**PRISM AFF**

**PRISM Supplement 1 --- CPWW**

**Apathy is a feature of our time – time governance has created a simulation where it’s easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism. Change is possible, but not in the current framework which twists us dry**

**Fisher 9** (Mark Fisher, experiencing the world, writer, theorist, teacher, k-punk. 2009, Zero Books, "Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?", Chapter 1: It’s easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism)//gideon

We do not need to wait for Children of Men's near-future to arrive to see this transformation of culture into museum pieces. The power of capitalist realism derives in part from the way that **capitalism** subsumes and **consumes all** of **previous history**: one effect of its 'system of equivalence' which can assign all cultural objects, whether they are religious iconography, pornography, or Das Kapital, a monetary value. Walk around the British Museum, where you see objects torn from their Iifeworlds and assembled as if on the deck of some Predator spacecraft, and you have a powerful image of this process at work. In the conversion of practices and rituals into merely aesthetic objects, the beliefs of previous cultures are objectively ironized, transformed into artifacts. Capitalist realism is therefore not a particular type of realism; it is more like realism in itself. As Marx and Engels themselves observed in The Communist Manifesto, [Capital] has drowned the most heavenly ecstasies of religious fervor, of chivalrous enthusiasm, of philistine sentimentalism, in the icy water of egotistical calculation. It has resolved personal worth into exchange value, and in place of the numberless indefeasible chartered freedoms, has set up that single, unconscionable freedom - Free Trade. In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted **naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation.** Capitalism is what is left when beliefs have collapsed at the level of ritual or symbolic elaboration, and all that is left is the consumer-spectator, trudging through the ruins and the relics. Yet this turn from belief to aesthetics, from engagement to spectatorship, is held to be one of the virtues of capitalist realism. In claiming, as Badiou puts it, to have' delivered us from the "fatal abstractions" inspired by the "ideologies of the past"', capitalist realism presents itself as a shield protecting us from the perils posed by belief itself. The attitude of ironic distance proper to postmodern capitalism is supposed to immunize us against the seductions of fanaticism. Lowering our expectations, we are told, is a small price to pay for being protected from terror and totalitarianism. 'We live in a contradiction,' Badiou has observed: a brutal state of affairs, profoundly inegalitarian - where all existence is evaluated in terms of money alone - is presented to us as ideal. To justify their conservatism, the partisans of the established order cannot really call it ideal or wonderful. So instead, they have decided to say that all the rest is horrible. Sure, they say, **we may not live in** a condition of perfect **Goodness**. **But** we're lucky that **we don't live in** a condition of **Evil**. Our **democracy is not perfect**. **But it's better than** the **bloody dictatorships**. **Capitalism is unjust**. **But** it's **not criminal like Stalinism**. **We let millions of Africans die of AIDS**, **but we don't make racist nationalist declarations like Milosevic**. **We kill Iraqis with** our **airplanes**, **but we don't cut their throats with machetes** like they do in Rwanda, etc. The 'realism' here is analogous to the deflationary perspective of a depreSSive who believes that any positive state, any hope, is a dangerous illusion. In their account of capitalism, surely the most impressive since Marx's, Deleuze and Guattari describe capitalism as a kind of dark potentiality which haunted all previous social systems. Capital, they argue, is the 'unnamable Thing', the abomination, which primitive and feudal societies 'warded off in advance'. When it actually arrives, capitalism brings with it a massive desacralization of culture. It is a system which is no longer governed by any transcendent Law; on the contrary, it dismantles all such codes, only to re-install them on an ad hoc basis. **The limits of capitalism are not fixed by fiat**, but defined (and redefined) pragmatically and improvisationally. This makes capitalism very much like the Thing in John Carpenter's film of the same name: a monstrous, infinitely plastic entity, capable of metabolizing and absorbing anything with which it comes into contact. Capital, Deleuze and Guattari says, is a 'motley painting of everything that ever was'; a strange hybrid of the ultra-modern and the archaic. In the years since Deleuze and Guattari wrote the two volumes of their Capitalism And Schizophrenia, it has seemed as if the deterritorializing impulses of capitalism have been confined to finance, leaving culture presided over by the forces of reterritorialization. This malaise, the feeling that there is nothing new, is itself nothing new of course. We find ourselves at the notorious 'end of history' trumpeted by Francis Fukuyama after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Fukuyama's thesis that history has climaxed with liberal capitalism may have been widely derided, but it is accepted, even assumed, at the level of the cultural unconscious. It should be remembered, though, that even when Fukuyama advanced it, the idea that history had reached a 'terminal beach' was not merely triumphalist. Fukuyama warned that his radiant city would be haunted, but he thought its specters would be Nietzschean rather than Marxian. Some of Nietzsche's most prescient pages are those in which he describes the 'oversaturation of an age with history'. 'It leads an age into a dangerous mood of irony in regard to itself', he wrote in Untimely Meditations, I and subsequently into the even more dangerous mood of cynicism', in which 'cosmopolitan fingering', a detached spectatorialism, replaces engagement and involvement. This is the condition of Nietzsche's Last Man, who has seen everything, but is decadently enfeebled precisely by this excess of (self) awareness.

**Neoliberal self-replication over-codes the public sphere and the resolution by commanding inward turns to obscures collective struggle—this doesn’t require engagement with the topic as a singlular reading, but instead opens up the opportunity for pluralist discourse and contestation over multiple articulations. The impact is the solidification of inequality—only shifting interpersonal relations towards coordinated action and forefronting contestation, rather than atomization can solve and reclaim the potential for activism**

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Neoliberalism also obfuscates the means for **redressing inequality** and **mobilizing diversity** by weakening relations among people and devaluing **coordinated** action. For publics and counterpublics alike, the prospect of **efficacious** **public** **engagement** has long depended on **bolstering** **interpersonal relations** and empowering coordinated action. John Dewey regarded **perceptions of mutual implication** in the conduct and consequences of human affairs as forming the **basis of a public**. When perceived, consequences do not exert a mechanistic pull on the formation of publics, but facilitate transformative action by individuals, who **“reflect upon” their** **connections** with one another: “Each acts, in so far as the connection is known, in view of the connection.”13 Public engagement draws importantly on ideas and practices of **mutual** standing and **connection**, suggesting, for example, that people may jointly benefit from the alleviation of a problem. Or that people may **work together** to address issues and concerns in the name of **fairness** and **justice**. Or that people may work together to achieve **shared goals** that improve collective well-being. Plainly put, **public engagement** draws on the promise of a public good, which neoliberalism **disavows** through its strict reliance on **a narrow individualism**. As I argue in this essay, this notion of a public good does **not** refer to **specific, bounded content**; it does not demand **shared experiences**; it does not aim for **consensus**. Rather, this public good constitutes a practice of articulating **mutual** standing and **connection**, recognizing that people can solve problems and achieve goals—and struggle for justice—through coordinated action. **In a** **networked public sphere**, there is no singular, universal public good, but **multiple** articulations of a public good. Both the bourgeois public sphere and neoliberalism seek to promote singularity over multiplicity: the former by asserting the supposedly unique capacity of the bourgeoisie to discern a public good, and the latter by disaggregating a public good into individuals who can only act alone. In these ways, both the bourgeois public sphere and neoliberalism privilege established interests and raise obstacles for **a vibrant critical publicity**. I develop my argument over three main sections in this essay. In the first section, I explicate how a networked public sphere draws on a dynamic public good that calls attention to relationships and connects people in different ways as a force for public engagement. Enlivened through relationships, a networked public sphere may enable the productive power of difference and create opportunities for addressing inequalities. In the second section, I critique a neoliberal public built around the atomistic individual and guided by the principle of competition. Flattening difference and discounting inequality, a neoliberal public assumes that everyone can adopt the position of homo oeconomicus. In the third section, I discuss the prospects for resistance to a neoliberal public through the coordinated action of networked locals. Using the example of public education, I discuss how local advocates may work together to rebuild and expand connections across difference in a networked public sphere. A networked public sphere and a public good Defying an essentialist and static framework, a public good is **dynamic** and **mobile**, operating at different levels of society, and open to **contestation** and reformulation. A public good does not function as a container that holds a **particular** set of values, **principles**, and **issues,** although some publics may seek to define a public good in exclusionary terms. A public good does not refer to a **discrete body of knowledge**, an **established** group of **institutions**, or **a coherent synthesis** of public opinion. Rather, a public good circulates in society, connecting people’s perceptions and actions to their relationships **with each** other and the worlds they inhabit. **It informs the ways that people make engagement meaningful**. It is a network of **discursive**, **embodied**, and **material relationships**. Affirming this dynamism, public sphere scholars may productively conceptualize a public good as a practice that draws on relationships within and among publics and counterpublics to connect people in different ways. When advocates articulate a public good, they appeal to people to **imagine** their **connections with others** in particular ways, to perceive connections that may facilitate **coordinated** **action** towards addressing problems, issues, and goals. Insofar as publics do not reference naturally occurring associations, relationships within and among publics have to be **constructed**. People must perceive themselves as members of a community, allies in a struggle for justice, citizens implicated in the actions of their governments. Along these lines, Dewey distinguishes between the brute fact of human association and the consciously cultivated bonds of community. Humans are born and live among others, but community “is emotionally, intellectually, consciously sustained.” Coordinated action implies a collective subject, a “we” who should do something. Dewey holds that “‘we’ and ‘our’ exist only when the consequences of combined action are perceived and become an object of desire and effort.”14 Michael Warner offers an attenuated version of this argument in holding that “a public is constituted through mere attention.” Warner’s position productively draws attention to the constructed character of publics through “active intake.” However, he limits this activity in at least two ways: first, Warner emphasizes identification over and against the possibility of dissociation. He writes to audience of his book: “If you are reading this, or hearing it or seeing it or present for it, you are part of this public.” Yet this insistence conflates awareness and affiliation, which leaves no agency for someone who encounters something they find objectionable, or someone who may be aware of discourses that exclude them. Second, Warner discounts dialogic models of publics as placing too much emphasis on “polemic” and “argument.” Instead, he privileges the circulation of texts, which appears to compel a choice among modes of communication and limits the means of constructing publics. A public good operates in a networked public sphere by explicitly or implicitly calling attention to relationships, constructing or reconstructing relationships, and drawing on these relationships as a force for **public engagement**. The operation of a public good informs both publicity and counterpublicity. On this point, Fraser observes that counterpublics often direct their public engagement to “the appropriate boundaries of the public sphere,” namely, shared perceptions of what constitutes public and private issues. She cites as an example the efforts of counterpublic actors to reframe domestic violence as a public issue. In this discussion, Fraser does not reject public appeals, but “naturally given, a priori boundaries.” Indeed, she underscores the value of appealing to a public good in writing that “democratic publicity requires  …  opportunities for minorities to **convince others** that what in the past was not public in the sense of being a matter of common concern should now become so.”16 Note Fraser’s reference to **“convinc[ing] others**,” which suggests an effort by counterpublic actors to make **connections** and emphasize **mutual standing**. This discursive move resists the assumption that domestic violence is an issue that only concerns its victims. In this case and others, the prospects for social change encourage advocates to engage others who may not have seen themselves as implicated in an issue or problem so that they may see its wider import. In another case, focusing on the contemporary issue of **state-condoned** racial **violence** in the United States and the civil rights movements that have emerged to counteract this violence, Sarah Jackson and Brooke Foucault Welles argue that counterpublics have operated with “the express goals of both legitimizing and communicating their lived realities and pushing the mainstream public sphere to acknowledge and respond to these realities.”17 Legitimation, communication, and acknowledgement all draw on relationships—relationships among participants in counterpublics as well as relations among publics and counterpublics. For counterpublic actors, these relationships may redirect otherwise isolating experiences to connect people who have suffered police brutality. Engaging with like-minded others, counterpublic actors may better understand their experiences, refashion identities from passive victim to capable agent, and push for social change. Among publics and counterpublics, legitimation, communication, and acknowledgment place a responsibility on wider publics to see their connections to places like Ferguson and people like Michael Brown. In this sense, counterpublic actors rejected assertions that the murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson constituted a confined incident. They instead connected the shooting in Ferguson to issues of race in the United States, in which all citizens hold a stake. Demonstrating **dynamism** and **mobility**, actors in a networked public sphere may articulate a public good **variously** through multiple **modes of** **engagement**. This variety indicates that multiplicity does not attenuate the productive power of a public good, but may facilitate its functioning in ways that resonate with the perspectives of actors within and **across publics and counterpublics**. For example, as he explicates a vibrant mode of dissent for democratic deliberation, Robert Ivie discerns a “topos of complementary differences” that enables dissenters to express “relations of **interdependence**” with the people and societies they critique to **sustain** **interaction** and **forestall violence**. In maintaining relationships amidst **disagreement**, dissent “enhances democratic pluralism” by questioning “**that which is taken for granted**” as well as **bridging “differences** to generate **constructive** **dialogue and** **deliberation**. Beyond deliberation, people may employ various forms of rhetoric and communication to recognize mutual standing and facilitate coordinated action.19 Perhaps through creativity born of struggle, counterpublicity may lend itself to discursive innovation. Addressing its generative potential, Brouwer writes that counterpublicity may emerge through “unruly, passionate, enfleshed, ironic” and other modes of engagement.20 0 Illustrating this point, Yvonne Slosarski considers how participants in labor protests in Wisconsin in 2011 enacted alternatives to policymakers’ market-oriented efforts to disempower public employee unions by revoking their rights to collective bargaining. Although they did not defeat the legislation, protestors articulated visions of a public good in diverse ways. Besides traditional means like testifying at public committee hearings, protestors commenced a weeks-long occupation of the state capitol that “enacted a vision of communal, participatory democracy.” 21 Slosarski maintains that the occupation emphasized themes of “self-governance, solidarity, and respect” in the ways that protestors treated, cared for, and supported each other.22 By constructing and cultivating these connections, protestors presented alternatives to neoliberal views of self and society While neoliberalism emphasizes **individuals**, the relationships articulated in a public good facilitate complementary engagements of “I” and “we,” of individual and community. On this basis, individual identity and agency do not arise as autonomous achievements, but through practices of social construction. One’s sense of self and capacity for action arises in part through interaction with others. Gerard Hauser discerns in public discourse an intersubjective relation through which individuals understand their engagement from the perspective of a shared “we” while maintaining their distinctive contributions.23 Reciprocally, development of a collective identity and agency draws on the spirit of individuals to **align with others**, to recognize connections that may enable **mutually valued action**. From particular exchanges to broader **engagements**, Dewey identifies the **mediation** of individual and **community** as a key dynamic of democracy. He holds that from the standpoint of the individual, democratic practices and norms facilitate individuals’ equitable participation in the groups to which they belong. From the standpoint of the community, democracy demands “the liberation of the potentialities of members of a group in harmony with the interests and goods which are in common.” Yet **this “common” does not admit to a** **transparent** **and** **singular reading**, since individuals belong to many groups, and notions of potentiality and common interests and goods arise when “different groups interact flexibly and fully in **connection** with other groups.” 24 Shared purpose arises through people’s **engagement** with difference, and the same person may commit themselves to multiple **shared purposes** through their membership in and interaction with various groups. By emphasizing **relationships**, the operation of a public good in a networked public sphere may serve to **bolster attention to (in)equality** **and difference** by facilitating **contestation** among publics and counterpublics. Equality and difference themselves invite relational judgments. We can assess neither in isolation: the isolated individual imagined in neoliberalism presumably has no connection to others, thereby rendering moot considerations of equality and difference. In contrast, calling on relationships and making connections encourages people to think about their relations to others and to discuss **differences** that may appear as **productive** and **unproductive**, just and unjust. **Relationality** serves as the basis for a contested, agonistic spirit and practice in a **networked public sphere.** As publics and counterpublics engage, they emphasize different relationships and construct alternative connections among people, advancing potentially competing visions of a public good and invigorating the agonism that Chantal Mouffe identifies as the “**very condition of existence” of** democratic **public engagement**.25 Engagement does not only circulate the perspectives of publics and counterpublics. **Even** in disagreement, it may shift the perspectives of people who engage each other by raising awareness and **situating** their **views in wider contexts**. Relationality and contestation recognize difference not as a set of essential categories or individual or group attributes but as varying engagements with others to offer **multiple perspectives** on public issues and concerns. Iris Marion Young explains that “because of their social locations, people are attuned to particular kinds of social meanings and relationships to which others are less attuned.” 26 Engaging diverse perspectives, difference contributes productively to public discourse, admitting various ways of looking at issues that would be foreclosed by an emphasis on sameness. Moreover, conceived in this way, difference neither fragments nor finishes public engagement among diverse social actors. Young observes that “social perspective consists in a **set of questions**, kinds of experience, and assumptions **with** **which reasoning begins**, rather than the **conclusions** drawn.” 27 This framework **underscores** the **productive** **power of difference** and **coordinated action** for a networked public sphere, which generates more **perspectives** and tests these perspectives **through contestation** in ways that are **unavailable** to the isolated individual. Further, this framework underscores that individuals as individuals do not rely on **singular** perspectives: “since individuals are multiply positioned in complexly structured societies, individuals interpret the society from a multiplicity of social group perspectives.” 28 In these ways, a dynamic public good sustains the vibrancy of a networked public sphere. My conceptualization of a public good has explicated its dynamism as a practice that, in drawing on relationships and making connections, also informs people’s perceptions of themselves and others. Yet, structural conditions in society may enable and constrain this practice, and this practice may reshape structural conditions. Seeking to draw greater attention to this aspect of publicity, Brouwer urges scholarship on counterpublics to attend to resource disparities among actors. Connecting perception, practice, and structure, he writes if we take the view that counterpublics emerge from perceptions of oppositionality to dominant forces, then we should remain attentive to the ways in which both perceptual and actual disparities of resources inflect counterpublic activities and counterpublics’ relations with other publics.29 As Brouwer suggests, in direct and indirect ways, resources mediated through institutions and social arrangements may provide a basis for action in the public sphere. For instance, people who perceive their positions in society as **precarious**—depending, perhaps, on insecure and low-wage employment for their sustenance or fearful of government surveillance because of their immigration status—may express reluctance to engage in modes of publicity that draw the attention of corporate or governing institutions. **Yet** **engagement may call attention to oppressive structures,** and some publics may rely on alternative structures to change oppressive ones. In developing her definition of counterpublics, for example, Fraser references institutions that facilitated feminist counterpublic engagement: “journals, bookstores, publishing companies, film and video distribution networks, lecture series, research centers, academic programs, conferences, conventions, festivals, and local meeting places.” 30 In their explication of a proletarian public sphere, Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge address the structures of capitalism and workers’ efforts to change these structures.31 Although a public good may be conceptualized and practiced to affirm and bolster multiplicity, some publics and scholars have practiced and conceptualized a public good to assert singularity. As Young observes, “under conditions of structural social and economic inequality, the relative power of some groups often allows them to dominate the definition of a common good in ways compatible with their experience, perspective, and priorities.” 32 Historically, an invocation of universality stood as the constitutive exclusion of the bourgeois public sphere. As Habermas observed, the bourgeoisie perpetuated a basic conflation of human being and property owner: the fully developed bourgeois public sphere was based on the fictitious identity of the two roles assumed by the privatized individuals who came together to form a public: the role of property owners and the role of human beings pure and simple.33 The bourgeoisie wrongly believed that property owners had achieved an economic autonomy and freedom that gave them an exclusive perspective on society as a whole. The bourgeoisie thought that they had obtained a vantage point on society that could vouchsafe everyone’s interests. Critiques of the bourgeois public sphere have revealed its legitimating discourses as particularity masquerading as universality.34 From this view, to call attention to one’s own particularity, when this particularity does not comport with the “universal” bourgeois subject, is to call attention to oneself as less than a fully autonomous agent. Conceptually, some scholars have sought to ground a public good in a common content, a shared set of procedures, or a consensus-driven outcome. For instance, in his model of deliberative democracy, Joshua Cohen regards the role of a public good, which he refers to as a common good, as focusing deliberation on “ways of advancing the aims of each party” to achieving consensus. A common good thus informs people’s motivations and orients their engagement, since everyone “seeks to arrive at decisions that are acceptable to all who share the commitment to deliberation.” To do this, people must focus on “appeals to the common good,” which implies a discrete object of discourse.35 Deliberation functions to sort reasons by separating those that carry general appeal from those that only warrant particular assent. This model dampens public deliberation and admits difference only to the extent that it serves an ultimate consensus. Further, this model attributes a universal motivation to diverse participants.36 While Cohen subordinates difference to the goal of consensus, John Rawls fixes lines of public and private by promoting the idea of public reason as a means of mediating difference in a pluralistic society. To do so, he effectively distinguishes questions of justice and the good life. People may answer questions of the good life by invoking culturally specific worldviews, through which citizens weigh and organize different values so that “they are compatible with one another and express an intelligible view of the world.” 37 Questions of the good life concern only those individuals and cultures to whom they are addressed. In contrast, questions of justice concern all members of a polity and, as such, demand deliberative procedures accessible to all. On these occasions, Rawls argues, citizens must draw on “public reason,” which consists of “substantive principles of justice” and commonly recognized “guidelines of inquiry.” Rawls insists that a “duty of civility” calls on citizens “to explain to one another on those fundamental questions how the principles and policies they advocate and vote for can be supported by the political values of public reason.” 38 For Rawls, citizens may fulfill this duty because public reason and its conception of justice constitute a part of everyone’s belief systems, functioning as a “module” that people may present separately from their wider beliefs. In articulating his idea of public reason, Rawls draws strict and impermeable lines between public and private—or, less “public”—discourse. Further, he ascribes an internally differentiated reason to citizens and demands that they maintain this division. In the form of public reason, Rawls imposes a universalized public good, which contains a discrete content, on a pluralistic society. This is precisely what a conceptualization of a public good in a networked public sphere must avoid. Neoliberalism and the public sphere Even as it raises serious challenges for models and practices of a multiple public sphere, neoliberalism does not dispense with publicity. Indeed, neoliberalism in its various forms circulates among the nodes of a networked public sphere. Neoliberalism challenges modes of critical publicity by aligning publics with its own vision of individuals and their interactions. Recalling the presumption of a bourgeois public, **a neoliberal public** disregards **difference** and **discounts inequality** to reassert a singular and universal model of publicity. To the degree to which it exerts force across a network, a neoliberal public obfuscates the diversity of the network in which it circulates. A neoliberal public exhibits distinct qualities and assumes alternative functions than a networked public sphere operating with a dynamic public good. To understand this neoliberal public, we first must recognize that scholars have used the term neoliberalism to refer to related but multiple developments and objects. Engaging the wide-ranging contemporary scholarship on the topic, Simon Springer observes that four prominent versions of neoliberalism circulate in the literature: neoliberalism as dominant ideology; neoliberalism as policy framework; neoliberalism as state form; and neoliberalism as mode of self-governance.39 As Springer notes, these versions may overlap. If we understand ideology as a set of political beliefs and principles, then we may discern a form of neoliberalism in the discourse of advocates who champion the superiority of markets. Yet, this very example lends itself to a policy program of privatization, and it reimagines the state through a market model. While the qualities and functions of a neoliberal public link to these variations, public sphere scholars may offer a distinctive contribution by considering how neoliberalism, as a dominant social force, shapes the subjectivities of people who act in the public sphere as well as their perceived and enacted relations to one another.40 The figure of an atomized individual stands at the center of a neoliberal public. In his 1962 book Capitalism and Freedom, Milton Friedman opened with an unequivocal assertion of the place of the individual: To the free man, the country is the collection of individuals who compose it, not something over and above them. … He recognizes no national purpose except as it is the consensus of the purposes for which the citizens severally strive.41 In rebuking “something over and above” individuals, in denying shared purpose, Friedman gainsaid the existence of coordinated action as anything other than an infringement on individual prerogative. Whereas public sphere scholars like Hannah Arendt have discerned a power in human relationships that “springs up between [people] when they act together,” 42 Friedman denied this potentiality. Elected officials, too, have voiced this individualist orientation. In his first inaugural address, President Ronald Reagan recast the progressive narrative of the American Dream “to privilege the individual as the hero, rather than the community.” 43 Like Friedman, Reagan grounded his view of the nation in individuals, and he did so in celebratory terms. At other times, censure has replaced celebration when individuals fail to reach their economic goals, or even economic survivability, since individuals alone bear the responsibility for their actions. Writing about the circulation of the “mortgage delinquent” in the 2008 housing market crisis in the United States, Megan Foley explains that this figure enforced neoliberal self-discipline by scolding debtors to “grow up, take responsibility, and repay their loans.” At the same time, this figure “minimized the scope of the mortgage crisis by pinning the blame on ‘irresponsible’ individuals who made ‘risky’ financial decisions.” 44 Just as an emphasis on an atomized individual denies coordinated action, **it** **occludes structural deficiencies**. In a neoliberal public sphere, individuals may exercise the fundamental value of **freedom**, defined generally as the ability of individuals to act as they please **without** coercion or **constraint**, but narrowly imagined as the **freedom of market actors**. Recalling a lineage of classical liberalism, Friedman upheld “freedom as the ultimate goal and the individual as the ultimate entity in society.” 45 Freedom supposedly brought limitless possibilities—individuals could **decide** best how they would live their lives; what they **valued**; with whom they would **interact** and **how**. However, in flattening society in the image of the market, Friedman and other neoliberals restricted freedom to the freedom of market actors.46 Democratic connotations of freedom as self-rule or “participation in rule by the demos,” notes Brown, gave “way to comportment with a market **instrumental rationality** that radically constrains both choices and ambitions. … No longer is there an open question of how to craft the self.” 47 In this shift, freedom also dissociates from other democratic values like equality and **justice**. Illuminating the implications of this move, Friedman contrasted the virtuous action of the free individual against the paternalistic and coercive actions of the state. Any effort by governing institutions to seek equality and pursue justice could never be genuine because it required the imposition of state control on the free will of individuals. As Paul Turpin notes, Friedman presented a stark choice: either citizens could defend freedom or submit to state control and, ultimately, totalitarianism.48 However, as I discuss below, Friedman and other neoliberals supported state action when they regarded it as serving the market. Unable to draw on **coordinated action** for social change, the neoliberal public subject only may act as an individual to change oneself in the image of the market. In this manner, neoliberalism redirects social concerns **inward**. Operating as a competitive market actor does not occur naturally; rather, individuals must develop their **competitiveness**. Pierre Dardot and Christian Laval explain that the neoliberal subject must work on oneself constantly “to survive competition.” **Success requires consideration of one’s activities as “an investment**, a cost calculation. The economy becomes a personal discipline.” 49 Dardot and Laval maintain that the self-improvement of the neoliberal subject does not constitute an exercise in delayed gratification; one does not mold oneself as a market actor to accumulate the financial means for self-fulfillment in a non-market activity later in life. Work appears as its own end. Neoliberalism “makes work the privileged vehicle of self-realization: it is by succeeding professionally that one makes a ‘success’ of one’s life.” 50 Neoliberalism subsumes other motivations and goals, such as **obtaining an** **education** or cultivating a friendship, under the singular framework of **maximizing one’s competitive advantage**. An individual economic actor, the neoliberal public subject appears as a “universal” that obfuscates its own particularity as well as the challenges faced by those who cannot seamlessly identify with its mode of subjectivity. On the question of gender, as Brown suggests, neoliberalism both ignores and exacerbates the difficulties that women face in adopting the position of homo oeconomicus, since women remain disproportionately responsible for the familial activities that neoliberalism regards as outside of the market. In this way, neoliberalism both intensifies and transforms a gendered division of labor. Intensification appears in the privatization of public infrastructures that support families and children. Transformation occurs through erasure of a public language for identifying and addressing the unequal impact of neoliberal policy change. As Brown writes, “women both require the visible social infrastructure that neoliberalism aims to dismantle through privatization and are the invisible infrastructure sustaining a world of putatively self-investing human capitals.” 51 For Nancy Fraser, this subjugation appears in the language of emancipation, as neoliberal policy co-opts the feminist critique of the traditional roles of breadwinner and homemaker. Supplanting the gendered “family wage” of the post-World War II era in Western economies, neoliberal policy romanticizes “female advancement and social justice” but undermines the very conditions and infrastructure necessary for advancement and justice.52 On a global scale, observes Rebecca Dingo, neoliberalism sets “women on a path toward formal market activities without recognizing the wide-reaching vectors of oppression and exploitation that impoverish women.” 53 In these ways, policymakers have championed markets as a universal prescription for national and international development without regard to context and conditions of exploitation. Neoliberalism also ignores the role of race and racism on the formation and agency of public subjectivities. A neoliberal public, as Darrel Wanzer-Serrano observes, operates “by an active suppression of ‘race’ as a legitimate topic or term of public discourse and public policy.” 54 Instead, neoliberalism’s emphasis on individual responsibility renders race as an antiquated category and racism as a problem of the past.55 Bradley Jones and Roopali Mukherjee explain that a neoliberal public presents a “socially progressive politics by articulating a colorblind, cosmopolitan, post-race subject, while characterizing as ‘backwards’ or ‘racist’ those who invoke racial claims.” 56 If there are only individuals, then charges of racism and sexism, which associate individuals with broader categories and implicate agency in structure, deny individual autonomy and serve only to “excuse” personal failings. Jones and Mukherjee hold that neoliberalism depoliticizes and privatizes difference, such that “culture becomes a matter of individual **choice**.” 57 These moves replace a dialectic of agency and structure with **an exclusive focus on agency**, and they bracket the relationship between **subjectivity**, **agency**, and **power**. The neoliberal subject appears as a new bourgeois subject. The cases of gender and race illuminate a uniform neoliberal discounting of particularity and difference, which extends to class, sexuality, ethnicity, and more. Presuming universality, the neoliberal subject fails to recognize how particularity matters, especially for those whose differences complicate their enactment of this putative universal. This lack of recognition carries considerable weight, since, as Wendy Hesford explains, “recognition affords legibility to certain bodies and social relationships and not to others.” 58 Neoliberalism cannot see the particularity of its public subject nor the varying advantages and disadvantages that the presumed adoption of homo oeconomicus places on the diverse subjects of a pluralistic society. This lack of recognition propagates resource disparities for people whose particularities carry additional responsibilities and burdens that complicate the economic rationality ascribed to homo oeconomicus. A neoliberal public operates by the principle of competition rather than the coordinated action of a networked public sphere operating with a dynamic public good. For a neoliberal public, competition frames social relations as a zero-sum game; one person’s success and standing appear at the expense of another. In contrast to models of the public sphere and practices that seek wider opportunities for agency**,** **a neoliberal public presents actors with strategic advantages in limiting** **the** **agency** **and denying the autonomy** **of others**. This constitutes a brutal embrace of, in Mouffe’s terms, “the potential **antagonism** that exists in human relations.” Mouffe recognizes the value of contestation for publicity, but she argues that productive conflict requires a move from antagonism to **agonism**, which constructs an other in such a way that it is no longer perceived as an **enemy** to be destroyed, but as an “**adversary**,” that is, **somebody whose ideas we combat but whose right to defend those ideas we do not put into question**.59 While agonism brings together conflict and reciprocity—which intimate, as Mouffe suggests, “some **common ground**”—antagonism and neoliberal competition emphasize conflict **without reciprocity**, which appears as a corollary of turning social commitments **inward**.

In this vein, denying another’s voice or disavowing relationships with others may remove competitive obstacles to one’s own success. Shifting from a laissez-faire view of market and state relations, neoliberalism enjoins the state to take actions that bolster competition. As Jamie Peck explains, Friedman and other neoliberal theorists “expressly sought to transcend the ‘naïve ideology’ of laissez-faire, in favor of a ‘positive’ conception of the state as the guarantor of a competitive order.” 60 Through privatization and trade agreements, the state may create markets. Through the reduction or elimination of social safety nets, the state may compel market behavior. Through various means, notes Sanford Schram, neoliberalism “restructures the state to operate consistently with market logic in order to better promote market-compliant behavior by as many people as possible.” 61 Concordant with a rise in income inequality in the United States, the contemporary disinvestment in and privatization of public institutions by state officials creates particular hardships for low-income and minority communities, who depend more on these institutions and may lack the resources, for example, to send children to well-funded private schools. Faced with few options, members of marginalized groups confront a choice: either internalize a market model or suffer as a “disposable population” that a restructured state has made “less of a burden on the rest of society.” 62 Oftentimes, this putative choice generates both outcomes—discipline and suffering. While articulating relationships through a public good to enable coordinated action may promote equality, inequality functions as the condition and end of competition. To win, we must become unequal to others. Inequality is not a social problem warranting redress for a neoliberal public, but a necessary part of its dynamic operation. As Maurizio Lazzarato explains, “for the neoliberals, the market can operate as regulatory principle only if competition is made the regulatory principle of society.” 63 Yet, as Lazzarato and others observe, markets are not natural. Markets must be constructed and maintained.64 The disciplinary force of neoliberalism serves to compel people to act according to market logics. Towards this end, inequality serves a valuable, motivating purpose: “Only inequality has the capacity to sharpen appetites, instincts and minds, driving individuals to rivalries.” 65 **Neoliberalism draws on inequality for its very existence**. Just as **structural conditions** may enable and constrain the practice of a dynamic public good in a networked public sphere, structural conditions may influence the practice of a **neoliberal public**. For instance, in Capitalism and Freedom, Friedman proposed educational vouchers to break a government “monopoly” on education and to foster competition, giving parents the freedom to choose from a range of “educational services [that] could be rendered by private enterprises operated for profit, or by non-profit institutions.” 66 Yet he issued this call in a U.S. political climate that was moving in the opposite direction: only a few years after the publication of Capitalism and Freedom, the federal government passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which directed federal dollars to school districts.67 Policymakers did not implement Friedman’s proposal for educational vouchers until the late 1980s and early 1990s, and these programs were limited to only a few locales.68 In the intervening years, actions by a wide range of people like Friedman, Reagan, and others gradually shifted perceptions of people’s relations to one another and structures to facilitate this significant change in public education. The changes wrought by vouchers, in turn, have created structures that reinforce neoliberal perceptions of publics and obscure the relationships articulated by a dynamic public good. For example, the state of Wisconsin adopted a statewide voucher program in 2015.69 A memo prepared by the Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau indicated that this expansion would cost public schools between 600 and 800 million dollars over a 10-year period.70 Facing this loss of revenue, and suffering from state budget cuts, many local districts have turned to ballot referenda simply to cover operating expenses.71 Moreover, analyses of the Wisconsin voucher program have indicated that roughly 76 percent of students using vouchers for the first time in the 2015–2016 school year attended a private school the previous year.72 This suggests that the benefits of the expanded voucher program disproportionately went to families who already possessed the financial means to send their children to private schools. Together, these changes have reshaped the structure of publicly funded education in Wisconsin and weakened its connection to a dynamic public good. Exacerbating inequalities, this changed structure may reinforce competition, since parents and students may believe that they can rely only on themselves to obtain a decent education. Resisting a neoliberal public The rise of a neoliberal public constitutes a portentous development that may, among other things, exacerbate inequality and marginalize people who do not fit the ideal of homo oeconomicus. Yet this development does not signal a totalizing transformation of the public sphere. A networked public sphere, composed of publics and counterpublics, holds the potential for resistance and a resurgent critical publicity. Resistance would not arise from an Archimedean point outside of a networked public sphere, but within this public sphere, countering the circulation and influence of a neoliberal public. Drawing on the mobility, flexibility, and generativity of interactions in a network, a resurgent critical publicity may emerge through new and reconfigured sites of engagement and human relationships. On issues regarding race and police brutality, for example, contemporary activists have sought to reshape public agendas and hold officials and officers accountable.73 On education, local communities have pushed back against market reforms and have demanded alternatives. These examples suggest the power of the local—or, more specifically, a networked local—as a historically emergent site of resistance against a neoliberal public. While I do not have the space to articulate a fully developed theory of local resistance, in this penultimate section I sketch a model of a networked local and, using education examples from Wisconsin, indicate how it may challenge a neoliberal public.74 In The Public and Its Problems, John Dewey envisioned reinvigorated public engagement through the emergence of a Great Community, a network of local communities through which people can reclaim their agency and purposefully direct their experiences in meaningful ways. A Great Community would enact a large-scale realization of the fundamental link between democracy and community: operating with a non-institutional conception of democracy, Dewey insisted that democracy functions most powerfully through human relationships, as people work together to address shared concerns and achieve shared goals.75 He envisioned democracy as placing individuals and communities in a reciprocal relationship such that individuals may draw upon social networks to realize their potential. Relationships—among individuals, between individuals and communities, and among communities—are key. Isolated individual action can neither build nor benefit from community: “no amount of aggregated collective action of itself constitutes a community.” Instead, people need to value, construct, and maintain relationships.76 A Great Community may appear through coordinated action and, in turn, bolster coordinated action. Dewey discovered in the local the resources for rebuilding democratic relationships and engaged publics, yet he also recognized the limits of the local. The local provides a basis for public engagement and regular, ongoing interactions that enable learning, through which people can improve their practices. In this way, the significance of the local does not lie in physicality as such, but in the accompanying benefits that attend proximity and familiarity: “there is no substitute for the vitality and depth of close and direct intercourse and attachment.” 77 In local communities people may come to know their interlocutors —if not by name, then through a shared sense of belonging to their community—and practice public engagement through familiar experiences. The regularity of local interaction creates opportunities for trial and error; people may reflect on past interactions, learn from what they regard as mistakes, and change their practices in subsequent interactions with one another. Local engagement can develop people’s competence, confidence, and perspective. Nevertheless, Dewey recognized the limits of the local in its potential for insularity, which can produce provincialism, bigotry, marginalization, and exclusion. An isolated local is as limited, and as detached from critical publicity, as an isolated individual. Just as a community requires relations among individuals, a Great Community requires relations among communities: “its larger relationships will provide an inexhaustible and flowing fund of meanings upon which to draw.” 78 Scholars of rhetoric and communication, in particular, may recognize how these relationships may elicit productive tensions between the contextualized discourse of particular sites in a network and the revisions that may occur when discourse circulates across a network. With regard to the former, Hauser observes that a rhetorical model of the public sphere emphasizes “local norms” for judging discourse rather than universal standards.79 Yet, as Hauser notes, within a multiple public sphere, norms and judgments will vary across a network. Further, the publics and counterpublics encountering any discourse will change as people participate across different nodes in a network.80 Far from being an obstacle to engagement across a network, **the** **contingent character** **of any** **particular node** or set of relationships may engender **dynamic** **movement** and **contestation** that questions **assumptions** and explores relationships through diverse perspectives. A networked local, which participates in a varied constellation of local communities, holds the potential to guard against **the limits of the local**. Dewey held that mobility may in the end supply the means by which the spoils of remote and indirect interaction and interdependence flow back into local life, keeping it flexible, preventing the stagnancy which has attended stability in the past, and furnishing it with the elements of a variegated and many-hued experience.81 Realizing this promise requires active and purposeful attention to relationships. In a networked public, relationships themselves exert no productive force independently from the people and communities who constitute them. Relationships must be tended to—constructed, cultivated, reflected upon, reevaluated, rebuilt. Participating in a network, a local community may be more open and inclusive, incorporating various issues, identities, and modes of participation. Contributing to a network, a local community may foster more widespread change. In the past few years, in communities across Wisconsin, people have pushed back against funding cuts for public schools, increased spending on private vouchers, expansion of charter schools, and other legislative measures that have threatened public education. These local advocates have worked within their own communities and joined together to try to change the public discourse about education in Wisconsin. For example, in Wauwatosa, home of Governor Scott Walker, local community members have formed an organization called Wauwatosa S.O.S (Support Our Schools) and have waged a multifaceted campaign consisting of websites, yard signs, t-shirts, door-to-door advocacy, and a letter-writing campaign to argue not only against budget cuts for education, but for increased funding.82 These have not been isolated efforts, as advocates in different communities have worked together. For instance, leaders of community groups in Milwaukee, Wauwatosa, and Lake Mills (a small town between Milwaukee and Madison) co-authored a public letter to decry the governor’s and legislators’ “stunning failure to support our kids.” The authors—Mary Young, Marva Herndon, Gail Hicks, and Sandy Whisler—noted than in recent spring elections, more than 70 local referenda had appeared on ballots across the state to “prevent cuts and school closings.” They called on policymakers to “pause the statewide expansion of voucher schools” and to “support the only school system that serves all and lifts all—public schools—before it’s too late.” 83 In their efforts, these community advocates have bridged some of the racial and ideological divides that historically have plagued Milwaukee and its surrounding suburbs.84 Their efforts exemplify the contingency and diversity of a networked public and the local communities that comprise it—not uniformly, not homogeneously, but by working together over specific concerns. Addressing issues like funding cuts and vouchers, these advocates have drawn on a networked public good to call attention to relationships and rebuild and expand connections threatened by a neoliberal approach to public education. In situating public schools as “the only school system that serves all and lifts all,” Young, Herndon, Hicks, and Whisler underscored how serving a diverse student population, rather than employing particular screening criteria that may exclude poor and minority students, exemplifies the idea that people have a stake in the growth of children across differences, connecting people of diverse backgrounds in a mutual project. They represented schools as a site for productively engaging difference, holding that “our kids’ public schools are the heart of our communities.” 85 In connecting school and community, they cast education not only as a means of enhancing one’s individual competitiveness, but as a way of strengthening bonds while also enabling individuals to realize their potential. Relatedly, in a public letter to the governor and state legislature signed by 35 public school principals from Southern Wisconsin, signees decried the “competitive nature and business model schools now face.” They wrote that this competitive model has produced “segregated schools” and “haves and have nots.” The principals suggested that this model weakened relationships and divided communities. Recalling the nation’s “bold promise to freely educate all children regardless of wealth, religion, race, gender, ability or citizenship,” the principals invoked the force of coordinated action, which they enacted in their jointly signed letter, to achieve educational excellence.86 Resisting a uniform approach, they envisioned connections through partnerships among local communities as well as local communities and the state. Conclusion In this essay, I have argued that neoliberalism represents a threat to a multiple public sphere and its critical attention to difference and (in)equality. Neoliberalism takes particular aim at a dynamic public good that circulates in a networked public sphere, facilitating coordinated action by constructing and reconstructing relationships among people and articulating mutual standing**. A** **dynamic public good underscores relationality** **by** **enabling people to perceive** **connections to one** **another, maintaining** **a person’s** **sense of self** **while** **building community,** **engendering** **judgments of productive and unproductive engagements** **with difference.** As a practice that engages perception, a dynamic public good also may be **constrained by structures** and may **reshape structures**. Envisioning an atomistic **individual** who exercises economic freedom, a neoliberal public draws on competition as a principle that works through and achieves **inequality**. I have argued that a neoliberal public represents a return of a bourgeois public by obfuscating its particularity and the uneven burdens faced by different people as they seek to obtain the position of homo oeconomicus. In its operation, competition may build unequal structures that raise additional obstacles for a dynamic public good. Using the example of community advocacy for public education, I have argued that resistance to a neoliberal public may arise through the coordinated action of networked locals. Denying the possibility of a **collective** “we,” a neoliberal public seeks to deny the possibility of **relationality** itself, or, at least, to fix relationships among people as **a zero-sum battle** for competitive advantage. Yet a neoliberal public itself constitutes a **constellation** of relations in a networked public sphere, as connections between neoliberal intellectuals like Friedman and politicians like Reagan suggest. From this perspective, the very multiplicity that neoliberalism disavows may provide **resources for resistance**. Because of its relationality, a networked public sphere exhibits flexibility and movement. Connections established by some advocates in a network may be joined by others in **diverse** ways. People may build on existing connections to strengthen their networks. While neoliberalism commands people to look **within** themselves to strengthen their competitive advantage, **a** **networked public sphere** informed by a dynamic public good invites people to seek **connections with** **others.** To be sure, relationships alone cannot guarantee a vibrant and just democracy, but it is difficult to imagine a democratically oriented critical publicity as a process of isolated individual activity. Nor should we imagine an efficacious critical publicity as designed and implemented in a top-down manner. Rather, it must be enacted by people themselves, and, in this **process**, local **engagements matter**.

**We advocate for a semiotic reorientation away from capital and time governance. Subjectivity is a commodity constructed by crisis – engaging with new forms of communication can re-structure our enunciation from individualism towards a collective with real political effects. By bypassing signs and the resolution the 1AC becomes an object that speaks for itself, creating an autonomous imperative that bypasses the hierarchies of capitalist language. Only via semiotic introspection as a starting point can we initiate true resistance in an age of isolation**

**Maurizio Lazzarato 14** (Italian sociologist and philosopher, 5/2/2014, Semiotext(e), "Signs and Machine: Capitalism and the Production of Subjectivity", Chapter 2: Signifying Semiologies and Asignifying Semiotics in Production and in the Production of Subjectivity)//gideon

In modern-day capitalism subjectivity is the product of a worldwide mass industry. For Guattari, it is even the primary and most important of capitalist effects since subjectivity conditions and participates in the production of all other commodities. 1 **Subjectivity** is a "**key commodity**" whose "nature" is **conceived, developed, and manufactured** in the same way as an automobile, electricity, or a washing machine. More than an economic or political crisis, the · crisis in which we have been stuck since the 1970s represents a crisis in the production of subjectivity, which can hardly be explained by technical, economic, or political processes. Subjectivity, subjectivation, processes of subjectivation, and subjection are all concepts that consistently appear in critical thought since the 1960s (Foucault, Ranciere, etc.), covering different and often contradictory ideas. In this regard Felix Guattari, who went further in the conceptual problematization and cartography of the features and modalities of the production of subjectivity, points to several pitfalls it is best to avoid. First of all, the structuralist impasse, which reduces subjectivity to the mere result of .. signifying operations: "What the structuralists say isn't true; it isn't the facts of language or even communication that generate subjectivity. At a certain level, it is collectively manufactured in the same way as energy, electricity, or aluminum."2 The production of subjectivity puts into play something very different from linguistic performance: **ethological**, **fantasmic** dimensions, **economic**, **aesthetic**, and **physical** semiotic systems, **existential territories**, and **incorporeal universes**, all of which are irreducible to a semiology of language. The concept of the substance of expression **must be pluralized** in order to bring to the fore the **extralinguistic, non-human, biological, technological, aesthetic, and machinic substances of expression**. The second pitfall comes from phenomenology and psychoanalysis, whose concepts reduce "the facts of subjectivity to drives, affects, intra-subjective apparatuses and relations," which Guattari also defines as "intersubjective drivel."3 Technical (digital, communicational, media) and social machines modulate and format subjectivity by acting not only within memory and sense but also within the unconscious. This non-human, machinic part of subjectivity is irreducible to intra- and intersubjective relations . . To avoid the third, sociological pitfall, we must move away froni methodological individualism and holism. Processes of subjectivation or semiotization are not centered on individual agents or on collective (intersubjective) agents. The production of subjectivity is indeed a "collective" process, yet the collective both goes beyond the individual, in an extra-personal dimension (machinic, economic, social, technological systems), and precedes the person (preverbal intensities within a system of affects and intensities). Finally, there is the last difficulty, which Guattari calls the "complex of infrastructures": a material infrastructure that generates an ideological superstructure (Marxism), an instinctual infrastructure that generates the psyche (Freud), or deep syntactic and linguistic structures that produce linguistic (signified) content. We will look to avert these three stumbling blocks while at the same time avoiding the pitfalls of structuralism.

1. The Remnants of Structuralism: Language Without Structure

**Structuralism is dead**, but what founded its paradigm-languageis still very much alive. Surprisingly, it is doing quite well, even after the critical theories that came out of the major theoretical innovations of the 1960s and 70s cleared a way out of structuralism. Here, however, language does not have the systemic and combinatory neutrality of structuralism. Critical thought has radically politicized language yet without ever fully giving up on the logic according to which language is unique to man and thus the cornerstone of politics. For Paolo Virno, politics must not be sought in the uses the speaker makes of it; language is intrinsically political insofar as its activity or praxis is realized in the public sphere. **Politics and the possession of language are literally one and the same**. For Ranciere, the logos constitutes the measure and verification of politics' sole principle--equality. Even a command, for one to be given, presupposes a minimum of equality, the equality of logos. In order for subordinates to understand and execute an order, they must share the same language as the person who issues it. Equality is in this way verified in language. Judith Butler considers all her work an extension of Hannah Arendt's affirmation that "men become political beings as beings of language." In the same vein, Giorgio Agamben establishes a strict relationship between language and human nature, because man, "uniquely among living things, [ ... ] has put [ . . . ] his very nature at stake in language."4 The more or less critical, more or less problematic, references are first of all Aristotle and his twofold definition of man ("Man is the only animal to possess language" and "man is a political animal"), Hannah Arendt, and analytic philosophy. For Vimo and Butler, the latter provides the starting point for a repoliticization of language through an analysis of the relationship between "words and power." According to Pascal Michon, who instead draws on the German tradition, we have undergone a "forgetting of the specificity of language." **The critique of capitalism and** a truly **subversive politics of art must be founded on** "humanity's sole creative force, the sole utopian force: the force of **language**."5 Today, Lacan's psychoanalysis, an apogee of structuralist thought, seems to be attracting new disciples. With Freudian themes interpreted in terms of Saussurean linguistics (the Hegelian master-slave dialectic), the subject becomes an effect of language and language the source of the subject; the unconscious is structured like a language and, like a language, it functions through metaphor and metonymy. 6 The "chain of signifiers," their combinatory, their "autonomy," their exteriority, their existence prior to all experience, produces both the signified and the subject. The Hegelian-Lacanian formation of the subject is faithfully faken up by ZiZek and, albeit with certain revisions, by Butler. Although she refuses the "structuring role of the law of the father," .Butler has the signifier act as a performative within Lacanian theoryleading to the same results. Language functions as a molar constraint, as a transcendental, as an "original and radical servitude" that "precedes and exceeds" the subject . . In an attempt to move beyond the reductive hypotheses inherited from Marxism, which made language a superstructure or ideological artifact, Ranciere transforms language along with affects . into the very origin of society: "the 'social' [ ... ] is in fact constituted by a series of discursive acts and reconfigurations of a perceptive field."7 Language and aff ects not only define the object of the distribution of the sensible, according to Ranciere (with the bourgeoisie controlling speech and "educated meaning" while the proletariat emits only animal noise, expressing itself through "brute sense"), they also constitute new productive forces. For my friends in cogni- . rive capitalism, the nature of labor and capital is given through \_-language and affects as well. Cognitive labor mobilizes the latter and cognitive capitalism captures and exploits them. way of understanding language, even if defined according to ·its ·political or productive function, seems to me a sharp discrepancy \vith the nature and functioning of subjectivity, enunciation, and production in modern-day capitalism. In all these theories, and despite their critical aims, we remain in a "logocentric" world, whereas with capitalism we have for some time entered a "machinecentric" world that configures the functions of language in a different way. In the machine-centric universe, one moves from the question of the subject to that of subjectivity such that enunciation does not primarily refer to speakers and listeners-the communicational version of individualism-but to "complex assemblages of individuals, bodies, material and social machines, semiotic, mathematical, and scientific machines, etc., which are the true sources of enunciation."8 The sign machines of **money**, \_**economics**, **science**, **technology**, **art**, and so on, function in parallel or independently because they produce or convey meaning and in this way **bypass language, significations, and representation**. In the mid-1960s, Pier Paolo Pasolini described the hold capital's modes of semiotization have over language as the beginning of a "post-human world" in which the sites of linguistic creation shifr to "production'' and machinisms. Given Italy's linguistic "backwardness," this process appeared in a particularly striking way. In the linguistic sphere, the second industrial revolution brought about "the substitution of languages of infrastructures [ . . . ] for the languages of superstructures." It had always been the case, from Egyptian civilization to the first industrial revolution, that "the linguistic models that dominate a society and make it linguistically unitary are the models of the cultural superstructures'' and of the intellectual elites in law, literature, education, and religion. Then suddenly, with the turn from capitalism to neo-capitalism, which coincided with the transformation of the "scientific spirit" into the integral "application of science" to production, "the languages of the infrastructures, let us say simply the languages of production, are guiding society linguistically. It had never happened before."9 The languages of "production-consumption'' produce "a kind of downgrading of the word, tied to the deterioration of the humanistic languages of the elites, which have been, until now, the guiding languages."10 The centers that create, develop, and unify language "are no longer the universities, but the Jactories."11 The "interregional and international" language of the future will be a "signing" language of "a world unified by industry and technocracy," that is, "a communication of men no longer men."12 This is exactly the opposite of what one finds asserted by the exponents of the linguistic turn: analysis is supposed only to examine the "language of infrastructures" and the subordination of "humanist" languages, language, and signifying semiotics to the semiotics of production and consumption. Even Hannah Arendt in The Modern Condition warns us that although the "ability to act," to "start new unprecedented processes," is still present, 13 it has become the privilege of the sciences which "have been forced to adopt a 'language' of mathematical symbols [ . .. ] that in no way can be translated back into speech." If we "adjust our cultural attitudes to the present status of scientific achievement, we would in all earnest adopt a way of life in which speech is no longer meaningful," for scientists "move in a world where speech has lost its power."14 Arendt subtly remarks something her commentators have failed to notice, namely that the dose relationship between action and speech, which occurs "without the intermediary of things or matter,''15 belongs to a "human condition'' which has not been our condition since at least the first industrial revolution. Pasolini's analyses, which show that it is not only in the sciences that "language has lost its power," are carried still further in the work of Guattari. The latter specifies the nature and function of the "languages of infrastructures" in his most important contribution to the question: asignifying semiotics. To map the "languages of infrastructures" and the modes of machine-centric subjectivation/enunciation, one must follow Guattari's advice to "ex.it language" by doing two things: dissociate subjectivity from the subject, from the individual, and even from the human, and cease considering the power of enunciation exclusive to man and subjectivity. Guattari sees no reason to deny the equivalent of a subjectivitythe equivalent of a "non-human for-itself [pour soi]" (which he calls proto-subjectivity) and of a power of enunciation (which he calls proto-enunciation)-with living and material assemblages. He asks rather that we consider the possibility of forces other than those of the individuated subject's consciousness, sense, and language that might function as vectors of subjectivation or as focal points of enunciation. Guattari extends the autopoietic power, the potential of selfproduction, to all machines. It is a power capable of developing its own rules and modes of expression, a power which Francisco Varela reserves solely for living machines. "[A]ll machinic systems, whatever domain they belong to-technical, biological, semiotic, logical, abstract-are, by themselves, the support for proto-subjective processes, which I will characterize in terms of modular subjectivity'' or "partial subjectivity."16 Modes of subjectivation, assemblages of semiotization and enunciation of all kinds-human and non-human, collective or individual-coexist within biological, economic, aesthetic, scientific, and social processes. Guattari's theory captures the fate of the creative function in capitalism. Languages as such have no privilege in creation. On the contrary, their functioning "can even slow down or prohibit any semiotic proliferation, and it often remains for nonlinguistic components to catalyze mutations and break [ ... ] the dominant lingriistic significations" and to serve as heterogeneous vectors of subjectivation. "Genetic codes throughout the history of life and iconic systems, like art, throughout the history of humanity, have been at least as rich [ . . . ] as linguistic systems."17 If one considers all human and non-human reality as "expressive," that is, as source, emergence, and detonator of processes of subjectivation and enunciation, then reality is present in our actions as multiple possibilities, as "optional matter." Thought and choices are exercised on the "economy of possibles"; they do not start with man and do not rely exclusively on "a signifying discourse produced between speakers and listeners." The history of evolution teaches us that if the "freedom" of possible choices exists at "higher" anthropological stages, they must he presupposed and found equally at the most "elementary" levels of the living being and matter. Subjectivity, creation, and enunciation are the results of an assemblage of human, infra-human, and extra-human factors in which signifying, cognitive semiotics constitute but one of the constituent parts. Guattari is not alone in approaching subjectivity and enunciation from "the point of view of things themselves" rather than that of the subject, human consciousness, and representation. We can find the same theme, though in very different terms, in Benjamin, Pasolini, or Klemperer. But well before their theoretical formulation, the new machines of industrial production, cinema, and art revealed a metamorphosis of the subject, object, and their modes of expression. The cinema's invention disclosed a reality expressed without representation or linguistic mediation. It was no longer necessary to trace signs and symbols in order to show an object, beings, or relations. Reality signified all by itself In art, a radical rupture occurred at the beginning of the century when ready-made, following cinema's example, signified by way of the object itself, unassisted by the sign or language. Properly speaking, ready-mades are no longer representations but "presentations." Duchamp's Bottle Rack or Fountain are objects mass-produced by industrial machinisms, produced by a new power-rather than that of homo Jaber, the power of a machinic assemblage, which assembles sign, material, and labor flows. Addressing this form of capitalist production, Marx evoked a global, non-qualified subjectivity manifesting itself in any object whatsoever. Guattari explodes "Marxist" anthropomorphism and its modes of expression by pushing the deterritorialization of subjectivity to the extreme. That objects might start "speaking," start "expressing themselves" (or start dancing, as they do in the celebrated passage &om the first book of Capital), is not capitalist fetishism, the proof of man's alienation, but rather marks a **new regime of expression** which **requires a new semiotics**. This is not simply a reversal of the subject's activity manifesting itself as the animation of the object, a reversal one need only stand back on its head. This is an irreversible process that shifts the question of the subject to that of subjectivity and &om human subjectivity to machinic, biological, social, aesthetic, etc., proto-subjectivities. The return to "humanism," whatever it may mean, is in any case neither possible nor desirable. Guattari deploys the philosophical program of Capitalism and Schizophrenia in the realm of semiotics and the production of subjectivity. The point is to leave behind the subject/object dualism imposed on multiplicities, which are neither subjects nor objects, by inscribing nature and culture along an indeterminate continuum. From this point of view, the linguist Louis Hjelmslev's work of the late 1960s and early 1970s on categories of expression and content proved fundamental. In Hjelmslev, however, the pair expression/ content remains prisoner to the Saussurean opposition between signifier and signified, whereas for Guattari expression does not refer to the signifier or language but to a collective semiotic machine preexisting both (a collective assemblage of enunciation encompassing diverse and heterogeneous substances of human and non-human expression). Likewise, content does not refer to the signified but to a social machine that preexists it (a machinic assemblage of action and passion we can by no means reduce to the economic, social, or political spheres). The double articulation of expression and content is not a specific property of language; the latter represents only one functional modality of the organic, biological, social, aesthetic, etc., strata of reality. The enlarged conception of this twofold relationship allows us to avoid the pitfalls of Marxism and structuralism, because expression and content, one presupposing and reversing the other reciprocally, maintain no causal relationship. Expression does not depend on content (Marxism), nor is content the product of expression (linguistic structuralism). Subjectivity is neither the result of linguistic or communicational expression nor the product of deeper socioeconomic contents. In a fundamental methodological shift, Guattari asks us to grasp the subject/object relation and the expression/content relation "by the middle," to foreground and problematize the "expressive instance," that is, the enunciation. In this way, he lays the basis for a new pragmatics, a new theory of enunciation, in which, paradoxically, the ground of enunciation is existential, not discursive. 18

2. Signifying Semiologies

The **strength of capitalism lies in its articulation** of processes of social subjection and machinic enslavement as well as in the effects of their respective **signifying and asignifying semiotics**. Both apparatuses play a fundamental role in controlling processes of capitalist deterritorialization and reterritorialization, for they enable the adjustment, modification, solicitation, assemblage, and stabilization of processes of desubjectivation and subjectivation. The fundamental distinction between signifying semiologies and asignifying semiotics has to do with the different ways in which they function and their very different effects on subjectivity. We will examine them separately in order to elucidate the distinction, one which no less always involves mixed semiotics. Instead of making language the site for the verification of equality; instead of considering it implicitly political because a manifestation of the publicity of action or, even, of making it a new productive force, Guattari proposes to "**exit language**" and develop a semiotic theory beyond human semiotics. In a capitalism organized around and founded on asignifying semiotics (Pasolini's "languages of infrastructures"), language is only "one particular but in no way privileged example of the functioning of a general semiotics." This general semiotics must account for **both signifying speech and** the machines of **aesthetic, technical-scientific, biological, and social signs**. Guattari distinguishes among different types of semiotics situated beyond the measures and hierarchizations of human language: "natural" a-semiotic encodings (crystalline systems and DNA, for example), signifjing semiologies including symbolic (or pre-signifying, gestural, ritual, productive, corporeal, musical, etc.) semiologies and semiologies of signification, and, finally, asignifjing (or post-signifying) semiotics. This represents Guattari's most important contribution to our understanding of capitalism and the production of subjectivity. In "natural" a-semiotic encodings, expression is not an autonomous stratum with regard to content. In a rock, in a crystalline structure, the "form" is conveyed by the "material" itself, such that expression and content are inherent to each other. There is no differentiating between a mineral, chemical, or nuclear stratum and a semiotic stratum organized into an autonomous syntax. The separation, the autonomization, of expression begins to develop with the emergence of life. With plants and animals "form' is transmitted through codes that create complex molecules and reproductive systems of species which begin to autonomize and to separate from "substance." With human behavior, signifying semiologies, and asignifying semiotics, transmission no longer depends on genetic codes but on learning, memories, languages, symbols, diagrams, graphs, equations, and so on, in other words, on semiotics functioning according to an autonomous syntax and strata of expression. In semiologies of signification, unlike natural encodings, expression and content maintain a relationship of interpretation, reference, and signification.

I. The Political Functions of Semiologies of Signification

Despite the specific attention paid to symbolic and asignifying semiotics which lie outside of language, Guattari has left us with a very precise picture of how language functions within capitalism. The establishment of a language and of a system of dominant significations is always first of **all a political operation** before it is a linguistic or semantic one. A certain type of language and certain modes of individuated semiotization and subjectivation are necessary in order to stabilize the social field disrupted by capitalist deterritorialization, a deterritorialization which undermines previous subjectivities, forms of life, and institutions. Stabilization entails the predominance of a national language, carrying with it the laws and modes of functioning of incipient capitalism over dialects, exceptional languages, and modes of infantile, "pathological," and artistic expression. The national language reduces them to marginality by bringing them "before the court of dominant syntaxes, semantics, and pragmatics." The constitution of linguistic exchange and of distinct and individuated speakers is, on the one hand, coextensive with the constitution of economic exchange, of its rational agents, and of the juridical contract and its contracting parties. On the other hand, it is coextensive ... with psychic instances of the "self" (id/superego) and the "other." Capitalist formations have recourse to a particular type of signifying semiotic machine which, overcoding all the other semiotics, allows "economic" production as well as the production of subjectivity to be administered, guided, adjusted, and controlled. By exercising power over symbolic semiotics, the semiotics of signification function as both a general equivalent of expression and a vector of subjectivation centered on the individual. Throughout Guattari's work we encounter the comparison with symbolic (pre-signifying) semiotics such as they function in primitive societies. This allows us to grasp the sudden change as well as the novelty the "imperialism and despotism" oflanguage represents. First of all, **capitalism requires that symbolic semiotics** (whether gestural, ritual, productive, corporeal, musical, etc.) **be hierarchized and subordinated to language**. Unlike language, they "do not involve a distinguishable speaker and hearer. Words do not play a major part, since the message is carried not via linguistic chains, but via bodies, sounds, mimicry, posture and so on."19 Since symbolic semiotics are "transitional, polyvocal, animistic, and transindividual," they are not easily assigned to individuated b . ("I "" " ) su Jeers, to persons , you . In our capitalist societies there is still this transindividual mode of functioning but it is confined to marginal forms of expression: madness, infancy, artistic creation, and creation period, as well as amorous or political passion. Symbolic semiologies and the semiology of signification cannot be distinguished by the strata of expression they put in play. Symbolic semiologies function according to a multiplicity ("n") of strata or substances of expression (gestural, ritual, productive, corporeal, musical, etc.), whereas semiologies of signification bring together only two strata (signifier/signified). In primitive societies, diff erent semiotic strata (artistic, religious, linguistic, economic, corporeal, musical, and so on) do not enter into dependent or hierarchized relation with each other. Speech interacts directly with other forms of expression (ritual, gestural, musical, productive, etc.) instead of constituting a higher modality of it. Each stratum of expression conserves its specific consistency and autonomy. The translatability of diff erent semiotic strata is not accomplished through a formalization of expression {the signifier) that overpowers other. semiotics, but through a social assemblage (tribe, community) which, on the contrary, precludes the emergence of a single signifying substance, of a signifying synthesis, of a system that hierarchizes and subordinates other forms of expression to language. In capitalism, on the other hand, these nonverbal forms of expression depend on language. "The signs of society can be interpreted integrally by those of language, but the reverse is not so. **Language is** therefore **interpreting society**."20 In this way, Emile Benveniste concludes the superiority of language over other semiotic systems. It leads Guattari to remark: "One sought to make symbolic semiotics dependent on linguistic semiologies on the pretense that they could not be deciphered, understood, or translated without recourse to language. But what does that prove? We wouldn't say that because we take a plane to go from the US to Europe that the two continents depend on aviation."21 Generalized exchange is not part of the economic sphere alone. The comparison, quantification, and exchange of economic values necessitate, first of all, significations that remain invariant in time and space, enabling a general translatability of semiotics into a linguistic "standard." Determining "value" requires the institution of a national language that operates the comparison and internal translatability of languages and local dialects. In reality, **words and sentences have no sense except within a particular enunciation**, a specific syntax, and a local micro-political situation. Every day every one of us passes through a multiplicity of heterogeneous languages: a language we speak to our families, at work, with friends, with God, with our superiors, and so on. Language has to function as an equivalent to these different

**Pluralistic Openness in governance and community is need to break the grip of ideology on the international order – Extinction is inevitable within closed world discourse formations**

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I conclude with my forward-looking reconstruction of Deutsch’s likely answer to Der Derian’s question. First of all, we can be reasonably confident what Deutsch thought about certain specific ‘closed world’ human-machine systems. Deutsch emphatically agreed with Wiener (and Der Derian) about the dangers of automated defense systems giving false alarms and making other decisions about war and peace.Footnote43 Deutsch’s particular complaint, however, was not one of ontological discontinuity, but that these systems were not based on adequate substantive knowledge. He would, of course, also want people, who were morally and politically accountable, making such important decisions in as decentralized a way as possible.Footnote44 But, as the interpretive analysis above makes clear, he would have been in favor of enhancing decision-maker powers using ‘open systems’ capable of adaptation, learning, and self-restructuring, when functionally appropriate or necessary. Secondly—and here his sympathy with Wiener’s efforts to build cybernetic ‘prosthetic’ devices might come into play—Deutsch would be rather open to the use of cybernetic devices as augmentations to human intelligence, especially when in the service of progressive forms of national development and the urgent need for international integration, peace, and security. Again, the quotation from the 1966 Introduction to The Nerves of Government above makes this clear, as does his positive use of Rapoport and Chammah’s simulational workFootnote45 in diagnosing possible pathways to overcoming the deleterious effects of inequality within and among nations, and his sustained investigation of improved service delivery systems with Manfred Kochen. Deutsch cited studies of different ways of simulating international conflict, and was aware of Harold Guetzkow’s many studies of simulated international processes.Footnote46 At the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin, he supported Stuart Bremer and associates’ development and utilization for contingent forecasting purposes of the GLOBUS simulation (Bremer, 1987).Footnote47 But as is clear to anyone familiar with these kinds of studies and Deutsch’s empirical style, Deutsch would be strongly in favor of empirically grounded simulation modeling. His own tentative efforts to suggest a model of social mobilization processes, mentioned above, indicates this preference, even if the Kochen and Deutsch design-oriented study only uses rather stylized, synoptic empirical referents as ideal types. Bremer’s team developing and applying GLOBUS was heavily empirically oriented. Bremer’s earlier work was an important contribution to Guetzkow’s Simulated International Processes project and its successor efforts summarized in Guetzkow and Valadez (1981). That volume is exemplary in the use of systematic empirical evidence in constructing later-generation international simulation models and formalized decision-making modules for possible use within human-machine mixed (low-tech cyborg) simulational systems. It is also exemplary in Guetzkow’s summary assessment of his modeling efforts using more than 50 empirical-historical validational studies. Deutsch would therefore probably ask of today’s and tomorrow’s cyborg hybrids: are their models’ assumptions empirically tested and updated by systematic programs of critical and public socio-political science?Footnote48 I would like additionally to suggest that these lines of empirically-historically disciplined simulational work represent a real, if imperfect and temporary, institutionalization of an anti-militarist line of social scientific cyborg research of the sort identified by hypothesis IH3 above. Beyond the brief mention of Rapoport and Boulding’s efforts noted above, neither Hayles, Edwards, nor Mirowski cites these specific developments.Footnote49 Unfortunately, to my knowledge, continuations of this kind of security-oriented work are very imperfect in today’s international affairs funding environment. What about the ‘closed world discourse formations’ which are so central to the Der Derian-Edwards-Mirowski concerns? Here, in light of the above review of Deutsch’s relevant work, is a fourth Deutschean answer to Der Derian’s question. (IH9): When closed world discourses/practices at or near the heart of American (or any other entity’s) security-seeking command, control, and communication practices evidence strong tendencies in networks of socio-political communication toward lethal forms of self-closure, they are likely symptoms of much more general pathological, destructive forms of extreme ideologies, nationalist, transnationalist, or internationalist.Footnote50 If they are at odds with the organizing principles of a larger society, then **the battle to correct them can be crucial in determining the fate of that society**. In passing, I have already mentioned that Deutsch’s cybernetic discourse was intended to apply to nationalist as well as non-nationalist ideologies. Could one not **use it to criticize extreme nationalism when it appears in ‘the War on Terror’, just as one could use it to criticize the destructive self-closure of Stalin’s ‘socialist internationalism’, or Al Qaeda’s militant Islamic transnationalism**? If we add dimensions of personal alienation and humiliation, as well as organizational renewal (Stern, 2003: Chapters 1 and 2), to Deutsch’s inequality dynamic for generating militant behavior, especially among those mobilized but not assimilated elites and masses, and allow it to work within as well as across different levels of global society, can we not see here some of the nationalist-transnationalist dynamics of contemporary terrorist groups and their supporters? Finally, consider the moral and religious dimensions of Deutsch’s cybernetic theorizing once again, **within the broader context of an alternative**, **open, and life-sustaining discourse formation**. Despite the informational limitations of Wiener’s communicational ‘bit flows’, Deutsch is clearly concerned with emotional as well as informational intelligence; he is not cybernetically trapped by a Cartesian separation of mind and body (Damasio, 1995). He wants an understanding of life processes that allows growth, novelty, and innovation. One could even identify his concerns as involving an embodied notion of the spiritual dimension of human life. Recall our initial reference to a ‘God’s-eye view’ of the battlefield. Deutsch would more likely have recalled the biblical belief that the kingdom of God is within you (Luke 17: 21). Deutsch’s unusual quotation **on openness to the encompassing suggests looking within ourselves as well as outwards**. **The mystery and awe of the encompassing**, Wiener’s ‘dark mystery of the future’, combined with the awesome mysterium tremendum of theological speculation,Footnote51 **could serve us all better than ‘shock and awe’ as a beacon for the future**. Coming from a non-sectarian, non-dogmatic, inclusive faith, Deutsch has proposed a universalistic, yet scientific, ethic in terms of which pride, idolatry, humility, and evil conduct by nations and other agencies can be operationally, if tentatively, judged. Is it not time to ask those questions of our own nation, as well as of our enemies? In the long run, partly for religious reasons, Deutsch was a qualified optimist, **seek**ing out **the powers for good of pluralistic forms of government and governance**. In the near future, **humankind could at best move toward the formation of pluralistic** security **communities at the regional and global levels**. But certain problems, including the financing of global public goods, the threat of nuclear weapons, and the environmental viability of our species, do and will require some amalgamated forms of global governance. **Addressing gross inequalities** **and developing habits of non-intervention** unless associated with collective legitimacy **are parts of such developments**: To succeed, not only good will and sustained effort, but political creativity and inventiveness will be needed, together **with a political culture of greater international openness**, **understanding and compassion. Without such a new political climate and new political efforts, mankind(SIC) is unlikely to survive for long**.Footnote52