) is not oriented towards the cure as a purpose. I am not saying anything that Freud has not already powerfully formulated: every inflection towards the cure as a purpose — making the analysis a pure and simple means to a precise end — gives something that **would be linked to the shortest path which could only falsify the analysis**" [42, p. 159].

For psychoanalysis, the definition of cure as an experience that leads to health must be replaced by an experience that is nowhere, **does not concern any possible situation**, has nothing to do with the objectives proposed by a treatment, and is impossible. It would not be identical to anything, and if it is not identical to anything, it could not even be identical to itself, and that would constitute a logical contradiction. In psychoanalysis, **the cure is imaginary, and even harmful**. In the case of health, this would be an individualized normativity that is not included in the ethical demands of the doctrine. Meanwhile, attempts to treat illness are accused of being attempts at social control, and influenced by narcissism and pride. Diseases and pathologies could not, in psychoanalysis, be considered as a deviation from the organic standard, but instead they are classified as sources of some kind of renegade power, instead of suffering. These concepts, in their many variations, are supposedly presented as possible replacements for the traditional concepts of "cure", "health" and "disease". However, even though the traditional definitions can be criticized and have gaps, the definitions adopted in psychoanalysis make these concepts much more vague and distant from reality than their original versions, with some of them to a point where they **are no longer comprehensible**. This makes the new proposal much less explanatory than the traditional one.

**8---Obscurantism**

**Ferreira 21** (Clarice de Madeiros Chaves Ferreira - Vice-President of the Brazilian Association of Evidence-Based Psychology and holds a degree in psychology from FUMEC University and Scientific Initiation at the Clinical Neuroscience Investigation Laboratory of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, “Is psychoanalysis a pseudoscience? Reevalutating the doctrine using a multicriteria list”, Brazilian Psychiatric Association, September 2021, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355493559_Is_psychoanalysis_a_pseudoscience_Reevaluating_the_doctrine_using_a_multicriteria_list#:~:text=Karl%20Popper%20was%20one%20of,address%20the%20issue%20are%20available>., MG)

**Obscurantism**

A lot could be said about the obscurantism problem, its relations with pseudoscience, and its pertinence as a part of a demarcation criteria. However, there is not a claim of being exhaustive in this section, despite being offered the following explanations for the introduction of this new item:

Obscurantism is a communication style, commonly adopted by pseudoscientists as a rhetorical strategy, that happens when the presentation of the assertions or concepts in a theory is done in a significantly imprecise way, **preventing an adequate comprehension of its proposal.** This protects it from objections: Since its definitions are excessively vague, it is **always possible to accuse the critic of not comprehending** it, as well as alternating the definitions in order to adopt or abandon its numerous meanings, using them respectively in the most opportune moments.

An obscurantist text, despite appearing to bring a robust content about a topic, in fact does not [10]. This seems relevant especially when comparing it to the definition of pseudoscience: Similarly, in the obscurantism case, an impression of scientificity is created when in fact there is a considerable distance from science (in the broad sense). For that reason, the introduction of this item seems justified.

In some obscurantism cases, a series of claims are made, but in reality, they are **proclaimed as phrases that lack truth value**, that is, phrases that cannot be true or false. In others, even if some meaning could be salvaged, an unclearness is imposed under their real definition by the own author, preventing readers from tracing precise or consensual interpretations about what they intended to say. This creates more difficulties for placing objections: It is harder to criticize a position that one cannot adequately comprehend compared to another that exposes its arguments explicitly and clearly. Also, it is important to notice that, under many circumstances, concept changes are welcome in science, but in order to do so, reasonable justifications must be presented. This is not taken into account by the obscurantist.

In the case of psychoanalysis, some things have changed from Freud's times to the present day, but despite not being many, they also were **not adopted based on the emergence of good evidence**. The great psychoanalytical theories of the present are still used, adopted and taught without going through empirical testing [14], showing that the changes were **arbitrary** and probably aimed just to **adapt to each age’s cultural climate**. An example of this could be the change in the pathological status regarding the sexual orientation of gays and lesbians, as well as penis envy [4]. A theory supposedly evolving and changing its concepts over time only has merits if those changes are made based on good evidence, and not only by cultural influence; after all, even religious movements change their explanations about the world as the centuries go by, and this is no reason to classify them as scientific.

Cioffi [4] points out that the etiological role of sexuality suffered with an opportunistic change of meanings. Ideas about sexuality, eroticism, and libido had their definitions chosen arbitrarily by Freud according to the context: When questioned by the skeptic, they became something that would represent fraternal love, affection, or in the case of sexual drives they would be desires that could be satisfied by using a variety of senses, including non-genital ones. Meanwhile, in safer and more receptive environments, those conveniently change back to mean "sexual" in the traditional sense.

“As psychoanalytic theory is **entirely empty,** it is also, at the same time, supremely adaptable. When some concept of the theory shows to be **hard to sustain**, or even **downright embarrassing** (…) it is enough to silently abandon it and take a new **theoretical rabbit out of the immense top hat of the unconscious**. This is what psychoanalysts like to describe as the ‘progress’ of psychoanalysis (…). What is given as progress in psychoanalysis is nothing but the ultimate interpretation, that is, the most acceptable in a specific institutional, historical or cultural context” [40, p. 140-141].

Buekens and Boudry [10] show that Lacanian psychoanalysis is another example of obscurantism. Lacan assumes that the unconscious is structured as a language, and defends that his writings are equivalent to the expression of his own unconscious. The adherence to an obscurantist style is, therefore, justified from his point of view. In this way, any systematic effort to interpret him would be **destined to fail,** and this immunizes the doctrine against any possible criticism. Even if Lacan gave the impression of being an authority about human psychology that would transmit his ideas through occult means, it would be up to the reader to interpret him (in the countless ways of doing so), while still being susceptible to possible accusations of not really understanding him.

Buekens and Boudry [10] argue that since it is not possible to trace definitive conclusions about what Lacan really meant to say, the only thing left for the reader is to subjectively interpret him according to their personal experience, what creates a significant divergence of interpretations by the adepts themselves. The psychoanalyst not only used an obscurantist language in his works, but also assumed and defended its use explicitly:

“I would say that it is with a deliberate, if not entirely deliberate, intention that I pursue this discourse in such a way as to **offer you the opportunity to not quite understand**. This margin enables you yourselves to say that you think you follow me, that is, that you remain in a **problematic position**, which always leaves the door open to a **progressive rectification**” [45, p. 164].

**1ar falsifiability matters**

**Falsifiability matters – treating psychoanalysis like it’s not a pseudoscience is a dogmatic move that leads to scientific stagnation and prevents discipline development**

**Ferreira 21** (Clarice de Madeiros Chaves Ferreira - Vice-President of the Brazilian Association of Evidence-Based Psychology and holds a degree in psychology from FUMEC University and Scientific Initiation at the Clinical Neuroscience Investigation Laboratory of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, “Is psychoanalysis a pseudoscience? Reevalutating the doctrine using a multicriteria list”, Brazilian Psychiatric Association, September 2021, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355493559_Is_psychoanalysis_a_pseudoscience_Reevaluating_the_doctrine_using_a_multicriteria_list#:~:text=Karl%20Popper%20was%20one%20of,address%20the%20issue%20are%20available>., MG)

This article pointed out that psychoanalysis — not only on its classic, but also with its contemporary version — ends up checking all of the seven items in Hansson’s multicriteria list. It also fits the eighth item that was introduced in this work. So, in this way, psychoanalysis checks eight out of eight demarcation of **pseudoscience’s items**. The evidence presented in this article suggests that with both Popper and Hansson’s demarcation proposals, and taking into account its traditional and contemporary versions, psychoanalysis is **indeed a pseudoscience**. Even if the impression that it represents the most reliable human psychological theory is created by its proponents, that is not the case, because it considerably **deviates from scientific standards of quality**.

Although research in psychoanalysis is widespread in Brazil, its objections are not being discussed in the literature, and this may be an indicator of alienation [46]. The maintenance of a dogmatic approach on a doctrine inserted in the academic environment is **dangerous**, since it can lead to **scientific stagnation** and prevent the full **development of its disciplines**, which in the case of psychoanalysis are psychology and psychiatry. It is important to further discuss criticisms of psychoanalysis, given that it is still treated as one of the main theoretical and clinical models for the comprehension of human behavior inside the academy. Even from an ethical perspective, it is important to carry out practices and build theories that are compatible with the best scientific evidence. There is **no good moral justification** for believing in whatever the theory, if it does not have enough evidence in its favor [47].

**2ac framework**

**Debating about policy is good, it’s the only way to reflect upon personal boundaries and engage with contingency – their model excludes that and causes dissatisfaction through thematizing politics**

**Turnbull 05** (Nick Turnbull PhD – Lecturer in Politics at the University of Manchester, “Policy in question: from problem solving to problematology”, University of New South Wales, February 2005, https://www.academia.edu/download/66798539/SOURCE02.pdf, MG)

The key to moving beyond both positivism and the deconstruction of meaning is the foundation of questioning and the concept of the problematological answer. Politics is surely the **sphere of debate** over the meaning of public problems and how to solve them. If we disagree on a question, we **argue** about it, add to it with other questions, ~~weaken~~ it, and debate the **pro and con of the possible answers**. A plurality of meanings means a plurality of answers, which indicates contingency, but it is **not an aporia** (an impassable obstruction to knowledge) (see Derrida 1993). It simply entails that meaning is in question.74 This establishes rhetoric as a legitimate dimension of discourse because problematological answers have an equal status, as answers, to apocritical answers. Some questions **cannot be solved** beyond dispute but they can be expressed and **then debated**. In fact, as I pointed out in Chapter Four, there is no argumentation in poststructuralism, because if signification were a free play of meaning it would be impossible to indicate one answer to a question over another (Meyer 1995: 238). Similarly, while Foucault depicts a figurative picture of discourse (see Foucault 1970) he has no argumentation, which perhaps accounts for the feeling that agency is absent in his work. But while we are ‘prisoners’ of language, defined by it in important ways, we can **reflect upon our boundaries as well**, through questioning, even if this is difficult. Knowledge has its own inertia because we operate on the basis of presumed answers and so reality appears continuous (Meyer 2000; see also Chapter Seven). Nonetheless, it is also open to question and therefore we are not always powerless. Even those working within an established discourse have to continually reinforce its legitimating power, and therefore can escape responsibility only by rhetorical means. Hence powerful elites have a strategic interest in arguing for particular ways of framing problems. Agency and structure are in reason, and we can understand both in terms of questioning. Rationality is still possible, so our task should be to reverse the fragmentary reductionism of science and the internal fragmentation of radical poststructuralism but without reimposing the problem solving model upon reality as the sole, unjustified criterion of resolution. By drawing on Meyer’s concept of problematological answers, we can establish what is rational and what is irrational about politics without judging it in scientific terms. This is essential if we are to understand policymaking, which is multidisciplinary.

In political theory, where poststructuralism is enjoying contemporary popularity, for example with Laclau and Mouffe (1985) and Zizek (1999), poststructuralists argue that politics emerges from the failure of ontology to establish the conceptual closure of reason. Laclau and Mouffe, for example, identify the breakdown of foundationalism with an appreciation of the contingency underlying social relations as the source of politics, in contrast to scientific utopianism which searches for an essence (1985: 142-3). However, if ontology is a failed approach to philosophy then **why** **develop an alternative philosophy** based on this failure? Meyer makes this criticism of Derrida by pointing out that the concept of ‘trace’ of the subject actually reinstates Cartesianism in a new guise, albeit one of radical negativity: ‘Is it not quite simply an insurmountable contradiction to want to declare the death of Cartesianism, while in the same breath overcoming that death by stating that the subject is a trace of itself?’ (1995: 136). He points out a similar contradiction in Lacan’s assertion that **the ‘lack’ of reality is reality**, asking if this does not, in fact, reveal a foundational problematicity that defines humanity (1995: 136-7). Robinson’s (2004) review of several works drawing on Lacanian theory, including books by Mouffe and Zizek, sums up the problems of this approach to politics very well. He points out that Lacanian theorists work from **ontology rather than politics** (2004: 261). Instead of articulating contingency, ‘lack’ is instead reified into an essence; a nihilistic, fundamental negativity (2004: 259). This actually tends to **exclude politics from theory** by essentialising negativity in exactly the same way as the totalising theories they reject (2004: 268).

We will not be able to theorise ‘the political’ adequately without expressing the problematicity that defines it. Despite affirming contingency as essential to reason, poststructuralist theories have little to say about rhetoric. Instead, they speak of politics in terms of the impossibility of reason (Zizek 1999) or as defined by antagonism (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). Why should we speak of politics in such radical terms? When we are faced with contingency we resort to persuasion in order to reach a solution. However, poststructuralists barely speak ofrhetoric in its traditional sense as ‘persuasion’ because the theory derives from the idea that literal discourse is only possible by repressing other meanings. Yet we know that policy, for example, does effectively make pronouncements that **function at a literal level**, **no matter what symbolic meaning might be attributed to it;** a bus timetable, for example. Politics deals with contingency, yet it does reach answers despite this. Hence poststructuralism seems only to apply to cases of radical social disjuncture or, on the other hand, to define everything that makes sense as authoritarian. Apart from the fundamental **dissatisfaction we feel about a theory that thematises politics** in only a negative light, such a theory does not help us conclude anything about policy, which deals with answers as much as questions.

**Problem solving is good, it’s the only way to express identity and establish a foundation for knowledge – their theory is reductionist, paradoxically replicates the shortcomings of ontology, and crowds out politics**

**Turnbull 05** (Nick Turnbull PhD – Lecturer in Politics at the University of Manchester, “Policy in question: from problem solving to problematology”, University of New South Wales, February 2005, https://www.academia.edu/download/66798539/SOURCE02.pdf, MG)

If poststructuralism has a critical value it is because it **questions** established theory and therefore has at least questioning as a fundamental property (even if it does not affirm this, because it affirms nothing), which indicates that it is possible to answer. Policymaking involves **posing questi**ons and **settling upon answers**. Hence, we cannot understand it without a philosophical framework that accounts for both questioning and answering. Dewey’s practical orientation is something to hold on to because policymaking does seek **practical solutions**. Political reasoning is **not necessarily irrational**, even if it can be when people employ irrational discourse to their own political advantage.

Radical postmodernism or poststructuralism is **not sufficient for understanding policymaking** not just because it is abstract, nonpractical philosophy, but because it actually rejects philosophy. In this sense, it has much in common with positivism even though they are quite different. This is Meyer’s view of these two streams of twentieth century thought, and in their rejection of questioning he identifies a common thread (1994: 44). Science restricts rationality by rejecting philosophy in favour of solving problems empirically; nihilism (poststructuralism) rejects philosophy by saying that we have only questions, while failing to thematise this as positive, therefore rejecting rationality along with it. At the same time, it paradoxically **replicates the shortcomings of ontology** in rejecting it. Problematology is opposed to both of these. Meyer thematises the nature of philosophy as questioning and therefore contemporary problematicity is the condition for the restoration of philosophy, not its renewed rejection.

I would point out that references to questioning are everywhere in discussions of postmodernity and postmodernism. For example, Smart describes postmodernity as the period in which the values of Western civilisation are ‘justifiably in question’, as that which ‘called into question or subjected to doubt’ modern ideas of progress (1993: 26, 28). He cites Giddens’ description of a generalised problematicity across society, and not just of philosophy, when he noted that ‘we increasingly find ourselves “left with questions where once there appeared to be answers”’ (1993: 35). It is in the very nature of modernity to generate the radically reflexive questioning that now encompasses modernity itself, says Zygmunt Bauman, who describes the postmodern social condition as ‘an incessant flow of reflexivity’ that produces ‘institutionalized pluralism, variety, contingency and ambivalence’ (1992: 149). Not dissimilarly, Lyotard stated that postmodernity is in fact a consequence of the modernist drive to question its own presuppositions (1984: 79). And Beck argues that the pervasive ‘doubt’ that has arisen around the project of modernity could provide the basis for a new ethics, modern identity and social contract (1997: 162). One could find many references to questioning elsewhere. So, although Western thought has always put things into question, what is new is the generalised reflexive questioning of postmodernity and the lack of new answers.

In postmodernity, questioning is not just a social condition but even extends to questioning the foundations of thought itself. Despite the differences between theorists described as postmodernists, they share in common the view that metaphysics is at an end. Along with **Lyotard**, Baudrillard, Derrida, Foucault, **Lacan**, Fish, and Rorty have all attacked foundational philosophy. The general view is that the foundation of knowledge has been called into question and no new metaphysics will ever be constructed. **One would think philosophers had given up.** In the postmodern critique we see the fragmentation of thought from within, of logical difference itself, which becomes marked by a ‘trace’ or a ‘lack’. This confusion is reflected in the uncertainty about the nature of postmodernism itself, which Smart says seems to bemore a series of questions than a definitive concept (1993: 12). Thus Lyotard’s ‘answer’ to the question of the postmodern is ‘that which, in the modern, puts forward the unpresentable in presentation itself’ (1984: 81). Postmodernism, then, is the non-closure of reason, the irrational without which the rational could not exist.

How might we understand postmodernity in a more rational way? If the postmodern condition is a situation of generalised questioning, shouldn’t this draw our attention to questioning itself? Indeed, what is Lyotard’s ‘incredulity toward metanarratives’ (1984: xxiv) if not an affirmation of questioning as a primary stance? Despite this, postmodern thinkers have not considered questioning for itself. In fact, questioning has received very little attention at all in philosophy, which has always questioned in practice even though it has never been its central theme (Meyer 1995: 6). Philosophers in the twentieth century did pay more attention to questioning, for example, to understand meaning (Collingwood 1939, 1962; Gadamer 1979), logic (Hintikka 1999) and politics (Castoriadis 1991). But while these thinkers valued questioning, they did so in only a limited way. This is because philosophy focused on answering, via ontology, and displaced questioning to a cognitive, rhetorical role.

Despite the title of Lyotard’s paper, ‘Answering the question: what is the postmodern?’, he could not answer satisfactorily because he **did not recognise the value of questioning in his own critique**. Because he could not adequately thematise questioning or answering, postmodern theory became that which paradoxically expresses progress as the impossibility and undesirability of progress. Postmodernity is different from modernity, but it also cannot be different, because difference itself has fragmented. Postmodernism neither is nor isn’t because identity is non-identical with itself; knowledge fragments from within and the cohesion of reason collapses. Under these terms conceptual confusion and a lack of meaning indicate success. But why should we accept this contradiction and mirror the fragmentation of thought (Meyer 1995: 3), now conceived of as positive, all the while denying its positivity because such an affirmation is impossible? Meyer makes the contradiction clear; ‘…how can we put as our guiding principle the negation of all guiding principles?’ (Meyer 1995: 3)

Is problematicity really unpresentable? The confusion over the nature of postmodernity is a natural result of the failure to thematise questioning as constitutive of reason. If we consider postmodernity in terms of questioning, postmodernity is the generalised questioning of modernity and problematology is the only sufficient response to historical problematisation. Postmodernity emerges from modernity as a problematological response to modernity’s questioning of itself, modifying the past without completely dissolving it in the answer.

With a rational account of postmodernity as questioning, poststructuralism and postmodernism are **firmly behind us**, this time philosophically so, a stop on the path to questioning that has been superseded by it (Meyer 2001a). Problematology explicates questioning and establishes a **foundation for knowledge** that also permits us to describe contemporary problematicity. Problematology is a new metaphysics to replace ontology. Meyer has created a new logic and terminology that expresses the problematicity of postmodernity, a necessary quality for a successful systematic study of contemporary society (see Bauman 1992: 161). If identity has fragmented, then it has become a question that cannot be conclusively resolved because it expresses several alternative possible answers at the same time, hence it is rhetorical. The decentering of the subject makes of us ‘an irreducible problem, one for which the only answer, far from suppressing the question, reproduces it endlessly’ (Meyer 1995: 303; see also Castoriadis on identity as a ‘puzzle’ 1991: 170-1). In postmodernity, our answer to the question of identity is always problematological, and therefore always in question as much as it provides an answer. With increased questioning comes politics and so political processes operate from, and contribute to, the production of individual and collective identities. Policymaking is also a part of this questioning and produces social identity and difference as much as solving practical problems.

**2ac mcgowan/perm**

**McGowan votes for the perm---can integrate K’s insights and the 1AC**

Daniel **Tutt 13**, Interviewing Todd McGowan, October 27, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have: Interview with Philosopher Todd McGowan”, http://danieltutt.com/2013/10/27/enjoying-what-we-dont-have-interview-with-philosopher-todd-mcgowan/

DT. It seems to me that a frequent critique of psychoanalysis and politics is that in its inability, and perhaps unwillingness to propose concrete policy reforms or political projects, **it falls back on a notion that everyone should just undergo analysis**. Do you think that a political project that is informed by psychoanalytic teachings implies that we should all undergo analysis? You write in your book for instance that fantasy is a crucial point for facilitating a sort of un-bonding process from the larger capitalist mode of subjectivity. What do you see as the role of analysis and political emancipatory work?¶ **TM. I will alienate many of my analyst friends with this response**, but I have no political investment at all in psychoanalytic practice. I’ve undergone some analysis myself. However, **I don’t believe that everyone undergoing psychoanalysis would change much at all politically**. What is important about psychoanalysis to me is its theoretical intervention, its discovery of the death drive and the role that fantasy plays in our psyche. This is the great advance. **And political struggle can integrate these theoretical insights without any help from actual psychoanalysis**. What allows one to disinvest in the capitalist mode of subjectivity is not, in my view, the psychoanalytic session. Instead it is the confrontation with a mode of enjoyment that ceases to provide the satisfaction that it promises. This prompts one to think about alternatives. Obviously, not everyone can become a theorist, but in a sense, **everyone already is a theorist**. We theorize our enjoyment when we think through our day and plan out where we’re going to do. Even watching a television show requires an elaborate theoretical exercise. Making this theorizing evident and thus arousing an interest in theory is to me much more important than having a lot of people undergo psychoanalysis. In response to your question about the universalization of psychoanalytic practice, I have more faith in a universalization of psychoanalytic theory.

**2ac at: nuclear language bad**

**We need to use the language of nuclear experts to challenge them --- solves co-option**

**Hogan 94** [J. Michael Hogan, Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences at Pennsylvania State University, The Nuclear Freeze Campaign: Rhetoric and Foreign Policy in the Telepolitical Age, p. 6-7]

Most former freeze activists retain at least some faith in the democratic process. According to Solo, the freeze campaign at least *began* a long process of “educating” the public, and for a time it successfully **transformed “the issues and the language used by politicians” to facilitate discussion of nuclear issues**, breaking from “the dominant discourse of arms control and the cold war.” But just as this “war of ideas” was beginning to bear fruit, according to Solo, “the movement narrowed its agenda, which in turn constrained its educational program and confined its politics.” Concerned with answering its right-wing critics and remaining “respectable” among “political and arms control elites,” freeze advocates began **defending the initiative on “technical grounds,”** thereby straying from their “original goal of breaking out of arms control ‘negotiations as usual’ and challenging the new militarism.” For Solo, the lesson is clear: that in order “to develop a mass base” with “potential to develop political power **without being co-opted**,” peace activists must “**promote political literacy with a dynamic education strategy** that recognizes the peculiarities of our culture and language and does not overlook the continuing impact of television on our political life as a nation.”

**2ac at: nukespeak**

**Only effective discursive stewardship and technological power prevents the rogue usage of nuclear weapons – this turns and outweighs the K and proves the permutation is possible and desirable.**

**Futterman 94.** J.A.H. Futterman, Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin and Physicist at the University of California’s Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, “Obscenity and Peace: Meditations on the Bomb,” http://web.archive.org/web/20060106211941/http://www.dogchurch.org/scriptorium/nuke.html

Now this contrasts with the argument of those who would "reinvent government" by putting up bureaucratic roadblocks to maintaining the reliability of the US nuclear arsenal through research and testing. They reason that if the reliability of everyone's nuclear arsenals declines, everyone will be less likely to try using them. The problem is that some "adventurer-conqueror" may arise and use everyone's doubt about their arsenals to risk massive conventional war instead. An expansionist dictatorship might even risk nuclear war with weapons that are simpler, cruder, less powerful, much riskier (in terms of the possibility of accidental detonation) but much more reliable than **our own may eventually become without adequate "stockpile stewardship."[**14] But **the inhibitory effect of reliable nuclear weapons goes deeper than Shirer's deterrence of adventurer-conquerors**. **It changes the way we think individually and culturally, preparing us for a future we cannot now imagine**. Jungian psychiatrist Anthony J. Stevens states, [15] "History would indicate that people cannot rise above their narrow sectarian concerns without some overwhelming paroxysm. It took the War of Independence and the Civil War to forge the United States, World War I to create the League of Nations, World War II to create the United Nations Organization and the European Economic Community. Only catastrophe, it seems, forces people to take the wider view. Or what about fear? **Can the horror which we all experience when we contemplate the possibility of nuclear extinction mobilize in us sufficient libidinal energy to resist the archetypes of war**? **Certainly, the moment we become blasé about the possibility of holocaust we are lost**. **As long as horror of nuclear exchange remains uppermost we can recognize that nothing is worth it**. **War becomes the impossible option**. Perhaps horror, the experience of horror, the consciousness of horror, **is our only hope**. Perhaps horror alone will enable us to overcome the otherwise invincible attraction of war." Thus I also continue engaging in nuclear weapons work to help fire that world-historical warning shot I mentioned above, namely, that as our beneficial technologies become more powerful, so will our weapons technologies, unless genuine peace precludes it. **We must build a future more peaceful than our past**, **if we are to have a future at all**, with or without nuclear weapons — a fact we had better learn before worse things than nuclear weapons are invented. If you're a philosopher, this means that I regard the nature of humankind as mutable rather than fixed, but that I think most people welcome change in their personalities and cultures with all the enthusiasm that they welcome death — thus, **the fear of nuclear annihilation of ourselves and all our values may be what we require in order to become peaceful enough to survive our future technological breakthroughs**.[16]

**Their criticism of nukespeak fails – its nostalgia for a utopian world beyond language with authentic relationships to nuclear weapons merely feeds the fantasy of nuclear control they claim to resolve. Instead, a subtle struggle over the power of the meaning of nuclear weapons through our Foucaultien approach solves better.**

**Chaloupka 92.** William Chaloupka, professor of political science at Colorado State University, Knowing Nukes: The Politics and Culture of the Atom, University of Minnesota Press, 1992, 20-23

From the nuclear critic's perspective, nuclear opponents unnecessarily constrain themselves when they adopt a first political assumption that is misleading and has not been subjected to the same reflection reserved for the other terms of the debate. The **claim that nukes are "unspeakable"** appears as an intolerable oppression, a **paternalistic admonition** to "be quiet" that outdistances (and silences) all such preceding calls. In carry- ing as well the injunction that we not speak about that which can only be spoken, this presumption deepens the paradoxes of nukes. There must be a reason we "cannot speak," and there is. To speak is to reveal a paradox nuclear politics must repress. We can begin to see the awkward, reversed influence of this repression **when we consider the one activity by which nuclear opponents have been attentive to language**—**their focus on interpretations of "nukespeak."**53 Nukespeak actually stands for **a simple critique of euphemism**; **the problem is that this simplicity leads away from the rest of the critique offered by opponents —it is inverted**. **The nukespeak argument imagines a world, just before this one, which had no technocratic euphemisms and no evasive verbs and nouns**. **Somehow, this was a world without language games, without genres of political speech, where words "meant" some- thing explicit**. **That world —presumably the one that Einstein argued the nuke inalterably changed —sits invitingly just outside our grasp, recover- able if only we would resolutely call things by their real names**. The nukespeak argument conforms to Baudrillard's "**nostalgia for the real**." **There can be no reconstructive politics based on eradicating euphemism**. The artifacts and practices of nuclearism **have no honest, real meanings**. **There is no straightforward name for a protective reaction strike**. **To call it a bombing run trivializes it**. To call it genocide (or eco- cide) conflates it with phenomena —such as the Holocaust —that we would rather keep separate, for good reasons. **And so on**. **The activities of nuclearism are encased in a context so thoroughly bound to its discourse —technologized, simulated, and then turned into spectacle — that any attempt to speak simple truth could only be another part of the simulation**. This is where nuclear criticism draws the line between itself and the liberal critics of modern society, from Orwell on to the present. Either Einstein was right and the world was irretrievably changed, or he was wrong and it can be returned to a prior condition of innocence, where things had "real" names. While the nukespeak argument suggests that these things are nameable, the nuclear critic responds that the nuke has already been actively reshaping situations. Indeed, that insight on the activism of nukespeak has been available for some time now. It was Marcuse who showed how contemporary nuclear discourse is not simple misleading, but is a manip- ulation that has its own syntax and grammar. Nuclear criticism might disagree with Marcuse's (and, later and more explicitly, Habermas's) pre- sumption that a clearer language game would be closer to truth. Still, we can note that Marcuse identified the discursive component of nuclear- ism's authority. The forms Marcuse finds all share a pattern, constructing an inverted universe in which absurdity and danger serve security and trust. In one important example, Marcuse deconstructs Edward Teller's oft- repeated, unofficial title, "the father of the H-Bomb," showing how this highly improbable combination is powerfully useful for discipline: Terms designating quite different spheres or qualities are forced together into a solid, overpowering whole. The effect is ... a magical and hypnotic one —the projection of images which convey irresistible unity, harmony of contradictions. Thus the loved and feared Father, the spender of life, generates the H-bomb for the annihilation of life.54 The cleverness (or, for Marcuse, the cunning) of such formulations belies the hope that clarity could solve matters. **The simplest nukespeak commentaries ask the wrong question when they argue that matters would be more obvious if terminology were less euphemistic**. At a certain point—**in Utopian remove from the realm of knowledge and power** —that would be the case. But the better question is slightly different. We could ask, What sort of an authoritative logic would behave this way? Founding strength on deterrence, then announcing the unspeakability of its topic, then pro- ducing a discourse that flaunts contradiction and turns it into unity and safety, nukespeak is more than euphemism. It turns ecstatic. An oppositional politics, fully capable of problematizing this (hyper-) exuberant nuclearism, is possible on bases other than such suspect cate- gories as euphemism, survival, unspeakability, and numbing. Through- out this book, I am trying to reposition antinuclearism within such a defensible political practice. At the very least, this implies an intellectual project; to paraphrase Foucault, there is a struggle over issues of knowledge, set off by nuclear criticism. The political mood of the language-and-politics position is well framed by nuclear criticism. More precisely, a political mood could yet form, one that would contrast sharply with an existing nuclear opposition that, in the United States, has adopted a paradoxical structure, **as if driven to mirror the paradoxes of nukes themselves**. Antinuke talk has been ponderous —so responsible and serious that it just obviously defeats itself, and must invent the defense that "people really don't like to talk about nuclear war very much." **Paradoxically, opponents then test that humorlessness by asking citizens to become independent entrepreneurs of risk, weighing the likelihood and amplitude of possible disasters. It should not be surprising that such a politics works only intermittently, if at all.**

**2ac at: k of deterrence/military**

**Every central premise in their criticism of deterrence is wrong---retaining military force as a deterrent against highly destructive conflict is compatible with and key to long-term anti-imperialist goals of eliminating militarism and oppression. Even if violence exists on a continuum, the difference between war and its absence is still highly salient. And their approach utterly fails to provide a strategy for dealing with the possibility of conflict, which makes it complicit if we win our impact**

**Peach 4** [Lucinda Joy, Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religion at American University, 2004, “A Pragmatist Feminist Approach to the Ethics of Weapons of Mass Destruction,” in *Ethics and Weapons of Mass Destruction: Religious and Secular Perspectives*, ed. Hashmi, p. 436-441]

The pragmatist feminist perspective that I develop in this chapter is deeply indebted to and affirms in many respects the antiwar feminist approach outlined by Carol **Cohn and** Sara **Ruddick** in the preceding chapter, but with **some marked differences**. These differences, I argue, reveal more completely both the promise and **the limitations** of antiwar feminism. At the outset, it is important to note that there is neither a single "feminism" nor a single "pragmatism" with which it might be aligned. Instead, there are multiple feminisms, just as there are multiple pragmatisms. The "pragmatist feminism" developed in this essay draws on several elements from American Pragmatism, a philosophical school developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, most prominently by Charles Peirce, William James, John Dewey, and George Herbert Mead. Despite the many differences among the pragmatists, they tend to share several features. Perhaps most salient to the subject of this volume is their presumption "that human agency in all of its higher manifestations has evolved from ... concrete circumstances in which a vulnerable organism is confronted, often (if not usually) in concert with other organisms of the same species, with possibilities of both injury and fulfillment."' It is the continuous reminder of "human fallibility and finitude"' that **constrains pragmatists** from positions such as foundationalism and dogmatism and thus **against** ideologies that encourage the use of armed force, and especially of WMD, in all but the most extreme circumstances. It is also a reminder that armed conflicts are composed of embodied human beings, **each of whom has the capacity for suffering** as well as happiness, a point stressed by feminist analyses of armed conflicts. There are several significant points of commonality or intersection between pragmatism and feminism.3 Perhaps most important for thinking about the ethics of weapons of mass destruction is that both are actively engaged in attempting to solve social problems. The early pragmatists viewed the purpose of philosophical reflection to be "the intelligent overcoming of oppressive conditions." Dewey, for example, recommended the criticism of beliefs underlying society that have led to "unsatisfactory conditions in order to radically reconstruct our society according to non-oppressive and cooperative standards."5 Feminist goals of liberating women from oppression thus **echo pragmatist ones**. While most often feminist movements have been focused specifically on ending the male domination and oppression of women, a more inclusive feminist vision has as its object the elimination of all hierarchical and oppressive relationships, including the oppression of so-called third world or developing nations (especially of the Global South) by those of the so-called first world or industrialized nations (especially of the Global North), of ethnic, cultural, racial, or religious minorities by majorities, homosexuals by heterosexuals, the poor by the wealthy, children by adults, and so on. In addition, pragmatists advocate the elimination of sharp divisions between theory and practice, reason and experience, and knowing and doing.8 Pragmatists **focus much more on consequences** rather than on a priori abstract conceptualizing, captured in the phrase that pragmatists assign value on the basis of "what works" or what provides "emotional satisfaction."9 From a pragmatist perspective, the most important questions are practical ones. Pragmatists consider moral agents to be **actors within a concrete particular context** that both influences what is experienced and is influenced by those experiences. The inextricability of the perceiver from what is perceived means that **action**, whether in the context of armed conflict and the use of WMD or otherwise, **must be situated within the larger context** of which it is a part. Since every decision to enter or engage in an armed conflict and every decision to deploy WMD, of whatever type, must be considered within the full context of **other relevant actors, agencies, and term strategies or results**,12 a pragmatist perspective is **unlikely** to result in the kind of abstract thinking that antiwar feminism criticizes in dominant just war and realist approaches.13 Feminism also shares pragmatism's rejection of traditional rationalist and empiricist approaches and its commitment to the inseparability of theory and practice.14 Both believe that reason must be grounded in experience and requires being supplemented, at least in particular circumstances, by emotion.15 In this respect, feminists also favor a posteriori rather than a priori forms of knowledge, those that develop on the basis of experience rather than those that are posited prior to it.16 In sum, both pragmatism and feminism accord a central place to the particular, the concrete, and the factual elements of experience, as opposed to the universal, the generalizable, and the abstract.17 This opposition to abstraction is apparent, for example, in feminist understandings of women's "different voice" and Dewey's views about the importance of the qualitative background of situations. In contrast to mainstream philosophy, both feminist and pragmatist perspectives focus on everyday life and emphasize respect for others and the constitutiveness of community. The pragmatists' sensitivity to the social embeddedness of persons led them to understand the "I" "only in relation to other selves, so that the autonomy of individual agents needed to be integrated with their status as social beings" existing in community. 18 This common conception of the "relational self" suggests that both pragmatists and feminists will resist turning others into "the Other," who can then be demonized and made into "the enemy," suitable to be killed. The feminist commitment to the well-being of others, in both the local and the global community, is well illustrated by Carol Cohn's and Sara Ruddick's contribution to this volume. However, this commitment also provides the basis for the pragmatist feminist position articulated here that **refuses to categorically rule out the moral legitimacy of any resort to armed force or war**, since such resort may be **morally imperative to protect innocent others**. In addition to these marked similarities, it is also important to acknowledge how a pragmatist feminism differs significantly from American Pragmatism. Perhaps most important is pragmatist feminism's attention to the gendered character of the social world and gender's impact on the formation and maintenance of male and female identities. These subjects largely were ignored by the American Pragmatists19 but influence the analysis of the ethics of WMD outlined here. In addition, feminists tend to give greater import to the cognitive aspects of affect than pragmatists, even though, as already discussed, pragmatists recognize the importance of emotions to agency and cognition. Despite its differences from more mainstream strands of feminism, pragmatist feminism shares the goals of many strands of feminism to **make gender a central consideration of the analysis** (here of armed force and WMD)20 and to eradicate (patriarchal) oppression and domination. These goals result in a **strong presumption against the use of any weapons**, not only WMD, since they are in their very inception designed as tools for domination and suppression of others designated as "the enemy." This opposition to the use of armed force is related to feminist observations of the patriarchal and hierarchical, male-dominated and -controlled character of the military and the oppressive effects of war and militarism around the world, especially on women and children. In addition, the pragmatist feminist view described here affirms much in the "constitutive positions" of antiwar feminism articulated by Cohn and Ruddick,21 especially its observation of the gendered character of war and militarism, its suspicion of masculinist approaches to war and conflict resolution, and its critique of the dominant tradition for its focus on the physical, military, and strategic effects of these weapons separate from their embeddedness in the rest of social and political life. With this brief overview in mind, in the following section, I describe how a pragmatist feminist perspective compares with the antiwar feminist position outlined by Cohn and Ruddick in Chapter 21 with respect to the specific issues addressed by this volume. SOURCES AND PRINCIPLES Although pragmatist feminism itself does not directly provide general norms governing the use of weapons in war, it does so indirectly through its affirmation of elements of justwar theory, as described below. Pragmatist feminism **does not categorically rule out the use of armed force** or engagement in war. Its pragmatist perspective steers in a different direction from the antiwar feminists' "practical" opposition to war. Whereas the realist tradition has been unduly pessimistic in its assumption that war and armed conflict are necessary, certain, and inevitable, on a pragmatist feminist view, antiwar feminist thinking tends to be **unduly optimistic** about the human capacity to transcend the use of violent methods of resolving disputes, given the consistent and continual resort to such means throughout most of human history. From a pragmatist feminist perspective, the historical and contemporary experience of the repeated resort to violence and the inability of humanity thus far to develop alternative mechanisms for resolving large-scale disputes suggests the likelihood of future wars and armed conflicts. In light of this history, **overcoming the "war culture**" that antiwar feminists view so unfavorably can be possible **only outside the immediate situation of armed conflict**. Once the aggressor has struck or threatens to do so imminently, **it is too late to change our societies and ourselves in order to avoid war**. Rather, it is then necessary to act in order to **avoid annihilation** in one form or another. Given its view that some wars and some opposition to war and armed conflicts are morally necessary to protect ourselves and others from harm, pragmatist feminists seek to impose moral limits on the harm and suffering to the minimum necessary. Despite an awareness of its limitations,22 a pragmatist feminist perspective considers just war theory to provide a flexible and modifiable set of criteria for attempting to act morally and in accordance with principles of justice, both in entering into an armed conflict (jus ad bellum) and in the actual engagement of that conflict (jus in bello). In particular, pragmatist feminism shares just war's starting premise of a strong presumption against the legitimacy of the use of armed force and violence to resolve conflicts. A pragmatist feminist perspective thus **rejects Cohn's and Ruddick's contention** that justwar theorists "implicitly **accept war as a practice even when condemning particular wars**."23 Recognizing the historical and global reality of war making and armed force as means of resolving conflicts and **adopting strategies to maximize justice and minimize immorality** when such means are adopted **is not the same as "implicitly accepting the practices of war**," at least in the absence of **demonstrably effective means of eliminating such conflicts**. To ignore the reality of the continuing resort to war and armed force is itself to revert to **abstraction** **rather than** offering **a practical method for eliminating** the **human suffering** and incalculable damage caused by war and armed conflict. Here Colin and Ruddick reveal (intentionally or otherwise) their situatedness as citizens of a war-making state, one that has had the choice in many, if not all, instances since the mid-twentieth century, at least, of deciding whether or not to go to war. Just as Cohn and Ruddick criticize just war theory for failing to explore nonviolent alternatives once a just cause is determined or war has begun, **their antiwar feminist approach fails to offer concrete suggestions for avoiding armed conflict** when a nation or people is confronted with armed aggression or assault by others, the situation where the options boil down to "**fight or die**." This perspective **fails to look at war from the point of view of the aggressed-against**, when armed conflict becomes a necessity in order to retain national and/or cultural and/or ethnic identity from subjugation by the aggressor(s). In such circumstances, the moral necessity of armed force looks quite different. And in such circumstances, the **threatened** use of WMD can be seen as **less evil than** the **alternatives**, such as **doing nothing** and being conquered **or fighting a conventional war and faring poorly**. Rather than reverting to abstract thinking about war, pragmatist feminism affirms just war theory's casuistic approach to particular armed conflicts as well as its position that such means are sometimes morally justifiable or even morally obligator)' in order to protect oneself (individual or nation) or innocent third parties. Further, pragmatist feminism affirms just war thinking's **attention to particular conflicts rather than war in the abstract** and its stance of moderation and of **imposing** the **minimal suffering** necessary to accomplish the objective of restoring the peace.24 Thus, with respect to the military response of the United States to the September 11 terrorist attacks, a pragmatist feminist application of just war criteria yields the conclusion that the jus ad bellum principles of "last resort" and "proportionality," as well as the in hello principles of "proportionality" and "discrimination," were not satisfied. A second difference in the two feminist perspectives emerges out of the antiwar feminist observation that war and militarism are not separate from everyday life but integral aspects of it.25 While this is an extremely important insight into the underlying conditions of war and militarism, it needs to be joined with **alternative proposals for addressing the "large-scale military conflict**." There has been scant attention to this issue in antiwar feminist scholarship. Even if one assumes, as antiwar feminists do, that war is a "presence" in everyday life and not merely a discrete "event" that occasionally "erupts,"26 it is nonetheless the case that "**war" is more damaging and harmful, and creates greater suffering in a multiplicity of ways**, than the absence of war. Pragmatist feminist thinking about the ethics of WMD is **attentive to how such differences in consequences** differentiate war from “everyday life.” A third significant area of difference between the two types of feminist theories concerns responses to the causes of war. Whereas pragmatist feminists agree with antiwar feminists that wars are partially a mutual construction, they also insist that some wars have much more to do with unjust aggression for which opposing sides do not share equal responsibility. Antiwar feminism fails to accept that some wars are not only necessary as a matter of prudence, but also morally justifiable *on feminist grounds*, for example, humanitarian intervention to end the severe oppression of innocent victims. For a pragmatist feminist, the current state of international affairs unfortunately **requires** consideration of the circumstances in which the **threatened** or actual **use of such weapons for defensive or deterrent purposes** may be morally allowable or even **morally necessary**. Given these circumstances, pragmatist feminism considers the just war tradition to provide a morally useful source of norms relating to the use of weapons in war.

**Zero empirical correlation between innate drives or social institutions and war – the only way to prevent conflict empirically is to look at the specific decision calculus of national leaders**

**Sharp 8** [Gary, adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University Law Center, “Democracy and Deterrence. Foundations for an Enduring World Peace,” http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA493031&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf]

While classical liberals focused on political structures, socialists analyzed the socioeconomic system of states as the primary factor in determining the propensity of states to engage in war. Socialists such as Karl Marx attributed war to the class structure of society; Marx believed that war resulted from a clash of social forces created by a capitalist mode of production that develops two antagonistic classes, rather than being an instrument of state policy. Thus capitalist states would engage in war because of their growing needs for raw materials, markets, and cheap labor. Socialists believed replacing capitalism with socialism could prevent war, but world events have proven socialists wrong as well. 32 These two schools of thought—war is caused by innate biological drives or social institutions—do not demonstrate any meaningful correlation with the occurrence or nonoccurrence of war. There are many variables not considered by these two schools: for example, the influence of national special interest groups such as the military or defense contractors that may seek glory through victory, greater resources, greater domestic political power, or justification for their existence. Legal scholar Quincy Wright has conducted one of the “most thorough studies of the nature of war” 33 and concludes that there “is no single cause of war.” 34 In A Study of War, he concludes that peace is an equilibrium of four complex factors: military and industrial technology, international law governing the resort to war, social and political organization at the domestic and international level, and the distribution of attitudes and opinions concerning basic values. War is likely when controls on any one level are disturbed or changed. 35 Similarly, the 1997 US National Military Strategy identifies the root causes of conflict as political, economic, social, and legal conditions. 36 Moore has compiled the following list of conventional explanations for war: specific disputes; absence of dispute settlement mechanisms; ideological disputes; ethnic and religious differences; communication failures; proliferation of weapons and arms races; social and economic injustice; imbalance of power; competition for resources; incidents, accidents, and miscalculation; violence in the nature of man; aggressive national leaders; and economic determination. He has concluded, however, that these causes or motives for war explain specific conflicts but fail to serve as a central paradigm for explaining the cause of war. 37 In the final analysis, Wright is unequivocally correct—there is no single cause or explanation for war. However, there is one clear consistency in all wars: wars always begin through the calculated decisions of men or women, regardless of any cause, motive, or explanation. As the UNESCO constitution asserts, “wars begin in the minds of men.” 38 People—national leaders— are always at the core of any decision to wage war, and any strategy for preventing war must address these individuals.

**The lack of deterrence is the most reliable predictor of war – instead of focusing on root causes, we should look to variables that directly affect decision-making, and deterrence is the most important factor**

**Sharp 8** [Gary, adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University Law Center, “Democracy and Deterrence. Foundations for an Enduring World Peace,” <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA493031&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>]

Wars are not simply accidents. Nor, contrary to our ordinary language, are they made by nations. Wars are made by people; more specifically they are decided on by the leaders of nation states—and other nonnational groups in the case of terrorism—who make the decision to commit aggression or otherwise use the military instrument. These leaders make that decision based on the totality of incentives affecting them at the time of the decision. . . . Incentive theory] tells us that we simply have a better chance of] . . . predicting war, and fashioning forms of intervention to control it, if we focus squarely on the effect of variables from all levels of analysis in generating incentives affecting the actual decisions made by those with the power to decide on war. 42 Incentive theory focuses on the individual decisions that lead to war and explains the synergistic relationship between the absence of effective deterrence and the absence of democracy. Together these three factors—the decisions of leaders made without the restraining effects of deterrence and democracy— are the cause of war: War is not strictly caused by an absence of democracy or effective deterrence or both together. Rather war is caused by the human leadership decision to employ the military instrument. The absence of democracy, the absence of effective deterrence, and most importantly, the synergy of an absence of both are conditions or factors that predispose to war. An absence of democracy likely predisposes by [its] effect on leadership and leadership incentives, and an absence of effective deterrence likely predisposes by its effect on incentives from factors other than the individual or governmental levels of analysis. To understand the cause of war is to understand the human decision for war; that is, major war and democide . . . are the consequence of individual decisions responding to a totality of incentives. 43

**2ac psychoanalysis wrong**

**Psycho-analysis is wrong---terrible methodology, every refutable claim has been disproven, ineffective results**

Robert **Bud and** Mario **Bunge 10** {Robert Bud is principal curator of medicine at the Science Museum in London. 9-29-2010. “Should psychoanalysis be in the Science Museum?” [https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg20827806-200-should-psychoanalysis-be-in-the-science-museum/}//JM](https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg20827806-200-should-psychoanalysis-be-in-the-science-museum/%7d//JM) (link credit to EM)

WE SHOULD congratulate the Science Museum for setting up an exhibition on psychoanalysis. Exposure to pseudoscience greatly helps understand genuine science, just as learning about tyranny helps in understanding democracy. Over the past 30 years, **psychoanalysis has** quietly **been displaced** in academia by scientific psychology. But it persists in popular culture as well as being a lucrative profession. It is the psychology of those who have not bothered to learn psychology, and the psychotherapy of choice for those who believe in the power of immaterial mind over body. **Psychoanalysis is a bogus science** because **its practitioners do not do scientific research**. When the field turned 100, a group of psychoanalysts admitted this gap and endeavoured to fill it. They claimed to have performed the first experiment showing that patients benefited from their treatment. Regrettably, **they did not include a control group and did not entertain the possibility of placebo effects**. Hence, their claim remains untested (The International Journal of Psychoanalysis, vol 81, p 513). More recently, a meta-analysis published in American Psychologist (vol 65, p 98) purported to support the claim that a form of psychoanalysis called psychodynamic therapy is effective. However, once again, the original studies did not involve control groups. In 110 years, psychoanalysts have not set up a single lab. They do not participate in scientific congresses, do not submit their papers to scientific journals and are foreign to the scientific community - a marginality typical of pseudoscience. This does not mean their hypotheses have never been put to the test. True, they are so vague that they are hard to test and some of them are, by Freud's own admission, irrefutable. Still, most of the testable ones have been soundly refuted. For example, most dreams have no sexual content. The Oedipus complex is a myth; boys do not hate their fathers because they would like to have sex with their mothers. The list goes on. As for therapeutic efficacy, little is known because psychoanalysts do not perform double-blind clinical trials or follow-up studies. Psychoanalysis is a pseudoscience. Its concepts are woolly and untestable yet are regarded as unassailable axioms. As a result of such dogmatism, psychoanalysis has remained basically stagnant for more than a century, in contrast with scientific psychology, which is thriving.

**Psychoanalysis has zero logical or empirical basis, can’t be scaled up, and totalizes the existence of the human condition in pseudoscientific terms**

**Robinson 8** [Andrew, political theorist and activist based in the UK Contemporary Political Theory. Avenel: Aug 2008. Vol. 7, Iss. 3; pg. 351, 7 pgs]

By his own admission, Stavrakakis **does not provide blueprints** (which is unsurprising), nor does he provide prescriptions, political direction or policy proposals (pp. 13-14, 30). This leaves the work of **dubious relevance to people doing politics** whether as activists, politicians or administrators. The aim is rather to argue for radical democracy as 'the institutionalization of a mechanism which enables the continuous re-articulation of the symbolic field constituting society' (p. 129). The author makes very broad claims about this function of democracy, which is 'the most pressing task' of politics (p. 60), the only way to ensure permanent creation of the new (p. 60) and the only legitimate form of hegemony (p. 256). The argumentation backing up these claims mostly amounts to **assertion** and exegesis. However, this is not simply a case for existing liberal democracies. Radical democracy is contrasted with existing democracies (pp. 255-256) and is taken to imply a change in the arrangement of jouissance . Instead of the fantasies pervasive today, typified by their blaming of the other for the incompleteness of the self, Stavrakakis proposes a passage to feminine jouissance that encircles the lack (pp. 22-23, 111, 144, 268, 278-279). Present democracies have been hit by an assault on the two pillars of modern democracy -- equality and liberty -- by the neoliberals and neoconservatives, respectively, leading to a 'post-political' world in which conflict is avoided and thus returns as social problems, and in which a new, almost pre-democratic despotism is taking shape (pp. 263-264). Despite this, democracy can still function as 'the mobilising force, the common denominator, for a politics of alternatives' (p. 258).

These political conclusions are dubious. Liberal democracies in fact tend to be quite closed to change and to be supplemented with aggressive nationalist and racist identities. The liberal state, like the authoritarian state, tends to essentialize itself as a form in such a way as to deny its own contingency. It is not clear that the radical democratic framework guarantees basic rights or prevents the state from making essentialist claims on others. Stavrakakis assumes that the democratic form itself directly achieves the goal of recognizing contingency (p. 141). Yet this cannot be the case, since as Stavrakakis admits, this form does not prevent actually existing democracies from being inflected with fantasmatic projects such as ultranationalism, or degenerating into a 'post-political' disavowal of conflict. Further, whichever party gets in power -- by majority will or procedural hitch -- is generally able to ignore intransigent realities, pursue its own fantasmatic actings-out and repress, foreclose, disavow or otherwise silence whatever forms of social otherness are not to its tastes. Beyond this, there is a fantasmatic frame of the liberal-democratic state that pits the permanent institutions such as the police, bureaucracy and secret service against semi-permanent Others, hence displacing real social antagonisms into narratives of 'crime', 'disorder', 'terrorism', 'madness', 'anarchy' and so on. Can this fundamental fantasy be traversed without **shattering the frame of the** 'democratic' **state itself?** One might also wonder if the 'politics of alternatives' has not already emerged -- and passed by entirely the radical democrats -- in the form of the anti-capitalist and anti-neoliberal movements.

The linking of Lacanian theory to liberal democracy seems just too convenient. One cannot but be reminded of the Soviet-era dissidents whose critiques of the **existing regimes** ended up **reproducing** them in **their** proposed **alternatives** -- hence operating as the fantasmatic supplement of the regimes themselves. Surely a full acceptance of social contingency would generate social relations radically different from those pertaining in a society where such acceptance has not occurred. Acceptance of contingency might, for instance, necessitate the elimination of punishment, which involves a fantasy frame blaming the other (the criminal) for social conflict and risk; it would instead require that risk be assumed by all social actors and not displaced into special 'exceptional' spaces. It would seem to imply that the state needs to be constrained from the outside by other institutions, that a social order where power is negotiated or contested among multiple institutions is better than one where a single site monopolizes the field of social power. Or maybe it would be better served by the fluidity of affinity and the looseness of custom than by the fixity of state and law. Perhaps the revival of activities inscribing agonism and difference emerge, not inside the state, but in societal relations, oppositional movements and everyday life.

While the Lacanianism of the title is self-explanatory, it raises another problem -- why the 'left' in 'Lacanian left'? Stavrakakis defines 'left' as meaning a democratic legitimation of antagonism and 'alternatives' (p. 30), a definition that begs the question, identifying the 'left' directly with Lacanianism. This is pretty much unrecognizable in relation to general usage, in which 'left' is generally associated with the welfare or self-assertion of the worst-off, and the prioritizing of substantive social issues over property, propriety and order. Is Lacanian theory really 'left' in this more usual sense? It is, on Stavrakakis's own admission, 'subversive' rather than 'revolutionary' (pp. 2, 158) and has a 'reformist direction' (p. 109). What this means in concrete terms is that the structural frame is taken as unchangeable but the elements within it can be reshuffled. 'Exclusion and antagonism may be unavoidable, but acknowledging this does not restrict our ability to influence their particular articulations, to displace continuously the limits they impose' (p. 226). Again in common with other 'radical democrats', Stavrakakis says little to reassure either the excluded or included of the present that they will not be the losers of such a reshuffling; it is unclear as to who will be excluded in this process, and indeed, if any one exclusion can be deemed ethically worse than any other. At best it is possible that the presently marginalized could come out on top from such reshuffling. However, this is not the main aim of Lacanian theory, which has more to do with the recognition of contingency, rejection of 'utopianism' and defence of liberal-democratic regimes -- of the 'situationness', or ordering as such, of society, along with its 'eventness' or the recurrence of radical acts (pp. 156-157). This leads to assertions of the need for hierarchical power. For instance, authority is taken as inevitable in all social situations; it is 'a frame presupposed in every social experience' (p. 173). 'Without someone in command reality disintegrates' (p. 174). Such an orientation has a long history, but it is a history of the right, not the left, associated particularly with anti-communist liberals such as Popper, Kolakowski and Berlin, and traceable to the classical liberalism of authors such as Jefferson, de Tocqueville and J.S. Mill, who viewed constitutionality, political pluralism and a competitive 'marketplace of ideas' as necessary to impede the totalitarian tendencies of any one perspective taken alone. Contingency, anti-utopianism, a humble acceptance of limits to knowledge and action, the primacy of lack in human experience, are all paralleled in this older tradition. <<<Continues next page>>>

The strengths and weaknesses of the text largely follow from the usefulness and limits of the perspective it provides. The Lacanian perspective, as a partial truth, certainly provides interesting insights and a different way of seeing, and as such often generates productive contributions. However, it fails drastically to understand the **partiality of its own 'truth'**. In Stavrakakis's words, lack can't be signified but it can be formalized (p. 279). In other words, a final map of the structure of reality can still, from this perspective, be drawn -- and has been drawn already by Lacan. In effect, the result is a claim to be the theoretical end of history -- all else is utopian, essentialist and so on. In many respects, the perspective is also reactive, defined by what it is against (anti-essentialist, anti-utopian, anti-fantasmatic). **It is less clear what it is for** -- although the idea of feminine jouissance begins the task of constructing a positive pole. Its relation to the other is **very intolerant** and dismissive. It is not open to other voices because it is always ready to judge the other as failing its own rigid internal criteria. It expresses a dangerous urge to drive the other out of the community of speakers, and perhaps out of existence altogether. The chapter on Castoriadis is symptomatic here. Castoriadis in many ways stands for the entire field of horizontalist radicalism -- horizontalists and immanentists (Stirner, Reich, Negri, Deleuze, Marcuse, various critics of Lacan) circle around the text like barbarians at the gates. The dispute between Lacanianism and horizontalism is a dispute the stakes of which Lacanians are reluctant to confront, instead hiding behind the view from one side -- 'they disagree with us, therefore they are wrong'. Except that 'wrong' is usually replaced by one of a number of theoretical epithets -- romantic, utopian, essentialist -- which sound superficially like useful categories of theory but which are never defined and which serve mainly as a name to call people who disagree with one or another basic Lacanian assumption. The impression is given that those who hold these perspectives are somehow naïve, intellectually disreputable or unrespectable, but this connoted claim is never demonstrated. It is simply a choice of one perspective over another, conveyed in loaded language. Like most of its ilk, this book does plenty to show what Lacanian theory does, how it 'works' as a theoretical machine or toolkit, but rather less to say why it should be preferred to other approaches (assuming, of course, that not wanting to be called names is insufficient reason to accept its validity). Lacanian theory suffers from an **ontological and epistemological restrictiveness** derived from its absolutizing of structural topologies, which **limits its explanatory power** by rendering far too many specificities of metropolitan statist societies 'necessary' or 'unavoidable'. The theory involves restrictive, totalizing claims that are **neither logically** necessary **nor empirically demonstrated**; most often, acceptance of such claims is unnecessary to gain the benefits of the explanatorily or theoretically useful aspects of the perspective. Social phenomena vary in how well they fit this limiting frame. Nationalism and racism, having the right form, fit well, and hence become favourite expository targets for Lacanian theorists. But dogmas will have to be sacrificed if a broader field of social movements is to be encompassed.

**Even if they win superior explanatory power, psychoanalytic imaginings are useless in advancing political change**

**Rosen-Carole 10** [Adam, Visiting Professor of Philosophy at Bard College, 2010, “Menu Cards in Time of Famine: On Psychoanalysis and Politics,” Psychoanalytic Quarterly, Vol. LXXIX, No. 1, p. 205-207

On the other hand, though in these ways and many others, psychoanalysis seems to promote the sorts of subjective dispositions and habits requisite for a thriving democracy, and though in a variety of ways psychoanalysis contributes to personal emancipation— say, by releasing individuals from self-defeating, damaging, or petrified forms action and reaction, object attachment, and the like—in light of the very uniqueness of what it has to offer, one cannot but wonder: to what extent, if at all, can the habits and dispositions—broadly, the forms of life—cultivated by psychoanalytic practice survive, let alone flourish, under **modern social and political conditions**? If the emancipatory inclinations and democratic virtues that psychoanalytic practice promotes are systematically crushed or at least regularly unsupported by the world in which they would be realized, **then isn’t psychoanalysis implicitly** making promises it cannot redeem? Might not massive social and political transformations be the condition for the efficacious practice of psychoanalysis? And so, under current conditions, can we avoid experiencing the forms of life nascently cultivated by psychoanalytic practice as something of a tease, or even a source of deep frustration? (2) Concerning psychoanalysis as a politically inclined theoretical enterprise, the worry is whether political diagnoses and proposals that proceed on the basis of psychoanalytic insights and forms of attention partake of a fantasy of interpretive efficacy (**all the world’s a couch**, you might say), wherein our profound alienation from the conditions for robust political agency are registered and repudiated? Consider, for example, Freud and Bullitt’s (1967) assessment of the psychosexual determinants of Woodrow Wilson’s political aspirations and impediments, or Reich’s (1972) suggestion that Marxism should appeal to psychoanalysis in order to illuminate and redress neurotic phenomena that generate disturbances in working capacity, especially as this concerns religion and bourgeois sexual ideology. Also relevant are Freud’s, Žižek’s (1993, 2004), Derrida’s (2002) and others’ insistence that we draw the juridical and political consequences of the hypothesis of an irreducible death drive, as well as Marcuse’s (1970) proposal that we attend to the weakening of Eros and the growth of aggression that results from the coercive enforcement of the reality principle upon the sociopolitically weakened ego, and especially to the channeling of this aggression into hatred of enemies. Reich (1972) and Fromm (1932) suggest that psychoanalysis be employed to explore the motivations to political irrationality, especially that singular irrationality of joining the national-socialist movement, while Irigaray (1985) diagnoses the desire for the Same, the One, the Phallus as a desire for a sociosymbolic order that assures masculine dominance. Žižek (2004) contends that only a psychoanalytic exposition of the disavowed beliefs and suppositions of the United States political elite can get at the fundamental determinants of the Iraq War. Rose (1993) argues that it was the paranoiac paradox of sensing both that there is every reason to be frightened and that everything is under control that allowed Thatcher “to make this paradox the basis of political identity so that subjects could take pleasure in violence as force and legitimacy while always locating ‘real’ violence somewhere else—illegitimate violence and illicitness increasingly made subject to the law” (p. 64). Stavrakakis (1999) advocates that we recognize and traverse the residues of utopian fantasy in our contemporary political imagination.1 Might not the psychoanalytic interpretation of powerful figures (Bush, Bin Laden, or whomever), collective subjects (nations, ethnic groups, and so forth), or urgent “political” situations **register an anxiety regarding political impotence** or “castration” that is **pacified and modified** by the fantasmatic frame wherein the psychoanalytically inclined political theorist situates him- or herself as diagnosing or interpretively intervening in the lives of political figures, collective political subjects, or complex political situations with the idealized efficacy of a successful clinical intervention? If so, then **the question is: are the contributions of psychoanalytically inclined political theory anything more than tantalizing menu cards for** meals it cannot deliver**?** As I said, the worry is twofold. These are two folds of a related problem, which is this: might the very seductiveness of psychoanalytic theory and practice—specifically, the seductiveness of its political promise—register the lasting eclipse of the political and the objectivity of the social, respectively? In other words, might not every**thing that makes psychoanalytic theory and practice so politically attractive** indicate precisely the necessity of wide-ranging social/institutional transformations that far exceed the powers of psychoanalysis? And so, might not the politically salient transformations of subjectivity to which psychoanalysis can contribute overburden subjectivity as the site of political transformation, **blinding us to the necessity of largescale institutional reforms**? Indeed, might not massive institutional transformations be necessary conditions for the efficacy of psychoanalytic practice, both personally and politically? Further, might not the so-called interventions and proposals of psychoanalytically inclined political theory similarly sidestep the question of the institutional transformations necessary for their realization, and so conspire with our blindness to the enormous institutional impediments to a progressive political future?

**Psychoanalytic explanations of racism are reductionist, non-falsifiable and anti-political**

**Gordon 1**—psychotherapist living and working in London (Paul, Psychoanalysis and Racism: The politics of defeat Race & Class v. 42, n. 4)

Given that racism works at an unconscious level, it follows, in Cohen's¶ view, that strategies to challenge it at a conscious level are doomed to¶ failure. They are bound to fail precisely because they are rational and¶ fail to appreciate that the power of racism lies in the fact that it is¶ unconscious. To deinstitutionalise racism `will not in itself abolish¶ the power of the racist imagination' which will continue to flourish¶ through the media of popular culture long after its state forms have¶ withered away.42 `All the evidence to date', Cohen writes elsewhere,¶ `shows that the racist imagination is not accessible to rationalist¶ pedagogies, and almost effortlessly resists their impact'. What is all¶ this evidence? Certainly it is neither presented nor cited.43 Rustin,¶ too, claims that classroom teaching can have the effect of `increasing¶ kinds of defensive organisation'. But he cites no evidence - other¶ than referring to Cohen's work - and seems to believe that all `antiracism'¶ in education is a matter of seeking to change attitudes, rather¶ than opening up new ways of looking at the world.44¶ In Cohen's schema, then, racism is taken out of society and material¶ reality and lodged very firmly in the minds, the unconscious minds, of¶ individual subjects. Although in his 1988 article, `The perversions of¶ inheritance', he distanced himself from a position that afforded¶ absolute autonomy to the ideological, and thus ran the risk, as he¶ acknowledged, of `substituting changes in personal attitude or societal¶ values for structural reforms', this is, in fact, where he has ended up.¶ As his work has developed, **there is less and less sense of any**¶ **political project of anti-racism** and an almost exclusive concentration¶ on dealing with the beliefs and attitudes of racists. Ideology has¶ become all.¶ In placing racism in the unconscious, Cohen is very much in line¶ with the most orthodox of psychoanalysis which claims to find¶ `inside' individuals (whatever that might mean - the notion of an `internal¶ world' is always taken for granted and never really put into question)¶ what actually belongs in society, in what psychoanalysis calls¶ `the external world'. Indeed, one of the earliest Marxist critiques of¶ Freud's theories made precisely this point, accusing Freud of rendering¶ individual what was irredeemably social.45 In the same vein, and particularly¶ germane to the present discussion, the refusal of psychoanalysis¶ to acknowledge social and political reality, to see what is in front of it, is¶ exemplified in the following story.¶ Like many analysts of her time, Melanie Klein, in whose tradition¶ Cohen writes, engaged in the quite unethical and inappropriate practice¶ of analysing her own children. She began her son Erich's analysis in¶ Budapest in 1920 when he was 5 and continued it when she separated¶ from her husband and moved to Berlin. There, Erich developed a¶ phobia about going outside. Klein `explained' to Erich that his anxiety¶ was due to his fantasies about having sexual intercourse with his¶ mother. Erich told his mother of a street that was particularly frightening¶ to him because it was filled with young `toughs' who tormented him.¶ Klein ignored this and, recalling that the street was filled with large¶ trees, interpreted these as phalluses and evidence of his continued¶ desire for his mother and of his fear of castration as a punishment.¶ Years later, Erich's elder brother Hans, also an analysand of his¶ mother, told Erich that the youths had, in fact, been an anti-Semitic¶ gang that routinely attacked Jewish children. Erich had never been¶ told by his mother that he was Jewish. As the historian of psychotherapy¶ Philip Cushman comments: `It is difficult to know what is¶ more remarkable in this incident with Erich: Klein's dismissal of, her¶ almost phobic denial of, the ``external'' social realm, or her remarkable¶ self-centredness.' 46 Klein, in other words, placed in the mind of her son¶ that which fully belonged in the material world. Objective reality¶ became a `state of mind'. Exactly the same criticism can be levelled¶ at Cohen's placing of racism inside the unconscious minds of individuals.¶ It is indeed ironic that, with postmodernists such as Cohen,¶ we should be witnessing a return to a past - albeit at a more sophisticated¶ level of `discourse' - when, according to the liberal race relations¶ paradigm, racism did not really exist, only racial prejudice, something¶ that was individual and psychological.¶ The question of method¶ Cohen's work unavoidably raises the question of the status of psychoanalysis¶ as a social or political theory, as distinct from a clinical one.¶ Can psychoanalysis, in other words, apply to the social world of groups, institutions, nations, states and cultures in the way that it does,¶ or at least may do, to individuals? Certainly there is now a considerable¶ body of literature and a plethora of academic courses, and so on, claiming¶ that psychoanalysis is a social theory. And, of course, in popular¶ discourse, it is now a commonplace to hear of nations and societies¶ spoken of in personalised ways. Thus `truth commissions' and the¶ like, which have become so common in the past decade in countries¶ which have undergone turbulent change, are seen as forms of national¶ therapy or catharsis, even if this is far from being their purpose. Nevertheless,¶ the question remains: does it make sense, as Michael Ignatieff¶ puts it, to speak of nations having psyches the way that individuals do?¶ `Can a nation's past make people ill as we know repressed memories¶ sometimes make individuals ill? . . . Can we speak of nations ``working¶ through'' a civil war or an atrocity as we speak of individuals working¶ through a traumatic memory or event?' 47¶ The problem with the application of psychoanalysis to social institutions¶ is that there can be no testing of the claims made. If someone says,¶ for instance, that nationalism is a form of looking for and seeking to¶ replace the body of the mother one has lost, or that the popular¶ appeal of a particular kind of story echoes the pattern of our earliest¶ relationship to the maternal breast, how can this be proved? The¶ pioneers of psychoanalysis, from Freud onwards, all derived their¶ ideas in the context of their work with individual patients and their¶ ideas can be examined in the everyday laboratory of the therapeutic¶ encounter where the validity of an interpretation, for example, is a¶ matter for dialogue between therapist and patient. Outside of the consulting¶ room, there can be no such verification process, and the further¶ one moves from the individual patient, the less purchase psychoanalytic¶ ideas can have. Outside the therapeutic encounter, anything¶ and everything can be true, psychoanalytically speaking. But if everything¶ is true, then nothing can be false and therefore nothing can be¶ true.¶ An example of Cohen's method is to be found in his 1993 working¶ paper, `Home rules', subtitled `Some reflections on racism and nationalism¶ in everyday life'. Here Cohen talks about taking a `particular line¶ of thought for a walk'. While there is nothing wrong with taking a line¶ of thought for a walk, such an exercise is not necessarily the same as¶ thinking. One of the problems with Cohen's approach is that a kind¶ of free association, mixed with deconstruction, leads not to analysis,¶ not even to psychoanalysis, but to... well, just more free association,¶ an endless, indeed one might say pointless, play on words. This¶ approach may well throw up some interesting associations along the¶ way, connections one had never thought of but it is not to be confused¶ with political analysis. In `Home rules', anything and everything to do¶ with `home' can and does find a place here and, as I indicated above, even the popular film Home Alone is pressed into service as a story¶ about `racial' invasion.¶ Cohen's method also relies to no little extent on various caricatures.¶ There is the parody of an undifferentiated anti-racism which is always¶ crude and simplistic in its explanations, always dogmatic and authoritarian¶ in its prescriptions. `It is no longer possible', Cohen claims at one¶ point, `to call a spade a spade . . . because the level of connotations,¶ which is always open to multiple associations, including racist ones,¶ has been shut down ``By Order''.' 48 No one would deny that much¶ that is called anti-racism has been ill-considered or counter-productive¶ or simple-minded, but to suggest that this is the whole story - and this is¶ the picture one gets from Cohen's account - appears simply bad faith.¶ Nor does one get any sense from his account that some forms of antiracism¶ have been subjected to the most rigorous critique - from other¶ anti-racists, notably in this journal. So, too, there is the distorted depiction¶ of teachers bearing the anti-racist message. In Cohen's world, they¶ are always middle class, relying on a `deficit model' of working-class¶ culture, and engaged in a `civilising mission', believing themselves to¶ be `the bringers of reason and tolerance to those gripped by unreason,¶ prejudice and ignorance'.49 Doubtless such attitudes exist, but Cohen's¶ depiction is so one-dimensional; it has no room for complexity or¶ difference. If it did, he could not take up the position that he does, of¶ the one who really knows. It is also a position that takes Cohen on¶ to dangerous ground in which, at times at least, it seems as though¶ all authority is bad (in the language of Foucault, it is tutelary and¶ constitutes surveillance) and all resistance to authority good, or at¶ least understandable.50¶ Racism without history¶ Not only is racism psychologised and individualised. It also becomes¶ something that is universal. Cohen's colleague Rustin makes this¶ clear in the article cited earlier,51 while Cohen himself states that¶ `Every language and culture, in so far as it is able, privileges its own¶ practices, using them to define its own origins, and defend its own¶ boundaries. Every form of ethnicity, if it has the means, is ethnocentric.¶ The key word is if.'52 (There is a dangerous slippage here in that¶ `ethnocentrism' is not the same as racism and, while it may turn into¶ it, it need not and frequently does not.) What is not explained by¶ either Cohen or Rustin is why some individuals or some groups are¶ `more' racist or less racist than others. Racism is thus completely¶ removed from history, but what is also not explained in this regard is¶ why it is more or less virulent at particular times and in particular¶ places. A psychoanalytic account like Cohen's simply cannot account¶ for such twentieth-century events as the massacre of the Armenians by the Turks in 1914 or the destruction of the Jews, or indeed anything¶ else. `To deny racism its history', Cohen had written in 1988, `is to¶ surrender to a kind of fatalism.'53 **Yet that is precisely the position**¶ **he has come to occupy**.¶ The question is not whether or not racism operates at an unconscious¶ level. There is clearly too much evidence to deny this. The question¶ is, rather, how important is this unconscious working? Should it¶ be, can it be, the focus of anti-racist strategy? For Cohen, however,¶ the unconscious has become all; nothing else really matters. Here we¶ have reached the site of a psychoanalytic determinism - a curious inversion¶ of the crude materialism that Cohen would rightly distance himself¶ from. It is a determinism which holds that we are not at all rational¶ thinking beings, but that we are driven all the time by forces beyond¶ our control. Our attachment to a belief or an ideal, our cultural preferences,¶ all these are to be explained by some supposed psychoanalytic¶ interpretation. **There is no hope, then**, except in the form of psychoanalytic¶ or psychotherapeutic treatment and it is this which Cohen¶ seeks to offer through his cultural studies approach.

**1ar no-scale up**

**Psychoanalysis can’t be scaled up to explain society or politics**

**Sharpe 10** [Matthew, lecturer, philosophy and psychoanalytic studies, and Geoff Goucher, senior lecturer, literary and psychoanalytic studies, Deakin University

Matthew and Geoff, *Žižek and Politics: An Introduction*, p. 182-185]

Can we bring some order to this host of criticisms? It is remarkable that, for all the criticisms of Žižek’s political Romanticism, no one has argued that the ultra- extremism of Žižek’s political position might reflect his untenable attempt to shape his model for political action on the curative final moment in clinical psychoanalysis. The differences between these two realms, listed in Figure 5.1, are nearly too many and too **great** to restate – which has perhaps caused the **theoretical oversight**. The key thing is this. Lacan’s notion of traversing the fantasy involves the radical transformation of people’s subjective structure: a refounding of their most elementary beliefs about themselves, the world, and sexual difference. This is undertaken in the security of the clinic, on the basis of the analysands’ voluntary desire to overcome their inhibitions, symptoms and anxieties. As a clinical and existential process, it has its own independent importance and authenticity. The analysands, in transforming their subjective world, change the way they regard the objective, shared social reality outside the clinic. But they **do not transform** the world.The political relevance of the clinic can only be (a) as a supporting moment in ideology critique or (b) as a fully- fl edged model of politics, provided that the political subject and its social object are ultimately identical. Option (*b*), Žižek’s option, rests on the idea, not only of a subject who becomes who he is only through his (mis) recognition of the objective sociopolitical order, but whose ‘traversal of the fantasy’ is immediately identical with his transformation of the socio- political system or Other. Hence, according to Žižek, we can analyse the institutional embodiments of this Other using psychoanalytic categories. In Chapter 4, we saw Žižek’s resulting elision of the distinction between the (subjective) Ego Ideal and the (objective) Symbolic Order. This leads him to analyse our entire culture as a single subject–object, whose perverse (or perhaps even psychotic) structure is expressed in every manifestation of contemporary life. Žižek’s decisive political- theoretic errors, one substantive and the other methodological, are different (see Figure 5.1) The substantive problem is to equate any political change worth the name with the total change of the subject–object that is, today, global capitalism. This is a type of change that can only mean equating politics with violent regime change, and ultimately embracing dictatorial government, as Žižek now frankly avows (*IDLC* 412–19). We have seen that the ultra- political form of Žižek’s criticism of everyone else, the theoretical Left and the wider politics, is that no one is sufficiently radical for him – even, we will discover, Chairman Mao. We now see that this is because Žižek’s model of politics proper is modelled on a pre- critical analogy with the total transformation of a subject’s entire subjective structure, at the end of the talking cure. For what could the concrete consequences of this governing analogy be? We have seen that Žižek equates the individual fantasy with the collective identity of **an entire people**. The social fantasy, he says, structures the regime’s ‘inherent transgressions’: at once subjects’ habitual ways of living the letter of the law, and the regime’s myths of origin and of identity. If political action is modelled on the Lacanian cure, it must involve the complete ‘traversal’ – in Hegel’s terms, the abstract versus the determinate negation – of all these lived myths, practices and habits. Politics must involve the periodic founding of entire new subject–objects. Providing the model for this set of ideas, the fi rst Žižekian political subject was Schelling’s divided God, who gave birth to the entire Symbolic Order before the beginning of time (*IDLC* 153; *OB* 144–8). But can the political theorist reasonably hope or expect that subjects will simply give up on all their inherited ways, myths and beliefs, all in one world- creating moment? And can they be legitimately asked or expected to, on the basis of a set of ideals whose legitimacy they will only retrospectively see, after they have acceded to the Great Leap Forward? And if they do not – for Žižek laments that today subjects are politically disengaged in unprecedented ways – what means can the theorist and his allies use to move them to do so?

**Can’t scale up Lacanian psychoanalysis to the state level**

**Epstein 10** [senior lecturer in government and IR – University of Sydney

Charlotte, “Who speaks? Discourse, the subject and the study of identity in international politics,” *European Journal of International Relations* XX(X) 1–24]

To be clear, this move is not intended to deny the intimate links between discourse and subjectivity. The earlier foray into Lacanian thought served precisely to underline the centrality of discourse to both the making and subsequent analysis of the subject. But by the same token it also drew out what is required to wield the discourse approach effec­tively in IR. Indeed Lacan’s analysis emphasizes the sheer complexity of the dynamics of a highly individual phenomenon (identity), and consequently the difficulties in taking this level as the starting point for analysing all other levels at which identity is politically at play.13 As the discipline that positions itself at the highest level of analysis (the supra­national), IR cannot maintain its focus at the level where some of the finer debates around subjectivity take place (see for example, Butler, 1997). The issue here is one of discipli­nary specificity, or, in other words, equipping IR for what it wants to do; and the solu­tion proposed is one of suspension or bracketing. To restate this important point differently, at the individual level, subjectivities and subject-positions remain coextensive. The distinction between subject-positions and subjectivities becomes operative once the analysis shifts beyond the individual level. This distinction thus offers a theoretically cogent way of studying identity while bracket­ing some of its more unwieldy dimensions that may, moreover, not be pertinent at the levels at which IR casts its focus. It renders the discourse approach operative for IR, because it makes it possible to study *state* identities, without having to presume that states have feelings, or indeed enter into questions of how much exactly are they like people, or what kind of selves do they possess. What the discourse approach analyses, then, is the ways in which actors — crucially, whether individuals or states — define themselves by stepping into a particular subject-position carved out by a discourse. In taking on the ‘I/we’ of that discourse, actors’ identities are produced in a very specific way. In doing so, they are establishing them­selves as the subjects of particular discourses, such as the anti-whaling discourse, and thereby marking themselves as ‘anti-whalers’. How, then, do discursive subject-positions differ from Wendt’s (1999: 227–229) role identities, where the actor is similarly seen as stepping into institutionalized roles (such as professor and student)? The crucial differ­ence is that the concept of subject-position does not harbour any assumption about any primordial self supporting these roles. Importantly, this is not to say that the self does not exist — that the professor or student have no selves — but simply that the concept is not relevant to the analysis of the discursive construction of identity, especially when taken to the interstate level.

**2ac positivism good**

**Valid, descriptive theories of the world are an essential prerequisite to emancipatory critique – epistemic shifts from Eurocentric thought are impossible without reclaiming the concept of objectivity.**

**Jones 04** – (August 2004, Branwen Gruffydd, PhD in Development Studies from the University of Sussex, Senior Lecturer in International Political Economy at Goldsmiths University of London, “From Eurocentrism to Epistemological Internationalism: power, knowledge and objectivity in International Relations,” Paper presented at Theorising Ontology, Annual Conference of the International Association for Critical Realism, University of Cambridge, http://www.csog.group.cam.ac.uk/iacr/papers/Jones.pdf)

The rejection of positivism which is a central element of recent critiques of mainstream IR has tended to extend to rejection of the notion and possibility of science itself. Science, often written in quotation marks ‘science’, is seen as inherently part of the project of Enlightenment-modernity, a mode of technical instrumental knowledge which is necessarily a means of control and domination of both society and nature 22 . An important component of the critique of the positivist orthodoxy is exposure of its coincidence with the interests of the powerful. Dominant ideas and methods which rest on claims of value-free scientificity and neutrality are shown to mask or legitimise the interests of the powerful and the exercise of power and domination. The very claim to be able to produce value-free, neutral scientific truth is rejected in a world of inherently conflicting interests. Instead, the ‘illusion of objectivism must be replaced with the recognition that knowledge is always constituted in reflection of interests’ (Ashley 1981: 207).

There are **two kinds of conflation** which are embedded within this critical stance. The first conflates the contents of natural scientific knowledge with the uses to which it is put in society. Much scientific knowledge, in both natural and social sciences, has indeed been produced by and in the explicit interests of the powerful, an integral part of the construction and maintenance of unequal and oppressive social orders, and the administration of accumulation and imperialism. But it is **important not to conflate the contents of knowledge with its social conditions of production and use**. When scientific knowledge is developed for and utilised in the service of oppression or commercial profit as opposed to the increased satisfaction of human needs, the oppression results from social forces, not from the cognitive properties of scientific knowledge 23:

Even assuming all the results of a research project are objectively true, the area chosen for investigation may be determined by contentious ideological assumptions or practical interests. Thus it is likely that drug companies have concentrated on artificially synthesized drugs to the detriment of research into those occurring naturally in plants; and it is certain that military might and commercial profit are the chief determinants of which secrets of nature get uncovered. In a world where science was funded with a view to satisfying human needs and conserving planetary resources, quite different discoveries might be made – neither more or less objective than the findings of modern science, but useful for different purposes. (Collier 1994: 180; see also Collier 1979).

The second conflation reduces scientific method to a positivist approach, equating positivist social science with social science per se with technical instrumentality. It is often asserted that the problem with positivist IR is that it applies the method of natural sciences or ‘the scientific method’ to the study of social phenomena 24 . **This is a mischaracterisation** of the real nature of the problem, which is that positivism first misunderstands the method of natural science, and then applies these misunderstood methodological principles to the study of social phenomena (Bhaskar 1997). Recognition of this enables us to retrieve the possibility of a particular form of social inquiry which can be called scientific or objective from abandonment along with positivism 25 .

A positivist understanding of scientific inquiry rests on a Humean notion of cause as constant conjunction between empirical variables or events, and explanation as the discovery of empirical regularities and correlations. When such empirical regularities are discovered they can be used to make predictions. This assumes an empiricist ontology and epistemology: the world consists only of that which is available to direct experience, and the only source of knowledge is through direct sensory experience. Critiques of positivism are correct to question these assumptions about knowledge and the world, but they are not correct in equating this with scientific method. Positivism consists of philosophers’ misunderstanding of the actual practice of natural science. **The practice of experiment is central** to the method of some natural sciences. A scientific experiment involves establishing closure: creating an artificial environment where the external and internal conditions are controlled so as to isolate particular features and mechanisms. This enables scientists to discover about aspects of reality which are not empirical : the causal properties and necessary ways-of-operating of specific mechanisms in nature which **are real** because they have the capacity to bring about change, given appropriate conditions and inputs, **but** are **not empirical** – they cannot be seen, only the effects of their operation can be seen. **This non-positivist, philosophical realist theory of science**, epistemology and ontology **is very different** from the positivist misunderstanding of scientific method and explanation. Scientific theories and the discovery of natural laws refer to real properties and causal powers of structured entities, not empirical events and regularities (Bhaskar 1997).

What are the implications of this non-positivist theory of science for social inquiry? The fact of human reflexivity rules out the possibility of experiment and prediction in social inquiry, because it is impossible to establish closure in the social world 26 . Ideas are causally efficacious: through informing social action ideas have causal efficacy in codetermining or influencing what actually happens, including (usually as an unintended outcome) the reproduction of social relations. This means that ideas are part of the object of social inquiry, as is fore-grounded by all variants of so-called reflexive approaches in International Relations (Keohane 1988). When we study society part of what we study includes the ideas that are held in that society. But we also study other aspects of society which are irreducible to ideas or individuals – real but non-empirical structures of social relations, historically-specific socially-produced material conditions, and so on.

This non-positivist theory of knowledge and the world gives rise to a notion of objectivity which does not entail the positivist commitment to value-free neutrality. Philosophical realism holds that the world consists of natural and social objects or entities which exist and have particular properties and causal powers independently of what, if anything, is known about them 27 . Knowledge about different aspects of the material and social world can be non-existent, partial, more or less adequate, more or less right or wrong. This informs a notion of objectivity which refers to what is the case, regardless of what is thought or believed to be the case:

The first and central use of the word “objectivity” is to refer to what is true independently of any subject judging it to be true. To say that it is an objective fact that the Earth is the third planet from the Sun is to say that this is so whether or not anyone knows or believes it, or even is able to formulate the statement. To say that kindness is an objective value is to say that it is a value, whether or not anyone judges it to be a value; it would be a value even if the whole of society regarded it as a culpable weakness and it was only practised shamefacedly as a private foible. (Collier 2003: 134-5).

This notion of objectivity does not entail a belief that human beings can acquire absolute truth and certain knowledge about either social or natural phenomena. It is possible to acknowledge that knowledge is always inherently fallible and socially constructed while retaining a notion of the objective reality which ideas are about. This allows commitment to judgemental rationality – the possibility of judging between different ideas on the basis of their relative adequacy, in terms of their relation to objective reality 28 . In social inquiry objectivity does not imply some form of external position of independence ‘outside’ society 29 . All knowledge is socially produced; but all knowledge is also about something which exists independently of the knowledge about it. (This is the case even for knowledge about ideas).

The ‘common-sense’ view pervading recent discussions of epistemology, ontology and methodology in IR asserts that objectivity implies value-free neutrality. However, **objective social inquiry has an inherent tendency to be critical**, in various senses. **To the extent that objective knowledge provides a better and more adequate account of reality than other ideas, such knowledge is inherently critical (implicitly or explicitly) of those ideas**. 30 In other words **critical social inquiry does not (or not only) manifest its ‘criticalness’ through self-claimed labels of being critical or siding with the oppressed, but through the substantive critique of prevailing ideas**. Objective social knowledge constitutes a specific form of criticism: **explanatory critique**. The critique of dominant ideas or ideologies is elaborated through providing a more adequate explanation of aspects of the world, and in so doing **exposing what is wrong with the dominant ideology**. This may also entail revealing the social conditions which give rise to ideologies, thus exposing the necessary and causal relation between particular social relations and particular ideological conceptions.

In societies which are constituted by unequal structures of social relations giving rise to unequal power and conflicting interests, the reproduction of those structured relations is in the interests of the powerful, whereas transformation of existing structured relations is in the interests of the weak. **Because ideas inform social action they are casually efficacious** either in securing the reproduction of existing social relations (usually as an unintended consequence of social practice), or in informing social action aimed at transforming social relations. This is why **ideas cannot be ‘neutral’**. Ideas which provide a misrepresentation of the nature of society, the causes of unequal social conditions, and the conflicting interests of the weak and powerful, will tend to help secure the reproduction of prevailing social relations. Ideas which provide a more adequate account of the way society is structured and how structured social relations produce concrete conditions of inequality and exploitation can potentially inform efforts to change those social relations. In this sense, ideas which are false are ideological and, in serving to promote the reproduction of the status quo and avoid attempts at radical change, are in the interests of the powerful. An account which is objective will contradict ideological ideas, implicitly or explicitly criticising them for their false or flawed accounts of reality. The criticism here arises not, or not only, from pointing out the coincidence between ideologies and the interests of the powerful, nor from a prior normative stance of solidarity with the oppressed, **but from exposing the flaws in dominant ideologies through a more adequate account** of the nature and causes of social conditions 31 .

**A normative commitment to the oppressed must entail a commitment to truth and objectivity, because true ideas are in the interest of the oppressed, false ideas are in the interest of the oppressors**. In other words, **the best way to declare solidarity with the oppressed is to declare one’s commitment to objective inquiry** 32 . As Nzongola-Ntalaja (1986: 10) has put it:

It is a question of whether one analyses society from the standpoint of the **dominant groups**, who **have a vested interest in mystifying** the way **society** works, or from the standpoint of ordinary people, who have nothing to lose from truthful analyses of their predicament.

The **philosophical realist theory of science**, objectivity and explanatory critique thus provides an **alternative response to the relationship between knowledge and power**. **Instead of choosing perspectives on the basis of our ethical commitment to the cause of the oppressed** and to emancipatory social change, **we should choose between contending ideas on the basis of which provides a better account of objective social reality**. This will inherently provide a critique of the ideologies which, by virtue of their flawed account of the social world, serve the interests of the powerful.

Exemplars of explanatory critique in International Relations are provided in the work of scholars such as Siba Grovogui, James Gathii, Anthony Anghie, Bhupinder Chimni, Jacques Depelchin, Hilbourne Watson, Robert Vitalis, Sankaran Krishna, Michel-Rolph Trouillot 33 . Their work provides critiques of central categories, theories and discourses in the theory and practice of IR and narratives of world history, including assumptions about sovereignty, international society, international law, global governance, the nature of the state. They expose the ideological and racialised nature of central aspects of IR through a critical examination of both the long historical trajectory of imperial ideologies regarding colonized peoples, and the actual practices of colonialism and decolonisation in the constitution of international orders and local social conditions. Their work identifies the flaws in current ideas by revealing how they systematically misrepresent or ignore the actual history of social change in Africa, the Caribbean and other regions of the Third World, both past and present – during both colonial and neo-colonial periods of the imperial world order. Their work reveals how racism, violence, exploitation and dispossession, colonialism and neo-colonialism have been central to the making of contemporary international order and contemporary doctrines of international law, sovereignty and rights, and how such themes are glaring in their absence from histories and theories of international relations and international history.

Objective social knowledge which accurately depicts and explains social reality has these qualities by virtue of its **relation to its object, not its subject**. As Collier argues, “The science/ideology distinction is an epistemological one, not a social one.” (Collier 1979: 60). So, for example, in the work of Grovogui, Gathii and Depelchin, the general perspective and knowledge of conditions in and the history of Africa might be due largely to the African social origins of the authors. However the judgement that their accounts are superior to those of mainstream IR rests not on the fact that the authors are African, but on the greater adequacy of their accounts with respect to the actual historical and contemporary production of conditions and change in Africa and elsewhere in the Third World. The criteria for choosing their accounts over others derives from the relation between the ideas and their objects (what they are about), not from the relation between the ideas and their subjects (who produced them). It is vital to retain explicitly some commitment to objectivity in social inquiry, to the notion that the proper criterion for judging ideas about the world lies in what they say about the world, not whose ideas they are.

A fundamental problem which underlies the origin and reproduction of IR’s eurocentricity is the overwhelming dominance of ideas produced in and by the west, and the wilful and determined **silencing of the voices and histories of the colonised**. **But the result of this fundamental problem is flawed knowledge about the world**. **Eurocentricity is therefore a dual problem concerning both the authors and the content of knowledge, and cannot be resolved through normative commitments alone**. It is not only the voices of the colonised, but the histories of colonialism, which have been glaring in their absence from the discipline of International Relations.

Overcoming eurocentricity therefore requires not only concerted effort from the centre to create space and listen to hitherto marginalised voices, but **also commitment to correcting the flaws in prevailing knowledge** – **and it is not only ‘the Other’ who can and should elaborate this critique**. A vitally important implication of objectivity is that **it is the responsibility of European and American, just as much as non-American or non-European scholars, to decolonise IR**. The importance of objectivity in social inquiry defended here can perhaps **be seen as a form of epistemological internationalism**. **It is not necessary to be African to attempt to tell a more accurate account of the history of Europe’s role in the making of the contemporary Africa** and the rest of the world, for example, or to write counter-histories of ‘the expansion of international society’ which detail the systematic barbarity of so-called Western civilisation. It is not necessary to have been colonised to recognise and document the violence, racism, genocide and dispossession which have characterised European expansion over five hundred years.

**2ac psychoanalysis racist**

**Psychoanalysis is antiblack.**

**Frosh 13**

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This article explores the prospects for a psychological contribution to postcolonial thought through the mediation of psychoanalysis. It does not attempt to deconstruct or historicize postcolonialism itself, at least to any significant extent, further than to state the need for a postcolonial theory of the subject that incorporates an understanding of affective and “subjective” issues—precisely the area with which psychoanalysis is primarily concerned. The positioning of psychoanalysis as a progressive, critical approach is not, however, a particularly secure one. The central difficulty is the way **psychoanalysis has frequently aligned itself with conformist and even “repressive” tendencies that reproduce colonial and at times racist tropes**, often in the context of psychological individualism, but sometimes in an explicitly political manner (Jacoby, 1983; Frosh, 1999). **This is despite** the existence of **a contrary urge in psychoanalysis**, especially reflected in the “critical theory” tradition that made use of it in the 1950s and 1960s (e.g., Marcuse, 1955) **but also in the work of several followers of Lacan** (Stavrakakis, 2007) and some British social reformists (Rustin, 1991). The tendency of American ego psychology to give prominence to “adaptationist” perspectives has been widely noted and has been criticized both by political radicals (e.g., Jacoby, 1975, 1983) and by Lacanians (cf. Roudinesco, 1990, p. 175: “According to [Lacan] such a psychological science had been affected by the ideals of the society in which it was produced”). The adoption of a strong antihomosexual bias by orthodox mid-20th century psychoanalysts has had particularly damaging consequences for the practice and reputation of psychoanalysis as a whole, even though recent attempts to reconcile psychoanalysis and queer theory are beginning to bear fruit (Frosh, 2006; Campbell, 2000). Psychoanalytic assumptions about the nature of a civilized mind will be briefly discussed below; but **overt forms of racism**, notably antisemitism, **have also on occasions been evident in its institutional practices** (Frosh, 2005, 2012). Most relevantly, **colonialism is a deeply problematic issue for psychoanalysis, because it is engrained in much psychoanalytic thinking and terminology, and this has effects on contemporary theory and practice in ways that are not always recognized**. For example, as discussed further below, psychoanalysts often draw on the language of the “primitive” to refer to unreasoning elements of people’s psychic lives. Thus, a notion that someone might be evincing a “primitive fantasy of destruction” is a very familiar one, but what is not acknowledged is that this terminology not only has its roots in a colonial opposition between primitive and civilized, but it also reproduces this division “unconsciously” when it is used. This is to say, the terminology is full of associations that position some ideas as civilized and some as primitive, reinforcing a developmental scheme that is heavily inflected by assumptions about the relationship between seemingly irrational and rational thought processes— and in particular who might “own” them. The history of this stretches back to the beginnings of psychoanalysis, reflecting the colonial and racist (including antisemitic) assumptions prevalent in the Europe out of which psychoanalysis arose. Freud deployed the idea that the thinking of what he called “savages” was not only contrasted to “civilized” mentality, but also revealed the origins of mental life both for the culture as a whole (the contemporary savage being a throwback to the precursors of modern “man”) and for the individual (the savage mind being like that of a child). For example, at the beginning of Totem and Taboo, subtitled Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics, he wrote, There are men still living who, as we believe, stand very near to primitive man, far nearer than we do, and whom we therefore regard as his direct heirs and representatives. Such is our view of those whom we describe as savages or half-savages; and their mental life must have a peculiar interest for us if we are right in seeing in it a well-preserved picture of an early stage of our own development. (Freud, 1913, pp. 1) The repetitive first person plural pronoun is notable here: “we believe,” “we do,” “we regard,” “our view,” “we describe,” “us,” “our own development”. The savage is the other, the not “us”; though as will be outlined briefly below, there is quite a degree of subtlety in what this might mean. Freud also was explicit about how “savages” share attributes with children, both in terms of how they think, and how they are thought about by “we adults”. “It seems to me quite possible,” he wrote (p. 99), “that the same may be true of our attitude toward the psychology of those races that have remained at the animistic level as is true of our attitude toward the mental life of children, which we adults no longer understand and whose fullness and delicacy of feeling we have in consequence so greatly underestimated”. The adoption of a binary between savage and civilized is not perhaps intrinsically racist and colonialist, but the assumption that the latter always displaces the former and, more importantly, that the terms can be applied to different people, is. In Freud’s thought, savage societies hold to various types of irrational thinking (concreteness, mystical attitudes to death, etc.), processes reviewed throughout Totem and Taboo (Freud, 1913) and explicitly linked with children in more “civilized” societies. For instance, in writing of wish fulfillment (p. 84), Freud commented, If children and primitive men find play and imitative representation enough for them, that is not a sign of their being unassuming in our sense or of their resignedly accepting their actual impotence. It is the easily understandable result of the paramount virtue they ascribe to their wishes, of the will that is associated with those wishes and of the methods by which those wishes operate. These ways of thinking make them “primitive” in the developmental sense that they should normatively be overcome by more advanced modes of being—a theme also taken up in the analysis of religion in The Future of an Illusion (Freud, 1927). Although Freud himself does not press for political action that does this— he was interested rather in how science might overcome superstition—the general approach is consistent with the justification of colonialism and even slavery on the grounds of the inherent inferiority of the primitive. There is another subtle turn here, however, that is specific to Freud and the early history of psychoanalysis, relating to the intense antisemitism of Freud’s time. Gilman (1993) showed how deeply rooted antisemitism was in the beliefs of many Europeans, markedly so in the Viennese among whom psychoanalysis grew up, and how widespread were ideas such as that Jews were castrated (hence, feminine), that they were “oriental” and maybe even “black,” and that they were primitive in the religious sense (Christianity having displaced Judaism) but also psychologically, socially, and racially. Gilman suggested that Freud, consciously or unconsciously, constructed some of the most conspicuously radical elements of his theory in response to this. For instance, Gilman argued that the trope that Jewish men are castrated through circumcision is replaced in psychoanalysis by the idea that the castration complex is universal, so that all people— including the most gentile—follow a model set by the Jews. This Freudian impulse to disarm antisemitism by positioning the Jews as the truly civilized people (which was mirrored in the idea that as nationalism took hold in Europe at the end of the 19th century, the Jews might be the only “true Europeans” oriented toward a transnational comity) results in a shifting of the “other” of European society away from the Jew and toward the “savage,” that is, the colonized, Black “primitive” of slavery and the European imagination. This theoretical move attempts to relieve Jews from the opprobrium of primitivity (unsuccessfully, as was demonstrated unequivocally just a few years later) by passing it onto the colonized other. There is always a danger with summary accounts such as this one, that the history it sketches simplistically reduces a tension-filled and ambiguous process to a linear narrative. It is certainly the case, for example, that psychoanalysis was from the start full of impulses that challenged and subverted the assumptions of the societies in which it found itself. Indeed, this is one reason for the mixture of explosive embrace and resistance that characterized the response to psychoanalysis: On the one hand, it fuelled enormous shifts in self-perception, artistic creativity and even political and economic thought (not confined to outspoken radicals— see, e.g., John Maynard Keynes’, 1919, 1936, post-World War 1 use of Freudian ideas to argue for the importance of emotional factors in economics). In many respects, it is precisely in the tension between what Toril Moi (1989, p. 197) called, in relation to the attitude of psychoanalysis to femininity, Freud’s “colonizing impulse” and its contrary acceptance of “the logic of another scene”—the specific expressiveness of unconscious life—that the creativity of psychoanalysis inheres. Nevertheless, consideration of the rootedness of much psychoanalytic thought in colonial assumptions is important not merely to sweep away the ideological detritus, but also to identify where the investments of psychoanalysis can provide leverage for understanding the place of psychosocial theory in the postcolonial project. A further example of the “detritus” might be found in some work by Celia Brickman (2003), which offers an extensive account of how the language of primitivity infects psychoanalysis. Like Gilman, she notes how Freud’s “universalizing reconfigurations” (p. 165) turn the despised Jewish body into the model for humanity as a whole. From the perspective of postcolonialism, however, this move, which is subversive in relation to antisemitism, is “made at considerable expense,” because “the modalities of inferiority previously ascribed to the Jews did not simply disappear but were ambivalently displaced onto a series of abjected others: primitives, women and homosexuals”. Brickman elaborated on how the assimilation of the Jewish other to Europeanism positions psychoanalysis as a colonialist discipline and incorporates racism into its fabric of argumentation. Categorized as a member of a primitive race, Freud repudiated primitivity, locating himself and his work within European civilization, with both its scientific and colonizing enterprises, and replacing the opposition of Aryan/Jew with the opposition of civilized/primitive (p. 167). In relation to psychoanalytic practice, primitive usually means either or both of fundamental and irrational. A primitive impulse is never a rational one; it always arises unmediated from the unconscious and hence has not been worked over by the secondary processes of thought. The sleight of hand then is to link this kind of primitivity with the irrationality of the colonized other and then to make rationality itself the marker of civilized human society— or even of what it means to be human at all. After all, when one loses one’s power of reason, one ceases to be able to function as human at least to the degree that equal citizenship is at risk. In the colonial context, this justifies colonization: irrational primitives cannot be trusted to run their own affairs; the civilized European is justifiably superior, for everyone’s good. Commenting on Freud’s anthropological speculation, Brickman (2003) noted how the psyche comes to be envisaged as a representation of colonialism and hence how Freud explicitly parallels the structure of the mind with that of (colonial) society: [By] correlating the progression of narcissism, the oedipal stage, and maturity with animism (savagery), religion (barbarianism), and science (civilisation), Totem and Taboo transposed the racial assumptions of the cultural evolutionary scale onto the modern psyche . . . The psychoanalytically conceived norm of mature subjectivity was, by virtue of the correlation of libidinal development with the cultural evolutionary scale, a rationalism whose unstated color was white, just as its unstated gender was male. (p. 72) **Even though these Freudian assumptions are mainly unstated, the terminology and the conceptual baggage of the savage” and the barbarian remained with psychoanalysis for some time and is still lying only just-dormant in those references to “primitive feelings**” that often can be found in clinical psychoanalytic discussions. A certain **mode of rationality** is given priority here, **which is attached to masculine “reason”** as it has developed over the period of industrial modernity (Frosh, 1994). That which falls short of it—the **“unreason” attributed to women, children, and primitive cultures**—is derogated and made subject to reason’s imperialism. This is not, of course, to imply that one should fully affirm unreason as a simple alternative to colonial reason; it is rather to claim that the reason– unreason opposition is itself rooted in a colonial mentality that supports it and narrows the range of what is culturally validated. In a similar vein, Neil Altman (2000, p. 591) commented, “When Freud the ego psychologist said, ‘Where id was, there ego shall be,’ he defined the goals of psychoanalysis in terms reminiscent of the colonial mentality. In this sense, the structure of racism is built into structural psychoanalytic theory, particularly in its ego-psychological form”. This claim is itself resonant of the critique of ego psychology mentioned earlier. The argument runs that because this form of psychoanalysis assumes reason to be superior to unreason, its concurrent assumption that unreason is characteristic of “primitives” means that it is promoting a colonizing process (reason trumping unreason; civilized displacing primitive) that is embedded in a racist paradigm. As an instructive aside, it is perhaps worth noting that ego psychology itself has a complex set of origins, one of which regularly gets lost when its notions of adaptation are pronounced solely conformist and colonialist. The occlusion here is of the personal history of most of the postSecond World War American ego psychologists as migrants or refugees from Nazi Europe. Their concerns were indeed to find creative ways to adapt to a new society; in addition, they were exercised by the explosion of irrationality that had overwhelmed their lost homelands, and their impulse to find ways to fend this off and protect future societies from its recurrence was perhaps understandable.

**1ar psychoanalysis racist**

**Psychoanalysis reduces racism to an interpersonal dynamic which obfuscates the structural factors driving exclusion**

**Beaulieu, ‘3**

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In Psychoanalysis and Black Novels, Claudia Tate explains why psychoanalytic theory has largely been avoided by Black intellectuals. Focusing on the dynamics of family\* relations while ignoring the social forces that precondition the family environment, **the psychoanalytic** **model "relegates the bleak material circumstances of real lives to the** **background**." Carrying "irritating baggage" with it as it isolates the Black family from the social forces that condition it, psychoanalytic the-ory "has avoided examining the relationship of social oppression to fam-ily dysfunction and the blighted inner worlds of individuals" (16). Thus ¶ scholars who study African American literature "shun" psychoanalysis **because it effectively "effaces racism and recasts its effects as a person**-**ality disorder** **caused by familial rather than social pathology**" (16). Be- ¶ cause of the continuation of racial oppression and "the demand for black ¶ literature to identify and militate against it," remarks Tate, "black liter- ¶ ature evolves so as to prove that racism exists in the real world and is ¶ not a figment of the black imagination" (17).

**Psychoanalysis cannot be the foundation for ethics or the political---it’s negativity denies any chance of emancipation while reproducing the logic of the squo**

**Gordon 1**—psychotherapist living and working in London (Paul, **Psychoanalysis and Racism**: The politics of defeat Race & Class v. 42, n. 4)

The postmodernists' problem is that they cannot live with disappointment. All the tragedies of the political project of emancipation ± the evils of Stalinism in particular ± are seen as the inevitable product of men and women trying to create a better society. But, **rather than engage in a critical assessment of how**, for instance, **radical political movements go wrong, they discard the emancipatory project** and impulse itself. The postmodernists, as Sivanandan puts it, blame modernity for having failed them: `the intellectuals and academics have fled into discourse and deconstruction and representation ± as though to interpret the world is more important than to change it, **as though changing the interpretation is all we could do in a changing world'**.58 To justify their flight from a politics holding out the prospect of radical change through self-activity, the disappointed intellectuals and abundant intellectual alibis for themselves in the very work they champion, including, in Cohen's case, psychoanalysis. What Marshall Berman says of Foucault seems true also of **psychoanalysis**; that it **offers `a world-historical alibi' for the passivity and helplessness** felt by many in the 1970s, **and that it has nothing but contempt for those naive enough to imagine that it might be possible for modern human-kind to be free.** At every turn for such theorists, as Berman argues, whether in sexuality, politics, even our imagination, we are nothing but prisoners: there is no freedom in Foucault's world, because his language forms a seamless web, a cage far more airtight than anything Weber ever dreamed of, into which no life can break . . . **There is no point in trying to resist** the **oppressions** and injustices of modern life, since even our dreams of freedom only add more links to our chains; however, once we grasp the futility of it all, at least we can relax.59 Cohen's **political defeatism** and his conviction in the explanatory power of his new faith **of psychoanalysis lead him to be** contemptuous and **dismissive of any attempt at political solidarity or collective action.** For him, `communities' are always `imagined', which, in his view, means based on fantasy, while different forms of working-class organisation, from the craft fraternity to the revolutionary group, are dismissed as `fantasies of self-sufficient combination'.60 **In this scenario, the idea that people might come together**, think together, analyse together **and act together as rational beings is impossible**. **The idea of a genuine community of equals becomes a pure fantasy**, a `symbolic retrieval' of something that never existed in the first place: `Community is a magical device for conjuring something apparently solidary out of the thin air of modern times, a mechanism of re-enchantment.' As for history, it is always false, since `We are always dealing with invented traditions.'61 Now, **this is** not only non- sense, but **dangerous nonsense** at that. Is history `always false'? Did the Judeocide happen or did it not? And did not some people even try to resist it? Did slavery exist or did it not, and did not people resist that too and, ultimately, bring it to an end? And are communities always `imagined'? Or, as Sivanandan states, are they beaten out on the smithy of a people's collective struggle? Furthermore, all attempts to legislate against ideology are bound to fail because they have to adopt `technologies of surveillance and control identical to those used by the state'. Note here the Foucauldian language to set up the notion that all `surveillance' is bad. But is it? No society can function without surveillance of some kind. The point, surely, is that there should be a public conversation about such moves and that those responsible for implementing them be at all times accountable. To equate, as Cohen does, a council poster about `Stamping out racism' with Orwell's horrendous prophecy in 1984 of a boot stamping on a human face is ludicrous and insulting. (Orwell's image was intensely personal and destructive; the other is about the need to challenge not individuals, but a collective evil.) Cohen reveals himself to be deeply ambivalent about punitive action against racists, as though punishment or other firrm action against them (or anyone else transgressing agreed social or legal norms) precluded `understand- ing' or even help through psychotherapy. It is indeed a strange kind of `anti-racism' that portrays active racists as the `victims', those who are in need of `help'. But this is where Cohen's argument ends up. **In their move from politics to the academy and the world of `discourse', the postmodernists may have simply exchanged one grand narrative**, historical materialism, **for** another, **psychoanalysis**.62 For psychoanalysis is a grand narrative, par excellence. It is a theory that seeks to account for the world and which recognises few limits on its explanatory potential. And the claimed radicalism of psycho- analysis, in the hands of the postmodernists at least, is not a radicalism at all but a prescription for a politics of quietism, fatalism and defeat. **Those wanting to change the world, not just to interpret it, need to look elsewhere.**