# K – Psychoanalysis – BFHR 7wk

Thanks to Eleanor Barrett, Guy Bloom, James Donovan, and Michael Greenberg for their hard work on this file. Please email khirn10gmail.com with any questions or concerns.

## 1NCs

### 1NC---Policy

#### Emerging tech cooperation is an expression of the death drive – that causes projection of our fears onto the human and non-human world to justify their annihilation

Dodds 12 [Joseph, MPhil, Psychoanalytic Studies, Sheffield University, UK, MA, Psychoanalytic Studies, Sheffield University, UK BSc, Psychology and Neuroscience, Manchester University, UK, Chartered Psychologist (CPsychol) of the British Psychological Society (BPS), and a member of several other professional organizations such as the International Neuropsychoanalysis Society, Psychoanalysis and Ecology at the Edge of Chaos, p. 70]

Here there are echoes of Freud's (1916) idea of 'anticipatory mourning' and the associated attacks and spoiling that we will study below (see p. 72). However, for Searles the natural world is not just a space for externalizing our conflicts. Rather, a healthy relationship to the non-human environment is essential for human psychological well-being. Furthermore, one consequence of our alienation from nature is an omnipotent longing for fusion with our technology, and a powerful anxiety should this fully occur.

Over recent decades we have come from dwelling in an outer world in which the living works of nature either predominated or were near at hand, to dwelling in an environment dominated by a technology which is wondrously powerful and yet nonetheless dead ... [T]his technology-dominated world [is] so alien, so complex, so awesome, and so overwhelming that we have been able to cope with it only by regressing, in our unconscious experience ... to a degraded state of nondifferentiation from it ... [T]his 'outer' reality is psychologically as much a part of us as its poisonous waste products are part of our physical selves. (Searles 1972: 368)

The further we are alienated from nature, the more we are driven into primitive regressive identification and omnipotent fascination with our technology, a powerful positive feedback loop. The inner conflict between our human and non-human selves, and our animal and technological natures, is projected onto the environment, further rupturing the relationship and leading to a spiral of destructiveness as we 'project this conflict upon, and thus unconsciously foster, the war in external reality between the beleaguered remnants of ecologically balanced nature and \*(hu)man's technology which is ravaging them' (ibid.).

Here we are in Klein's paranoid-schizoid world, with a primitive ego unable to differentiate between good and bad mother. While ecologists portray a good eco-mummy doing battle with bad techno-mummy, things are not so simple. As we have seen, civilization (and its technology) is a defence, a 'good mother' to protect us from capricious and uncaring mother nature (Freud 1930), but, as Searles suggests, we are supposed to accept that 'our good mother is poisoning us' (Searles 1972: 369).

For Searles (1972), behind both nuclear danger and ecological catastrophe lies the raw destructiveness Kleinians link to Thanatos, or what Erich Fromm (1992) understands in terms of necrophilia. Searles (1972: 370) argues that at this level of functioning we project 'our own pervasive, poorly differentiated and poorly integrated murderousness, bora of our terror and deprivation and frustration, upon the hydrogen bomb, the military-industrial complex, technology.' We may find the slow, more controllable death from pollution preferable to 'sudden death from nuclear warfare' or we might yearn for the quick relief of a nuclear blast to the 'slow strangulation' of environmental devastation (Searles 1972: 370). Living with such apocalyptic threats leads to a kind of ultimate version of the defence Anna Freud (1936) described as identification with the aggressor.

At an unconscious level we powerfully identify with what we perceive as omnipotent and immortal technology, as a defense against intolerable feelings of insignificance, of deprivation, of guilt, of fear of death ... Since the constructive goal of saving the world can be achieved only by one's working, as but one largely anonymous individual among uncounted millions ... it is more alluring to give oneself over to secret fantasies of omnipotent destructiveness, in identification with the forces that threaten to destroy the world. This serves to shield one from the recognition of one's own guilt-laden murderous urges, experienced as being within oneself, to destroy one's own intrapersonal and interpersonal world.(Searles 1972: 370)

In this view, we are seeing a kind of repetition on a planetary level of an early intrapsychic anxiety situation. In childhood 'a fantasied omnipotence protected us against the fUll intensity of our feelings of deprivation, and now it is dangerously easy to identify with seemingly limitless technology and to fail to cope with the life-threatening scarcity of usable air, food, and water on our planet' (ibid.). Unfortunately our technological powers have outstripped our emotional maturity, and the omnipotent phantasies of infancy now have a frightening objectivity. In place of a religion we no longer believe in, or hopes for future generations we no longer have meaningful contact with, we identify with our immortal, inanimate technology.

In this realm of omnipotent fantasy ... mother earth is equivalent to all of reality ... a drag ... to our yearnings for unfettered omnipotence ... It may be not at all coincidental that our world today is threatened with extinction through environmental pollution, to which we are so strikingly apathetic, just when we seem on the threshold of technologically breaking the chains that have always bound our race to this planet of our origin. I suspect that we collectively quake lest our infantile omnipotent fantasies become fully actualized through man's becoming interplanetary and ceasing thereby to be man ... [W]e are powerfully drawn to suicidally polluting our planet so as to ensure our dying upon it as men, rather than existing elsewhere as ... gods or robots ... [T]he greatest danger lies neither in the hydrogen bomb ... nor in the more slowly lethal effect of pollution ... [but] in the fact that the world is in such a state as to evoke our very earliest anxieties and at the same time to offer the delusional 'promise' ... of assuaging these anxieties, effacing them, by fully externalizing and reifying our most primitive conflicts ... In the pull upon us to become omnipotently free of human conflict, we are in danger of bringing about our extinction.(Searles 1972: 371-372).

#### Their life-affirmation culminates in fundamentalist violence – only the death drive makes life worth living

McGowan 13 [Todd, Associate Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Vermont, *Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis*, Symploke, University of Nebraska Press (Lincoln, NE): 2013, p. 224-7]

On the level of common sense, this opposition is not symmetrical. What thinking person would not want to side with those who love life rather than death. 3 Everyone can readily understand how one might love life, but the love of death is a counterintuitive phenomenon. It seems as if it must be code language for some other desire, which is how Western leftists often view it. Interpreting terrorist attacks as an ultimately life-affirming response to imperialism and impoverishment, they implicitly reject the possibility of being in love with death. But this type of interpretation can't explain why so many suicide bombers are middle-class, educated subjects and not the most downtrodden victims of imperialist power.4 We must imagine that for subjects such as these there is an appeal in death itself. Those who emphasize the importance of death at the expense of life do so because death is the source of value. 5 The fact that life has an end, that we do not have an infinite amount of time to experience every possibility, means that we must value some things above others. Death creates hierarchies of value, and these hierarchies are not only vehicles for oppression but the pathways through which what we do matters at all. Without the value that death provides, neither love nor ice cream nor friendship nor anything that we enjoy would have any special worth whatsoever. Having an infinite amount of time, we would have no incentive to opt for these experiences rather than other ones. We would be left unable to enjoy what seems to make life most worth living. Even though enjoyment itself is an experience of the infinite, an experience of transcending the limits that regulate everyday activity, it nonetheless depends on the limits of finitude. When one enjoys, one accesses the infinite as a finite subject, and it is this contrast that renders enjoyment enjoyable. Without the limits of finitude, our experience of the infinite would become as tedious as our everyday lives (and in fact would become our everyday experience). Finitude provides the punctuation through which the infinite emerges as such. The struggle to assert the importance of death- the act of being in love with death, as bin Laden claims that the Muslim youths are - is a mode of avowing one's allegiance to the infinite enjoyment that death doesn't extinguish but instead spawns.• This is exactly why Martin Heidegger attacks what he sees as our modem inauthentic relationship to death. In Being and Time Heidegger sees our individual death as an absolute limit that has the effect of creating value for us. As he puts it, "With death, Dasein stands before itself in its own most potentiality-for-being. This is a possibility in which the issue is nothing less than Dasein's Being·in·the-world."" Without the anticipation of our own death, we flit through the world and fail to take up fully an attitude of care, the attitude most appropriate for our mode of being, according to Heidegger. Nothing really matters to those who have not recognized the approach of their own death. By depriving us of an authentic relationship to death, an ideology that proclaims life as the only value creates a valueless world where nothing matters to us. But of course the partisans of life are not actually eliminating death itself. They simply privilege life over death and see the world in terms of life rather than death, which would seem to leave the value-creating power of death intact. But this is not what happens. By privileging life and seeing death only in terms of life, we change the way we experience the world. Without the mediation that death provides, the system of pure life becomes a system utterly bereft of value.• We can see this in the two great systems of modernity- science and capitalism. Both modern science and capitalism are systems structured around pure life.• Neither recognizes any ontological limit but instead continually embarks on a project of constant change and expansion. The scientific quest for knowledge about the world moves forward without regard for humanitarian or ethical concerns, which is why ethicists incessantly try to reconcile scientific discoveries with morality after the fact. After scientists develop the ability to clone, for instance, we realize what cloning portends for our sense of identity and attempt to police the practice. After Oppenheimer helps to develop the atomic bomb, he addresses the world with pronouncements of its evil. But this rearguard action has nothing to do with science as such. Oppenheimer the humanist is not Oppenheimer the scientist.10 The same dynamic is visible with capitalism. As an economic system, it promotes constant evolution and change just as life itself does. Nothing can remain the same within the capitalist world because the production of value depends on the creation of the new commodity, and even the old commodities must be constantly given new forms or renewed in some way.11 Capitalism produces crises not because it can't produce enough- crises of scarcity dominate the history of the noncapitalist world, not the capitalist one - but because it produces too much. The crisis of capitalism is always a crisis of overproduction. The capitalist economy suffocates from too much life, from excess, not from scarcity or death. Both science and capitalism move forward without any acknowledged limit, which is why they are synonymous with modernity." Modernity emerges with the bracketing of death's finitude and the belief that there is no barrier to human possibility." The problem with the exclusive focus on life at the expense of death is that it never finds enough life and thus remains perpetually dissatisfied. The limit of this project is, paradoxically, its own infinitude. It evokes what Hegel calls the bad infinite - an infinite that is wrongly conceived as having no relation at all to the finite. We succumb to the bad infinite when we pursue an unattainable object and fail to see that the only possible satisfaction rests in the pursuit itself. The bad infinite - the infinite of modernity- depends on a fundamental misrecognition. We continue on this path only as long as we believe that we might attain the final piece of the puzzle, and yet this piece is constitutively denied us by the structure of the system itself. We seek the commodity that would finally bring us complete satisfaction, but dissatisfaction is built into the commodity structure, just as obsolescence is built into the very fabric of our cars and computers. Like capitalism, scientific inquiry cannot find a final answer: beneath atomic theory we find string theory, and beneath string theory we find something else. In both cases, the system prevents us from recognizing where our satisfaction lies; it diverts our focus away from our activity and onto the goal that we pursue. In this way, modernity produces the dissatisfaction that keeps it going. But it also produces another form of dissatisfaction that wants to arrest its forward movement. The further the project of modernity moves in the direction of life, the more forcefully the specter of fundamentalism will make its presence felt. The exclusive focus on life has the effect of producing eruptions of death. As the life-affirming logic of science and capitalism structures all societies to an increasing extent, the space for the creation of value disappears. Modernity attempts to construct a symbolic space where there is no place for death and the limit that death represents. As opposed to the closed world of traditional society, modernity opens up an infinite universe.14 But this infinite universe is established through the repression of finitude. Explosions of fundamentalist violence represent the return of what modernity's symbolic structure cannot accommodate. As Lacan puts it in his seminar on psychosis, "Whatever is refused in the symbolic order, in the sense of Verwerfung, reappears in the real." 15 Fundamentalist violence is blowback not simply in response to imperialist aggression, as the leftist common sense would have it. This violence marks the return of what modernity necessarily forecloses.

#### We don’t need an alternative besides our framework of analysis – the fantasy will reveal itself as long as we continue asking questions to expose their concealment of the lack – in other words, it’s your job to confuse and frustrate them via a refusal to partake in their politics

**Dean 6** [Jodi, Professor of Political Science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, *Zizek’s Politics,* Taylor & Francis: London and New York, 2006, p. xvii-xx]

By inserting popular culture into his writing, and himself into popular culture, Zizek enacts the way enjoyment colors or stains all thinking and acting. What this means, as I set out in detail in Chapter Three, is that there is a deep nonrational and libidinal nugget in even the most rational, formal ways of thinking. Again, it is not simply that popular culture is at the core of the theoretical enterprise of his books—it is that enjoyment is. Enjoyment is an unavoidable component of any philosophical effort (though many try to deny it). Zizek thus emphasizes the inevitable stain on philosophy, on thought, as he tries to demonstrate a way of thinking that breaks with (Zizek often uses Lacan's term traverses) the fantasy of "pure reason."

This leads to another key element of Zizek's thought: the possibility of taking the position of the excess. As I explain in discussions of his readings of St. Paul and Lenin, Zizek theorizes revolutionary politics as occurring through the occupation of this excessive place. Paul endeavors to put the Christian message to work, to establish new collectives beyond old oppositions between Greeks and Jews. Lenin also breaks with the given, arguing against all around him and against Marxist orthodoxy that the time for revolution is now, that it cannot be predicted, awaited, but must be accomplished with no assurances of success. Like Paul, he puts truth to work, organizing it in the form of a revolutionary political Party.

Zizek emphasizes that Lacan conceptualized this excessive place, this place without guarantees, in his formula for "the discourse of the analyst" (which I set out in Chapter Two). In psycho-analysis, the analyst just sits there, asking questions from time to time. She is some kind of object or cipher onto which the analysand transfers love, desire, aggression, and knowledge. The analysand, in other words, proceeds through analysis by positing the analyst as someone who knows exactly what is wrong with him and exactly what he should do to get rid of his symptom and get better. But, really, the analyst does not know. Moreover, the analyst steadfastly refuses to provide the analysand with any answers whatsoever. No ideals, no moral certainty, no goals, no choices. Nothing. This is what makes the analyst so traumatic, Zizek explains, the fact that she refuses to establish a law or set a limit, that she does not function as some kind of new master.7 Analysis is over when the analysand accepts that the analyst does not know, that there is not any secret meaning or explanation, and then takes responsibility for getting on with his life. The challenge for the analysand, then, is freedom, autonomously determining his own limits, directly assuming his own enjoyment. So, again, the position of the analyst is in this excessive place as an object through which the analysand works through the analytical process.

Why is the analyst necessary in the first place? If she is not going to tell the analysand what to do, how he should be living, then why does he not save his money, skip the whole process, and figure out things for himself? There are two basic answers. First, the analysand is not self-transparent. He is a stranger to himself, a decentered agent "struggling with a foreign kernel."8 What is more likely than self-understanding, is self-misunderstanding, that is, one's fundamental misperception of one's own condition. Becoming aware of this misperception, grappling with it, is the work of analysis. Accordingly, second, the analyst is that external agent or position that gives a new form to our activity. Saying things out loud, presenting them to another, and confronting them in front of this external position concretizes and arranges our thoughts and activities in a different way, a way that is more difficult to escape or avoid. The analyst then provides a form through which we acquire a perspective on and a relation to our selves.

Paul's Christian collectives and Lenin's revolutionary Party are, for Zizek, similarly formal arrangements, forms "for a new type of knowledge linked to a collective political subject."9 Each provides an external perspective on our activities, a way to concretize and organize our spontaneous experiences. More strongly put, a political Party is necessary precisely because politics is not given; it does not arise naturally or organically out of the multiplicity of immanent flows and affects but has to be produced, arranged, and constructed out of these flows in light of something larger.

In my view, when Zizek draws on popular culture and inserts himself into this culture, he is taking the position of an object of enjoyment, an excessive object that cannot easily be recuperated or assimilated. This excessive position is that of the analyst as well as that of the Party. Reading Zizek as occupying the position of the analyst tells us that it is wrong to expect Zizek to tell us what to do, to provide an ultimate solution or direction through which to solve all the world's problems. The analyst does not provide the analysand with ideals and goals; instead, he occupies the place of an object in relation to which we work these out for ourselves. In adopting the position of the analyst, Zizek is also practicing what he refers to as "Bartleby politics," a politics rooted in a kind of refusal wherein the subject turns itself into a disruptive (of our peace of mind!) violently passive object who says, "I would prefer not to."10 Thus, to my mind, becoming preoccupied with Zizek's style is like becoming preoccupied with what one's analyst is wearing. Why such a preoccupation? How is this preoccupation enabling us to avoid confronting the truth of our desire, our own investments in enjoyment? How is complaining that Zizek (or the analyst) will not tell us what to do a way that we avoid trying to figure this out for ourselves?11

### 1NC---Race/Identity

#### Their demand for racial recognition sustains the ability of whiteness to function as a master signifier that structures collective social desires --- the alternative’s psychoanalytic confrontation with the quixotic quest for racial wholeness enables the traversal of the racial fantasy that can best solve collective violence

**George 14** [Sheldon, Associate Professor and Director of the Graduate Program in English. Simmons College of Arts and Sciences, “From alienation to cynicism: Race and the Lacanian unconscious,” *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society* 19.4, (Dec 2014): 360-378]

Separation, Impaired by Race

Lacan described separation as the significant step through which the subject of desire truly emerges. As is shown in Figure 2 - See PDF, above, he schematized the alienating vel through the image of a letter V, above which is placed an inverted V to represent the reverse process of "separation" that completes the subject's loop of development into full subjectivity and binds the subject to a desire that emerges in the losange of the unconscious. In this separation, what the subject has to "free himself of is the aphanisic effect of the binary signifier" (1998b, p. 219). Rooting subjectivity in "scepticism" as what Lacan called "a mode of sustaining man in life" (p. 224), Lacanian theory ties the reversal of alienation to a "cynic[ism]" by which the subject questions the desire of the Other who grants the signifier (p. 238). This cynicism, which Lacan tied to the establishment of a more personal relation to one's own desire, constitutes what I would call an ethical stance for the subject of race, one in which this subject comes to interrogate and reject the racial signifiers that mandate the subject's relation to being and the Other.

For Lacan, the significant living Other within the Symbolic is both the Other, who personifies the site of jouissance that is the illusory Real of wholeness, and the paternal authority, who represents the Symbolic and its law of desire but also facilitates alienation by granting access to the signifiers that define identity for the subject. Not accounting particularly for race as a complicating factor in this process of separation, Lacanian theory nonetheless shows that in separation the subject must first move toward recognition of the desire/lack both of the subject and of the Other, who functions as a fantasy source of bliss. The goal here is to shift from a stultifying obsession with being and bliss toward an embrace of the signifier and fantasy. Lacan explained, "[I]t is in so far as his desire is beyond or falls short of what she says, of what she hints at, of what she brings out in meaning, it is in so far as his desire is unknown, it is in this point of lack [recognizable in the desiring Other's meanings], that the desire of the subject is constituted" (p. 218-219). By filling the gaps left in the Other's discourse with his own meanings and fantasies, the subject thus constitutes in the losange of his unconscious a desire that institutes separation from the Other.

What emerges in this separation produced by desire and fantasy is the desiring subject whose completion of the loop from alienation to separation Lacan presented in his formula for fantasy, $\*a , read as the barred subject in relation to the fantasy object. But it is precisely a relation to this fantasy object that complicates matters for the subject of race. Because in the racist American Symbolic the goal of the signifier is to aggrandize the lost bliss of the Real, the Symbolic functions actively to impair the raced subject's separation from this Real while also fortifying this subject's alienation by the signifier. Lacanian scholar Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks has shown that the Symbolic is structured around the racial signifier whiteness, which functions as a "master signifier" by establishing a "structure of relations, a signifying chain that through a process of inclusions and exclusions constitutes a pattern for organizing human difference" (2008, p. 4). Though securing for only whites the hierarchal fantasy of their "sovereign humanness," whiteness presents itself as the ideal to which all subjects aspire (p. 55). Despite the subject's alienation from not only the part of the self constituted as the non-meaning of the unconscious but also the impossible Real, what this master signifier "promises the subject is precisely access to being" (p. 45), thus directing the racial subject toward the very Real from which this subject must separate.

It is this obsessive pursuit of the Real, thus encouraged by race, that can lead to the violence and frustration of racism. This frustration arises because whiteness can never reconstitute being. In truth, whiteness functions only as the object a that merely promises wholeness by simultaneously masquerading as the phallus, the castrated object that manifests the illusory site of bliss in the Imaginary form of the subjective-self. Distinguishing the phallus from "the organ" (2006b, p. 579), Lacan associated the phallus with Imaginary fantasies of lack, fantasies about "exclusion[s] from the specular image" (p. 697). It is such fantasies of bodily parts "falling off" from the Imaginary self that define the aggressivity, or sense of psychic fragmentation, that may lead to the aggression that invades race relations. Whiteness produces such aggressivity because it aims at an impossible ideal of completion that no living subject - not even a white subject - can ever embody. Providing ideals both for the physical human form and for its fragmented psychic structure that simply are unattainable, the very term "white" marks its own discursive and fantasy function by defying the phenotypic reality of all subjects. With the subject of race remaining incapable of maintaining in actuality the two central positions in relation to being articulated by Lacanian theory, those of either "being" or "having" the phallus, the best this subject can do is position himself as having the fantasy object a that functions as referent to the phallus, the illusory remainder that when positioned within the self leaves even the white subject always one step removed from the ideal he seeks to embody (p. 582). There is thus a fundamental frustration, insufficiency and aggressivity awakened by this ideal called forth by the illusion of whiteness.

The problem with contemporary theoretical and political approaches to the aggression and racism that still plague race relations today is that their frequent reliance upon the concept of race precludes engagement with this fundamental aggressivity produced by the concept itself. While recognizing the destructive power and persistence of the illusion of race, the attempt made by numbers of African American scholars is not to destroy this illusion; instead, it is to give the illusion new mythical meaning by adopting a process of resignification that is made intelligible by Derridean poststructuralist theory. Tying agency to resignification of existing signifiers, Jacques Derrida, the father of poststructuralism, described the need to ground what we may call a critical stance toward the Other in a process modeled by the "bricoleur" (Derrida, 1978, p. 285). As skeptical critic, the bricoleur recognizes "the necessity of borrowing one's concepts from the text of a heritage which is more or less coherent or ruined" (p. 285). His task is to embrace the "received historical discourse" while altering its meaning by putting it to a use for which it "had not been especially conceived" (p. 285). It is this approach of the bricoleur that African Americans have often embraced in accepting the terms of race posited by the racist Symbolic.

This approach is driven by the need to reinforce a sense of being that was visibly challenged by slavery and continues to be challenged by racism. In Lacanian terms, the goal here is to alter the fantasy relation to being. This alteration is addressed most directly at the object a that structures fantasies of race. Where it is the a that stands as the internal object common to members of the race - the fantasy essence within each African American - rearticulation of African American identity is aimed at revaluing this internal, fantasy self. This self is what is devalued in the racist Symbolic as the object a of whiteness gains the discursive dominance that facilitates its masquerade as phallus, as signifier of being and jouissance. It is thus only through this glorification of the fantasy object thought to link African Americans intersubjectively that the subject rooted in this identity establishes a relation to being, thereby alienating himself in the signifiers that also liberate him.

This paradoxical path toward freedom through alienation creates what I would identify as an ambivalent relation to race for African Americans, whereby they challenge its racist implications by embracing the distinctions of self and other it promotes. But because the very function of race is to make the self and other knowable only through fantasy - by which the racial other is not only already defined, but is also often already defined as enemy –

what I propose is a traversal of the fantasy of race. This traversal involves separation not only from the Real represented by the mother, but also from the Symbolic that redirects the raced subject to this Real through buttressing the fantasy a of race. While racial identity can petrify the subject into the signifier of his or her race, thus contributing to the aphanisis of the raced subject's being, I argue that through a cynical questioning of the mandates and signifiers of the racial Symbolic the raced subject may attain an "obstacle to his fading," one that involves this subject coming to "recognize" his racial desire "as desire of the Other," as a desire shaped by a Symbolic structure that precedes and delimits the raced subject's existence (1998b, p. 235).

The Drive and Traversal of the Racial Fantasy

Most important in this traversal of race is an essential recognition of the lack in the signifiers of the Other, a recognition that the signifier does not capture the subject's entire being. Especially apparent in signifiers of race - like "black boy" -, there is always a left over, a part of the self that cannot emerge fully through the racial signifiers' subjective meanings. It is this very failure of the signifier that is highlighted in Figure 1 - See PDF,, wherein the circle of being designates an entire portion of the split subject that exists in the Real and is only partially accessible through the unconscious. The first implication of the fact that being is elided by the signifier's meaning is that, as we have seen, the subject is thus petrified into a signifier and simultaneously alienated from that part of the self that can be, but is not, signified by language, that part situated in the unconscious, where being and signification overlap to create non-meaning. But more radical than this is the implication that there is a part of the subject that is not available to the operations of the signifier but yet may express itself through desire, the part that comprises the rest of the circle of being. As Lacan argued, desire is "the metonymy of our being," and the "channel in which desire is located is not simply that of the modulation of the signifying chain" (1997, p. 321). This desire, I suggest, is what can facilitate an ethical separation of the S1 and S2, creating critical distance from the signifier and opening up a space for the subject to access better that of the self which escapes the signifier.

If we return to Fanon's Jean Veneuse, what we see is exactly a desire for abandonment that escapes signification and indeed grants structure to the signifiers that define subjectivity, organizing them by their effort to repress this desire. The escape of desire from the signifier is possible because the Lacanian subject is not merely the subject of the signifier, who "appears in the field of the Other," but also "the subject in the field of the drive," (1998b, p. 199), where desire functions as that which is "agitated in the drive" (p. 243). Characterized by a "constant force," a tension that is at odds with the homeostasis and delayed gratification promised by the signifier (p. 164), the drive is "different from any stimulation coming from the outside world" because it is an "internal" force (p. 164). It emerges from the libido as "pure life instinct," "irrepressible" and "indestructible life" (p. 198). This libido, manifesting itself most appropriately as that which "the sexed being loses in sexuality" (p. 197), is connected to Freud's notion of the subject as initially "polymorphous, aberrant," able to attain pleasure from all sources, but as subsequently forced to localize pleasure in the erogenous zones (p. 176). The signifier and the mores of the Symbolic institute a homeostasis that restricts "sexuality," as a manifestation of the force of the libido, into coming "into play only in the form of partial drives" (p. 176), so that we "deal only with that part of sexuality that passes" into "the networks of the signifier" (p. 177); but the force of this immortal libido insistently marks its presence at the site of the "gaps that the distribution of the signifying investments sets up in the subject" (p. 180). We see this insistence, for example, in parapraxis, as something slips through the network of the signifier, something emerging from the "losage \*," from the unconscious as a gap that Lacan places "at the centre of any relation" between "reality and the subject" (p. 181). It is because the force of what emerges from the unconscious in this movement outward directs the subject to the Other that the drive holds particular importance to an understanding of race.

What race encourages through the Other is substitution of desire for the drive, as it petrifies the subject in a stagnant relation to the fantasy object. The movement of the drive involves a "circular" path out from the gaps of subjectivity toward the Other and back to the subject (1998b, p. 178). In the place of the Other, the drive encounters and closes in on "the petit a ," which is "in fact simply the presence of a hollow, a void" that "can be occupied by any object" but that functions as representative of the "lost object" (p. 180). In the American Symbolic, I contend, the object a of race, acquired from the Other, binds the racial subject to this circular path around a hollow that serves as the source of identity. Unlike the path of desire, which involves a continual metonymic movement from object to object in search of a source of satisfaction, the drive endlessly circles its illusive object, "attaining its satisfaction without attaining its aim" (p. 179). While failing to attain the racial identity represented by the object a of race, the subject of race yet still remains bound to the a because the a of race becomes integral to the drive's function not just of "making oneself seen ," but more fundamentally of "making oneself " (p. 195). In encountering the object a defined by the Other, the subject acquires in this object, in race, a "little mirror," an "illusion" of self, to which the subject may "accommodate his own image" (p. 159). We can say that in race the subject "assumes the role of the object," embracing the reversal whereby it is the jouissance and demands of the Other that are privileged (p. 185).

But this static objectification stifles the metonymy of desire. The fantasy object petrifying the self becomes the master signifier through which a "primal" repression of being is achieved, and what is "built on" the signifier, as we saw with Vaneuse, is "the symptom" of the subject, "constituted" as a "scaffolding of signifiers" (1998b, p. 176). It is because of the satisfaction gained from the symptom, the jouissance and sense of being granted by race as the soul or remnant of a lost being, that the drive need not reach its aim of hitting the mark set by race as object a . This satisfaction is sustained as the source of a subjective self with "nothing else" ensuring its "consistency except the object, as something that must be circumvented," something both aimed at and missed (p. 181). Lacan tied the pleasure of the symptom upheld by the drive to a kind of autoeroticism that he described in the image of "a mouth sewn up" in "certain silences," closed "upon its own satisfaction" (p. 179). It is this closing up upon a jouissance of pain and pleasure, this insertion into the self of the Other's signifier, that I associate with race.

However, Lacanian theory also shows that "by snatching at its object, the drive learns in a sense that this is precisely not the way it will be satisfied" (1998b, p. 167). I suggest that the existing ambivalence about race of both African Americans and white Americans makes possible increased recognition that race does not produce the sovereign humanness or supreme satisfaction that binds subjects to race as a fantasy source of being. Though the extent to which recent events in America mark a permanent shift in relations to the signifiers of race is yet to be seen, whiteness itself and the very value of race have been cynically questioned in the wake of publicized incidents of "white"-on-"black" murders - like the shootings of Trayvon Martin by George Zimmerman, and Jordan Davis by Michael Dunn - and police-on- "black" killings, like the death of Eric Garner in an illegal chokehold by New York police who alleged he was unlawfully selling cigarettes. 5 In light of active protests in Missouri after 18-year-old Michael Brown was shot by police in the streets of Ferguson, some have even argued optimistically that we are bearing witness to a "new civil rights movement which has sprung up" (Ifill, 2014). Whether or not this movement comes to full fruition, it is precisely a process of bearing witness that is key to its development thus far. What I suggest has occurred in the immediate aftermath of the killing of these black men is a shift in many Americans' scopic relation to the Other.

At issue in this shift is the gaze of the Other, which Lacan stated "has the effect of arresting movement" and halting transgression (1998b, p. 118). What objectifies the subject, as the movement of his or her drive binds the subject to the jouissance of the a , is subjection to an "entirely hidden gaze" of the Other, which the subject positions as a policing authority for whom the subject performs his or her identity (p. 182). This disembodied observer and judge constitutes an extimacy that polices unconscious desires, ensuring that "it is in the space of the Other that [the subject] sees himself and the point from which he looks at himself is also in that space" (p. 144). This space of the "capital Other," Lacan said, is the "locus of speech," the Symbolic (p. 129). Where Lacan associated this locus with the law, the law of the father and the law of desire, it can be said that this hidden gaze is often given presence by the police. Embodying the arresting gaze that "surprises" the subject in his moment of transgression, the police should allow to arise "the conflagration of shame" that realigns the subject's desire away from the pathological object of his or her fixation (p. 182). But while the police of Ferguson have facilitated an ostensive realignment of America's subjective relation to the object of race, they have done so by also largely dispossessing themselves of the agency of the shaming gaze.

Indeed, after the killing of the unarmed Michael Brown by police on August 18th, 2014, the agency of the shaming gaze was notably transferred to the community and the larger American and international public in turn. The community was the first to watch as the body of Michael Brown lay in the streets for hours. Marking this indignity in his eulogy at Brown's funeral, the Reverend Al Sharpton recalls that for "four and a half hours" the "family couldn't come to the ropes" but were left to watch "Dogs sniffin' through" (2014). Explaining that it signaled to him "how many of us are considered nothing," how "we were just so marginalized and ignored," Sharpton displays his own struggles against a Symbolic that destroys African Americans' fantasies of being (2014): he emphasizes, it was like Brown's "life value didn't matter" (2014). But Sharpton's rhetoric throughout the eulogy also marks the shift of the public gaze toward the Ferguson police and America itself. He asks, "How do you think we look when the world can see you can't come up with a police report?" - which was only produced with sparse details almost two weeks after the shooting - and "how do you think we look when young people march nonviolently asking for the land of the free and the home of the brave to hear their cry, and you put snipers on the roof and point guns on them?" (2014). Highlighting what many in the media and the public see as excessive force in the police's response to protestors, Sharpton exhorts, "America, it's time to deal with policing" (2014).

Sharpton's rhetoric echoes a larger national shift whereby the authority of the police as enforcer of the law and holder of the gaze is cynically challenged. As a reverend himself, Sharpton transfers the gaze from the earthly agency of the law to the divine agency of God, asking the mourners, "What does the Lord require of you" as response to the killing? (2014). But Sharpton finally pins both agency and responsibility to the self, arguing that "nobody gonna help us if we don't help ourselves," so "we've got to [start] a movement" (2014). Throughout, Sharpton's rhetoric directs the shaming gaze to the police by positioning this gaze as the possession alternately of the community, Americans in general, the international community that sees an America bound to practices of the past, and the heavenly authority who is positioned in judgment of all these participants. The eulogy contributes to and charts the optical shift that, now making the Ferguson police the object of the shaming gaze, has led not only to public calls for body cameras to document police activity but also to federal investigation of the Ferguson police department by the United States Department of Justice. This shifting of the gaze goes some way toward freeing the subject from the power of the policing Other, whose abuse and even transgressions of the law unveil the inherent racism of the Symbolic itself. With the Symbolic Other's capacity to define the raced African American subject cynically challenged, the individual African American is positioned to define more freely his or her own identity.

The possibility opened up here is dual, offering the subject access to an identity grounded in a reconfigured relation either to the fantasy a or to an individual desire actuated by the drive. Already emulating the metonymy of desire, the shifting of the gaze away from the line of sight traced in the vision of the policing Other and toward perception of the violent excesses this Other embraces because of race, opens up the object a of race to reevaluation by diverse onlookers. Through this displacement of the gaze, the violence that emerges from racial identity can be put to uses for which it was not intended, helping to fortify the poststructuralist approach of evolving African American identity through the bricolage of self-redefinition. But it can also, at the more individual level of the subject who is racialized as African American, issue a challenge to the very concept of race itself.

Conclusion

Though the ethical responsibility of issuing this challenge to the concept of race is ceded through the glorification of the a , this responsibility is established even in the model of poststructuralism that holds such sway over contemporary thinking about social change, wherein the ultimate aim of the theory is not an essentialist but a strategic deployment of identity. In the poststructuralist vision, because the given identity is "never fully owned," it remains open to "urgent and expanding political purposes" that demand shifting allegiances across such lines as race, class and gender (Butler, 1993, p. 228). But while poststructuralism produces this politics driven by a metonymic shift in subjective positionality by assuming a center-less self untethered from all identity, I envision through psychoanalysis the subject's encounter with an excluded center masked by the illusions of this subject's embraced identities. Where belief in race threatens to bind the subject to the fantasies of wholeness secured by the object a , and where true poststructuralist resignification of race forecloses recognition of the deeper drives that guide the identity politics of the individual subject, such a potentially seminal moment in the reconfiguration of race offers the racialized subject a unique opportunity to attempt a Lacanian traversal of race that can ground individual political activity in deeper recognition of the subject's desire.

Lacan specified that the object a "plays the role of obturator," inhibiting such recognition by facilitating the "closing of the unconscious" (1998b, p. 144). Aimed at an impossible wholeness, what the object a of race attempts is to fill the constitutive gaps in the subject, the spaces left unoccupied by the subject's absent being. But Lacanian theory stipulates that the "subject who has traversed the radical fantasy [can] experience the drive" that exudes from the space of these gaps (p. 273). Where this drive is an expression of the undirected libido whose "effective presence" is registered only in "desire," it is through the process of reorienting one's desire away from such fantasies as race that the subject may begin the process of experiencing and directing this internal tension of the drive (p. 153). Through the process of "mapping" one's own desire in one's cynical questioning of the object a presented by the Other (p. 273), the subject is placed upon the "track of something that is specifically [her] business," situating herself in relation to a desire and drive that is particularly her own belonging (1997, p. 319). It is perhaps most likely that the recent attention to repeated incidents of deadly violence to black men will not produce sustained social skepticism about the value of race, for "the loop" of the fundamental fantasy, Lacan stressed, "must be run through several times" if the subject is to free himself truly from the illusions of the Other. However, the unconscious gap opened up by this cynical response to race at the national level allows essential space for the initial movements of the individual subject of race along the path of this loop.

#### In contemporary American society, racial identity often functions as an object a. White racial identity structures its coherence through conjuring images of mythic enjoyment experienced by black people; consequently, they become the objects of the surveillance of white racial gaze, objects whose excessive enjoyment must be curtailed, with spectacular violence of necessary.

**George 16** [Sheldon, Associate Professor and Director of the Graduate Program in English, Simmons College of Arts and Sciences, *Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity*, Baylor University Press: Waco, TX, February 1, 2016]

Difference may be isolated from the racial body in this manner because it is ultimately jouissance that grounds difference, establishing this difference through its circumscription of the fantasy object Lacan calls the object a. Most precisely, jouissance designates the pleasure that would emerge from an impossible wholeness. Lacan explains, however, that in the face of such impossibility the signifier serves as "the cause of jouissance," producing pleasure through its articulation of the fantasies of wholeness, or being, that compensate for subjective lack.14 This being, lost to the subject, is defined as a psychic sense of unity, autonomy, and individuality that the subject can construct only through the signifier's isolation of the object a, the illusory lost object that promises to return the subject to a jouissance-filled state of wholeness. In American society, this fantasy object a, I argue, is often racial identity, supporting both difference and jouissance-inducing fantasies of being. Within the fantasies of the racialized subject, this object a of race, this "object that puts itself in the place of what cannot be glimpsed of the other" and the self, serves as the "basis of being," isolating an imaginary core self that "holds the image [of the racial body] together," granting it psychic and semantic significance for the subject.15 Race, as object a, functions as what I would call after Lacan the "para-being," the "being beside," which is "substitute[ed] . . . for the being that would take flight."16 More so than the physical body, it is racial identity as founded by this illusory core being, the racial essence distinct to each racial group, that provides structure and coherence to fantasies of difference. But where this a as racial core is both illusory and thus elusive, what racial fantasies ultimately isolate as proof of the other's alterity is the other's enjoyment, which is perceived as an index of this other's jouissance, a reification of the bliss experienced by this other through access to an illusory a.

In racial fantasies, the other's visible or even stylized expressions of pleasure, which are exemplified so distinctly in music, come to define the other's particular mode of jouissance, his or her specific manner of accessing being. This visible enjoyment helps to construct the other as bound to a distinctive jouissance of being that differentiates self from other and racial group from racial group. Through the group's mode of jouissance, its very being or core self is defined and its racial identity is solidified. Racial alterity is thus often contextualized by a fantastical sense of the incompatibility of the other's mode of jouissance with that of the subjective self, or that of this self's racial group; but the other's jouissance, bound to fantasy, actively oscillates between subjective imaginings that designate it alternately as alien and as excessive, and this jouissance can therefore also found what Lacan terms "jealouissance," the frustrated hatred that may spring forth from the subject upon conviction that the other "has the a" and accesses a bountiful bliss the subject lacks.17 Where hatred of the other is fundamentally "addressed to being" and is essentially isolated through the jouissance perceived in the other's manifest enjoyment, it is toward the bountiful excesses of a visible pleasure alien to Dunn's self-identity, an unrestrained jouissance of being expressed in the boys' loud rap music and undisciplined behavior, that Dunn directs his hatred and aggressivity.18

Behavior, signaling a mode of jouissance, becomes the core of an otherness that Dunn would violently restrain and discipline. Echoing his interpretation of the case, Dunn's attorney, Cory Strolla, asserts to the press that "this isn't a black-and-white issue."19 He states, "It's what [Dunn] would call a subculture thug issue. . . . And again, it doesn't go to race. It goes to how people behave and respond to situations."20 While proclaiming, with the help of Strolla, that the incident occurred because he requested "a common courtesy" in asking the boys to turn their music down, Dunn attests that the boys responded to his request by not turning down but turning off the music; however, they then turned it back on, he says, and Davis started to curse and verbally threaten him from inside the boys' vehicle, actions Dunn himself responded to by rolling down his window and directly asking Davis, "Are you talking about me?"21 Dunn describes the boys' behavior as "obnoxious," adding that he was "stunned and . . . horrified and just couldn't believe that things escalated the way they did over a common courtesy."22 The boys' "obnoxious" behavior confirmed for Dunn an existing image into which he now solidly positioned them: acknowledging that he could have been "imagining" the danger he feared, Dunn explains, "You know, you hear enough news stories and you read about these things, they go through your mind"; with such stories about fearsome blacks in mind, and given "the way they behaved" in response to his request, Dunn concluded that "everybody in the car was a thug or a gangster."23

#### The 1ac’s resistance to whiteness is contrary to its intent. The aff participates in the very mythologization of that which it set out to confront. This is because the way the 1ac imagines achieving its goal is in fact structured by the very institutionalization of whiteness it claims to fight against. Any successful politics will require a new approach to the constitution of desire and symbolic capital.

Mbembe 15. Achille Mbembe, “Achille Mbembe on The State of South African Political Life,” September 19, 2015, http://africasacountry.com/2015/09/achille-mbembe-on-the-state-of-south-african-politics/

The old politics of waiting is therefore gradually replaced by a new politics of impatience and, if necessary, of disruption. Brashness, disruption and a new anti-decorum ethos are meant to bring down the pretence of normality and the logics of normalization in this most “abnormal” society. Steve Biko, Frantz Fanon and a plethora of black feminist, queer, postcolonial, decolonial and critical race theorists are being reloaded in the service of a new form of militancy less accommodationist and more trenchant both in form and content. The age of impatience is an age when a lot is said – all sorts of things we had hardly heard about during the last twenty years; some ugly, outrageous, toxic things, including calls for murder, atrocious things that speak to everything except to the project of freedom, in this age of fantasy and hysteria, when the gap between psychic realities and actual material realities has never been so wide, and the digital world only serves as an amplifier of every single moment, event and accident. The age of urgency is also an age when new wounded bodies erupt and undertake to actually occupy spaces they used to simply haunt. They are now piling up, swearing and cursing, speaking with excrements, asking to be heard. They speak in allegories and analogies – the “colony”, the “plantation”, the “house Negro”, the “field Negro”, blurring all boundaries, embracing confusion, mixing times and spaces, at the risk of anachronism. They are claiming all kinds of rights – the right to violence; the right to disrupt and jam that which is parading as normal; the right to insult, intimidate and bully those who do not agree with them; the right to be angry, enraged; the right to go to war in the hope of recovering what was lost through conquest; the right to hate, to wreak vengeance, to smash something, it doesn’t matter what, as long as it looks “white”. All these new “rights” are supposed to achieve one thing we are told the 1994 “peaceful settlement” did not achieve – decolonization and retributive justice, the only way to restore a modicum of dignity to victims of the injuries of yesterday and today. Demythologizing whiteness And yet, some hard questions must be asked. Why are we invested in turning whiteness, pain and suffering into such erotogenic objects? Could it be that the concentration of our libido on whiteness, pain and suffering is after all typical of the narcissistic investments so privileged by this neoliberal age? To frame the issues in these terms does not mean embracing a position of moral relativism. How could it be? After all, in relation to our history, too many lives were destroyed in the name of whiteness. Furthermore, the structural repetition of past sufferings in the present is beyond any reasonable doubt. Whiteness as a necrophiliac power structure and a primary shaper of a global system of unequal redistribution of life chances will not die a natural death. But to properly engineer its death – and thus the end of the nightmare it has been for a large portion of the humanity – we urgently need to demythologize it. If we fail to properly demythologize whiteness, whiteness – as the machine in which a huge portion of the humanity has become entangled in spite of itself – will end up claiming us. As a result of whiteness having claimed us; as a result of having let ourselves be possessed by it in the manner of an evil spirit, we will inflict upon ourselves injuries of which whiteness, at its most ferocious, would scarcely have been capable. Indeed for whiteness to properly operate as the destructive force it is in the material sphere, it needs to capture its victim’s imagination and turn it into a poison well of hatred. For victims of white racism to hold on to the things that truly matter, they must incessantly fight against the kind of hatred which never fails to destroy, in the first instance, the man or woman who hates while leaving the structure of whiteness itself intact. As a poisonous fiction that passes for a fact, whiteness seeks to institutionalize itself as an event by any means necessary. This it does by colonizing the entire realms of desire and of the imagination. To demythologize whiteness, it will not be enough to force “bad whites” into silence or into confessing guilt and/or complicity. This is too cheap. To puncture and deflate the fictions of whiteness will require an entirely different regime of desire, new approaches in the constitution of material, aesthetic and symbolic capital, another discourse on value, on what matters and why.

#### Uplift and emancipation are rhetorical tools deployed in the aff’s particular mode of storytelling to produce a redemptive feeling in the listener. This pedagogy of optimism on the level of the form is actually a simplification of individual stories and participates in a political vampirism, a draining of the vital force and complexity of life in the over-presencing of imagistic representations.

Berlant 98. Lauren, George M. Pullman Professor, Department of English, University of Chicago, “Poor Eliza,” *American Literature*, Vol. 70, No. 3, No More Separate Spheres! (Sep., 1998), Duke University Press, pg. 635-668

What distinguishes these critical texts are the startling ways they struggle to encounter the Uncle Tom form without reproducing it, declining to pay the inheritance tax. The postsentimental does not involve an aesthetic disruption to the contract sentimentality makes between its texts and readers -that proper reading will lead to better feeling and therefore to a better self. What changes is the place of repetition in this contract, a crisis frequently thematized in formal aesthetic and generational terms. In its traditional and political modalities, the sentimental promises that in a just world a consensus will already exist about what constitutes uplift, amelioration, and emancipation, those horizons toward which empathy powerfully directs itself. Identification with suffering, the ethical response to the sentimental plot, leads to its repetition in the audience and thus to a generally held view about what transformations would bring the good life into being. This presumption, that the terms of consent are trans- historical once true feeling is shared, explains in part why emotions, especially painful ones, are so central to the world-building aspects of sentimental alliance. Postsentimental texts withdraw from the contract that presumes consent to the conventionally desired outcomes of identification and empathy. The desire for unconflictedness might very well motivate the sacrifice of surprising ideas to the norms of the world against which this rhetoric is being deployed. What, if anything, then, can be built from the very different knowledge/experience of subaltern pain? What can memory do to create conditions for freedom and justice without reconfirming the terms of ordinary subordination? More than a critique of feeling as such, the postsentimental modality also challenges what literature and storytelling have come to stand for in the creation of sentimental national subjects across an almost two-century span. Three moments in this genealogy, which differ as much from each other as from the credulous citation of Uncle Tom's Cabin we saw in The King and I and Dimples, will mark here some potential within the arsenal that counters the repetition compulsions of sentimentality. This essay began with a famous passage from James Baldwin's "Everybody's Protest Novel," a much-cited essay about Uncle Tom's Cabin that is rarely read in the strong sense because its powerful language of rageful truth-telling would shame in advance any desire to make claims for the tactical efficacy of suffering and mourning in the struggle to transform the United States into a postracist nation. I cited Baldwin's text to open this piece not to endorse its absolute truth but to figure its frustrated opposition to the sentimental optimism that equates the formal achievement of empathy on a mass scale with the general project of democracy. Baldwin's special contribution to what sentimentality can mean has been lost in the social-problem machinery of mass society, in which the production of tears where anger or nothing might have been became more urgent with the coming to cultural dominance of the Holocaust and trauma as models for having and remembering collective social experience.20 Currently, as in traditional sentimentality, the authenticity of overwhelming pain that can be textually performed and shared is disseminated as a prophylactic against the reproduction of a shocking and numbing mass violence. Baldwin asserts that the overvaluation of such redemptive feeling is precisely a condition of that violence**.** Baldwin's encounter with Stowe in this essay comes amidst a general wave of protest novels, social-problem films, and film noir in the U.S. after World War Two: Gentleman's Agreement, The Postman Always Rings Twice, The Best Years of Our Lives. Films like these, he says, "emerge for what they are: a mirror of our confusion, dishonesty, panic, trapped and immobilized in the sunlit prison of the American dream." They cut the complexity of human motives and self-understanding "down to size" by preferring "a lie more palatable than the truth" about the social and material effects the liberal pedagogy of optimism has, or doesn't have, on "man's" capacity to produce a world of authentic truth, justice, and freedom.21 Indeed, "truth" is the keyword for Baldwin. He defines it as "a devotion to the human being, his freedom and fulfillment: freedom which cannot be legislated, fulfillment which cannot be charted."22 In contrast, Stowe's totalitarian religiosity, her insistence that subjects "bargain" for heavenly redemption with their own physical and spiritual mortification, merely and violently confirms the fundamental abjection of all persons, especially the black ones who wear the dark night of the soul out where all can see it. Additionally, Baldwin argues that Uncle Tom's Cabin instantiates a tradition of locating the destiny of the nation in a false model of the individual soul, one imagined as free of ambivalence, aggression, or contradiction. By "human being" Baldwin means to repudiate stock identities as such, arguing that their stark simplicity confirms the very fantasies and institutions against which the sentimental is ostensibly being mobilized. This national-liberal refusal of complexity is what he elsewhere calls "the price of the ticket" for membership in the American dream.23 As the Uncle Tom films suggest, whites need blacks to "dance" for them so that they might continue disavowing the costs or ghosts of whiteness, which involve religious traditions of self-loathing and cultural traditions confusing happiness with analgesia. The conventional reading of "Everybody's Protest Novel" sees it as a violent rejection of the sentimental.24 It is associated with the feminine (Little Women), with hollow and dishonest capacities of feeling, with an aversion to the real pain that real experience brings. "Causes, as we know, are notoriously bloodthirsty," he writes.25 The politico-sentimental novel uses suffering vampirically to simplify the subject, thereby making the injunction to empathy safe for the subject. Of course there is more to the story. Baldwin bewails the senti- mentality of Richard Wright's Native Son because Bigger Thomas is not the homeopathic Other to Uncle Tom after all, but one of his "children," the heir to his negative legacy.26 Both Tom and Thomas live in a simple relation to violence and die knowing only slightly more than they did before they were sacrificed to a white ideal of the soul's simple purity, its emptiness. This addiction to the formula of redemption through violent simplification persists with a "terrible power": it confirms that U.S. minorities are constituted as Others even to themselves through attachment to the most hateful, objectified, cartoon-like versions of their identities, and that the shamed subcultures of America really are, in some way, fully expressed by the overpresence of the stereotypical image.

#### We should adopt a position of drive, rather than desire, when confronting race. Desire is when one thinks that there is an object which can fill their lack. Drive, by contrast, affirms lack itself as constitutive of the subject- founding identity on a void that can never be filled. Three impacts: 1) This is the condition for WISDOM, according to Lacan. 2) This is the only way to overcome the fantasy of a self that can be complete or full or satisfied. 3) This is the condition for overcoming racialized desire.

**George 16** [Sheldon, Associate Professor and Director of the Graduate Program in English, Simmons College of Arts and Sciences, *Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity*, Baylor University Press: Waco, TX, February 1, 2016, p]

Radically altering one's psychic relation to the Other, the process of self-naming I here advocate both redirects the urge to grieve the ancestor and repudiates the racialized designations through which the Other seeks to confine the subject in the steel jug of the Symbolic. What is ultimately entailed in this self-naming is the subject recognizing his or her "own image" as "a mortal cause, and griev[ing] this object" as a loss, as an emptiness around which the subject's own personality must be built as an incrementally expansive structure to contain this internal absence.32 In establishing such personality, the goal is not to escape lack but rather to ground the self within it, to, more precisely, build the self around its sustained void. Lacanian theory shows that the only way "to found wisdom [is] on lack," which presents the single viable source of self-recognition afforded the subject.33 The absent image, as container, as personality, must be cultivated and built up "ex-nihilo," from nothingness, as psychic defense against the alluring phallus and objects a that act as the decoys for desire within the confining ambit of the Symbolic.34 By recognizing this absence as the true pathway to desire, and by coming to travel this discovered path, the subject of race may not only attain the means of expressing the multiplicity of an identity and desire unhinged from the fantasy a of race, but also potentially direct him- or herself toward a goal that centers the very practice of psychoanalysis: not just a transcendence of race but a transcendence of the fundamental fantasy of recoverable loss that drives subjective and racial desire. What Lacanian theory posits is the possibility that, after the experience of actively mapping one's own relation to the fantasy object is undertaken by the subject, this "experience of the fundamental phantasy" can become "the drive" by which desire is then "agitated"; unveiled by the theory is the potential that, in cynically questioning the fantasy of race, the subject may confront the very lack that fuels all fantasy and all desire, the lack that must be subjectified as the empty core of a newly adumbrated self.35 Lacan importantly cautions that the "loop" of the subject's fantasy often must be "run through several times" before the subject abandons it. I propose, however, that because of the cynicism already central to their relation to the Symbolic, African Americans are uniquely positioned to embrace this very daunting task of transcending both race and the fundamental fantasy it supports.[36](#bookmark1602)

#### We don’t need an alternative besides our framework of analysis – the fantasy will reveal itself as long as we continue asking questions to expose their concealment of the lack – in other words, it’s your job to confuse and frustrate them via a refusal to partake in their politics

**Dean 6** [Jodi, Professor of Political Science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, *Zizek’s Politics,* Taylor & Francis: London and New York, 2006, p. xvii-xx]

By inserting popular culture into his writing, and himself into popular culture, Zizek enacts the way enjoyment colors or stains all thinking and acting. What this means, as I set out in detail in Chapter Three, is that there is a deep nonrational and libidinal nugget in even the most rational, formal ways of thinking. Again, it is not simply that popular culture is at the core of the theoretical enterprise of his books—it is that enjoyment is. Enjoyment is an unavoidable component of any philosophical effort (though many try to deny it). Zizek thus emphasizes the inevitable stain on philosophy, on thought, as he tries to demonstrate a way of thinking that breaks with (Zizek often uses Lacan's term traverses) the fantasy of "pure reason."

This leads to another key element of Zizek's thought: the possibility of taking the position of the excess. As I explain in discussions of his readings of St. Paul and Lenin, Zizek theorizes revolutionary politics as occurring through the occupation of this excessive place. Paul endeavors to put the Christian message to work, to establish new collectives beyond old oppositions between Greeks and Jews. Lenin also breaks with the given, arguing against all around him and against Marxist orthodoxy that the time for revolution is now, that it cannot be predicted, awaited, but must be accomplished with no assurances of success. Like Paul, he puts truth to work, organizing it in the form of a revolutionary political Party.

Zizek emphasizes that Lacan conceptualized this excessive place, this place without guarantees, in his formula for "the discourse of the analyst" (which I set out in Chapter Two). In psycho-analysis, the analyst just sits there, asking questions from time to time. She is some kind of object or cipher onto which the analysand transfers love, desire, aggression, and knowledge. The analysand, in other words, proceeds through analysis by positing the analyst as someone who knows exactly what is wrong with him and exactly what he should do to get rid of his symptom and get better. But, really, the analyst does not know. Moreover, the analyst steadfastly refuses to provide the analysand with any answers whatsoever. No ideals, no moral certainty, no goals, no choices. Nothing. This is what makes the analyst so traumatic, Zizek explains, the fact that she refuses to establish a law or set a limit, that she does not function as some kind of new master.7 Analysis is over when the analysand accepts that the analyst does not know, that there is not any secret meaning or explanation, and then takes responsibility for getting on with his life. The challenge for the analysand, then, is freedom, autonomously determining his own limits, directly assuming his own enjoyment. So, again, the position of the analyst is in this excessive place as an object through which the analysand works through the analytical process.

Why is the analyst necessary in the first place? If she is not going to tell the analysand what to do, how he should be living, then why does he not save his money, skip the whole process, and figure out things for himself? There are two basic answers. First, the analysand is not self-transparent. He is a stranger to himself, a decentered agent "struggling with a foreign kernel."8 What is more likely than self-understanding, is self-misunderstanding, that is, one's fundamental misperception of one's own condition. Becoming aware of this misperception, grappling with it, is the work of analysis. Accordingly, second, the analyst is that external agent or position that gives a new form to our activity. Saying things out loud, presenting them to another, and confronting them in front of this external position concretizes and arranges our thoughts and activities in a different way, a way that is more difficult to escape or avoid. The analyst then provides a form through which we acquire a perspective on and a relation to our selves.

Paul's Christian collectives and Lenin's revolutionary Party are, for Zizek, similarly formal arrangements, forms "for a new type of knowledge linked to a collective political subject."9 Each provides an external perspective on our activities, a way to concretize and organize our spontaneous experiences. More strongly put, a political Party is necessary precisely because politics is not given; it does not arise naturally or organically out of the multiplicity of immanent flows and affects but has to be produced, arranged, and constructed out of these flows in light of something larger.

In my view, when Zizek draws on popular culture and inserts himself into this culture, he is taking the position of an object of enjoyment, an excessive object that cannot easily be recuperated or assimilated. This excessive position is that of the analyst as well as that of the Party. Reading Zizek as occupying the position of the analyst tells us that it is wrong to expect Zizek to tell us what to do, to provide an ultimate solution or direction through which to solve all the world's problems. The analyst does not provide the analysand with ideals and goals; instead, he occupies the place of an object in relation to which we work these out for ourselves. In adopting the position of the analyst, Zizek is also practicing what he refers to as "Bartleby politics," a politics rooted in a kind of refusal wherein the subject turns itself into a disruptive (of our peace of mind!) violently passive object who says, "I would prefer not to."10 Thus, to my mind, becoming preoccupied with Zizek's style is like becoming preoccupied with what one's analyst is wearing. Why such a preoccupation? How is this preoccupation enabling us to avoid confronting the truth of our desire, our own investments in enjoyment? How is complaining that Zizek (or the analyst) will not tell us what to do a way that we avoid trying to figure this out for ourselves?11

### 1NC---High Theory

#### Their method ultimately fails to produce more satisfied subjects because there is no coherent social order to demand anything to. There is no complete moral philosophy capable of explaining the answer to simple questions like: “why care about others?” In its absence, overlapping social authories have produced rampant anxiety and paranoia

---public displays of enjoyment (like contemporary) are on the rise because society has given up on prohibiting anything

---explains such phenomena as the rise of Donald Trump

---the alt entails embracing the anxiety provoked by our encounter with genuine otherness

McGowan 13 [Todd, Associate Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Vermont, *Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis*, Symploke, University of Nebraska Press (Lincoln, NE): 2013, p. 99-112]

The problem with this reading of Hegel (which is in no way confined to Rawls and is in fact nearly the dominant reading) stems from its inability to come to grips with Hegel's insight into the ultimate failure of recognition.5 Through the search for recognition inaugurates subjectivity, recognition can never apprehend the subject in its singularity. Recognition reduces the subject to a symbolic identity — I am recognized as a professional, as a parent, as an American, and so on — and thus completely misses the subject's uniqueness, what in the subject is irreducible to determinate symbolic coordinates, even if this uniqueness is finally nothing more than a fantasy (or the subject's singular mode of fantasizing).

The failure operates in the other direction as well: the subject who seeks the other's recognition does not address itself to the real other but only to a symbolic entity that exists only as a construction of the signifier. Even when we seek the recognition of an actual person, what gives value to this recognition is its authorization by social authority, which is itself wholly unauthorized. The search for recognition cannot have any ethical status whatsoever because it involves submission to an entity that exists only through the act of submitting to it.6

When the subject seeks recognition, it devotes itself to becoming someone in the eyes of social authority, and the search for recognition validates this authority. But at no point does the subject actually encounter the real other, the other as such. Encountering the real other, the other that several thinkers have christened the "neighbor," requires turning away from social authority and abandoning the project of recognition.' At the point where the subject does not experience social recognition, it discovers the neighbor. As Kenneth Reinhard explains, the neighbor "materializes an uncanniness within the social relationship, an enjoyment that resists sympathetic identification and 'understanding/"8 The experience of recognition obscures this uncanniness and mediates the other's enjoyment in order to render it more palpable for the subject. But in the process, recognition allows the subject to avoid the neighbor or the real other.

The encounter with the real other is the key to the subject's ethical being and to the subject's enjoyment. Psychoanalysis allows us to see the foundational link that exists between ethics and enjoyment, where other approaches erect a clear divide between the two. Ethics, for most ways of thinking, involves a sacrifice of my own enjoyment for the sake of someone else's. Rather than lying to get ahead at work, I tell the truth to help create a more pleasant workplace atmosphere. Rather than devoting all my free time to watching pornography, I spend part of it working at the food bank. For Spinoza in his Ethics, I become ethical when I cease thinking from my own private perspective and approach an Amor intellectualis Dei, or "intellectual love of God," in which I can think in terms of the whole of creation rather than simply view isolated events from my limited perspective. This movement from the private and self-interested to the public and concerned for the whole defines almost every ethical project. But psychoanalytic thought does not conceive of ethics in this way. It is through enjoyment itself, not the sacrifice of it, that I genuinely encounter the other. An insistence on enjoyment is at the same time an insistence on ethical subjectivity.

The neighbor or real other is the enjoying other. The other's mode of enjoyment marks the other as absolutely singular. Everything else about the other — emotions, thoughts, desires, achievements, and so on — can be understood and communicated through the order of signification or language. We can share all these experiences through the mediation of the signifier, which informs them in their very origin. The other's enjoyment, unlike everything else about the other, disturbs us when we encounter it because it does not take us into account. While the other's symbolic identity includes us as the source of the look that validates it, the other's enjoyment not only ignores us but seems to go so far as to occur at our expense. When we encounter the enjoying other, we experience our own isolation, our own absolute insignificance for the other.

The encounter with the enjoying other occurs at moments when a radical cut emerges between the other and the subject. Events such as basketball games and rock concerts allow spectators to identify with the enjoyment that they see and thereby to avoid the trauma of the encounter with the other's enjoyment. In contrast, the shared laughter of people speaking a foreign language, the rumor of an orgy at a secret society, or the strange noises that a toddler hears behind the closed door of the parental bedroom do not provide any opening to the outsider. One hears the enjoyment without any possibility of partaking in it through the act of identification, and one almost inevitably imagines that one's exclusion is part of the enjoyment. The distinction between an enjoying other enjoying itself at my expense and an enjoying other indifferent to me becomes negligible. The pertinent fact is the other's enjoyment that doesn't include me.

Beyond the Demand

In traditional social arrangements, societies confront subjects with demands, and subjects respond by attempting either to follow the demands or to seek the desire of the social authority that the demand hides. The former path is the neurotic one: by sticking to the authority's demand, the neurotic hopes to gain its recognition. The problem is that what the authority demands is not what it necessarily desires. As we saw in the last chapter, there is no demand that doesn't conceal — or seem to conceal, which for the subject amounts to the same thing — a desire. The project of securing the social authority's recognition always runs aground on the ineffability of its desire and the irreducibility of this desire to an articulated demand. The irreducibility of desire to demand leaves subjects confronted by a social demand with the choice between these two paths.9

This fundamental choice that defines our subjectivity has almost fully disappeared in contemporary capitalist society. While many of the dramatic changes that have recently taken place (the Internet revolution, the globalization of the economy, the emergence of hybrid subjectivities) create illusory movement and leave underlying social structures intact, the turn away from the dialectic of demand and desire represents a substantive transformation in the way that subjects experience their social existence. Subjects today do not encounter a clear demand from social authority, and consequently they also do not confront the secret of the authority's desire beneath this demand.10

Instead of a clear demand prohibiting the subject's private enjoyment and exhorting a contribution to the public good, the subject receives inducements to enjoy itself from a variety of authority figures. Authority's demands are no longer demands in the traditional sense, and they do not appear to conceal anything. Rather than hiding its desire, authority publicly flaunts its enjoyment and encourages the subject to do the same." From Charlie Sheen's rants about his status as a "winner" to Nicolas Sarkozy's marriage to a supermodel to Silvio Berlusconi's open displays of corruption, figures of authority today parade their enjoyment and issue an implicit imperative for others to do the same. As a result, the subject does not face a choice between sticking to the explicit demand or seeking the hidden desire but rather the choice between trying to obey the imperative to enjoy or searching for the missing demand hidden somewhere in the social fabric. This is the choice between the position of the pathological narcissist and that of the fundamentalist, and it defines our era.

In contrast to the traditional social structure founded on the demands of a strong paternal authority, today's structure utilizes a new form of paternal authority, and this new authority has clear consequences for our relationship to enjoyment. This transformation bears directly on the ability of paternal authority to shield subjects from enjoyment. Traditional authority figures ruled through prohibition: they demanded that subjects sacrifice their enjoyment for admittance into the social order. This type of paternal authority governs through the establishing of distance — distance between the authority figure and the subject, as well as distance between the subject and enjoyment. The new authority, however, abandons distance for the sake of proximity. Rather than confronting us with an impenetrable demand that remains out of our comprehension, he assaults us with displays of his enjoyment.

The new authority rarely appears in the guise of an authority, but this, ironically, garners all the more power for him. As Slavoj Zizek points out, "Today's boss or father ... insists that we should treat him as a friend; he addresses us with intrusive familiarity, bombarding us with sexual innuendos, inviting us to share a drink or a vulgar joke," and as a result, "we are deprived even of the private space of irony and mockery, since the master is on both levels: an authority as well as a friend/'12 The proximity of the contemporary paternal authority deprives the subject of any space for private respite, and at the same time, it confronts the subject with its own obscene enjoyment.

What results is not a traditional subject of desire, a subject struggling with lack, but a subject wrestling with a disturbing presence. This is why, according to Eric Santner, contemporary anxiety is an anxiety "not of absence and loss but of overproximity, loss of distance to some obscene and malevolent presence."13 Authority has become too close, and its obscenity has become visible. The transformation of paternal authority — a turn from the prohibition of enjoyment to a command that subjects enjoy themselves — fundamentally alters the subject's relation not just to authority itself but to the other as such.

Whereas prohibition creates a social authority that exists at a distance from the subject — or that installs distance within all of the subject's relationships — the absence of an explicit prohibition leaves the contemporary subject in the proximity of a real other. The social field of prohibition is a terrain stripped of all enjoyment where everyone is reduced to the form of symbolic identity. Without this terrain (which is the contemporary situation), one encounters the other beyond its symbolic identity, the enjoying other. It is others listening to music with their headphones, talking loudly on a cell phone, eating excessive amounts of food, communicating in an unknown language, or emitting an unusual odor/4 Public displays of enjoyment occur with increasing frequency today because the dominant form of authority does not function through prohibition. Rather than violating the ruling social imperative, the public display of enjoyment heeds it. The result is rampant anxiety. Without the distance from the other requisite for desire, one experiences the anxiety produced by its presence.

Though a contemporary society that bombards us with the enjoying other is markedly different from traditional societies that prohibit public displays of enjoyment in order to sustain a public bond, there is a sense in which the current situation represents the truth of traditional societies. Just as Marx sees capitalism as revealing the truth of all hitherto existing social forms (specifically the structuring role that economy played), the society ruled by the imperative to enjoy lays bare the truth of all previous societies ruled by prohibition.

Through restrictions on enjoyment, these societies covered over the real encounter between the enjoying subject and the enjoying other. Nonetheless, even when the symbolic relation mediates this real encounter, it continues to mark the ultimate stake in social relations insofar as it occupies the limit point of all social relations, the point that social relations cannot include. In traditional societies, just as in contemporary society, the fundamental question remains the same for the subject, and it concerns the relationship that the subject takes up to anxiety.15 The ethical position, for psychoanalysis, necessarily involves the embrace of this anxiety - and this is at once the path to enjoyment.

#### Our paranoid hatred of others is rooted in jouissance, that excessive, rapturous pleasure humans irrationally strive toward that, “begins with a tickle and ends with blaze of [gasoline].”[[1]](#footnote-1) Put another way, jouissance is the enjoyment that we imagine as incoherent, tapping into some mysterious reservoir of the unknown, something dangerous, something seductive.

#### Jouissance ultimately emerges from an essential principle of human psychology: our very ability to communicate with others is premised on our traumatic separation from the world before language, a jouissance-filled state of wholeness forever foreclosed by our entrance into the social order. This constitutive lack defines the subject as eternally split between two worlds: impulsive desires internal to the self are to struggle against the constant, contradictory demands of the external world, with perfect mediation between the two worlds, self and other, an impossible fantasy.

#### With that impossible wholeness behind us, we naturally seek substitutes and fill-ins that offer stopgap access to the jouissance that wholeness offered. Lacan designated these fantasy objects as “object a,” objects of desire that offer the promise of unbridled pleasure but are ultimately unattainable (because nothing can deliver unbridled pleasure- there’s no silver bullet to eternal psychic happiness). Embracing the anxiety of the other’s enjoyment --- the death drive itself --- offers the only possibility of ethical encounter

---cynicism/pessimism fails b/c it’s not cynical about what other people believe (i.e. it believes that everyone is just way dumber than you which is itself a fantasy that maintains faith in the overall system)

---enjoyment is overwhelming and unproductive- it takes control of you- allowing ourselves to be disturbed by the Other as other is the most ethical and sustainable way to confront difference

---Fascism = attempt to confront the other on the terrain of your own rules, structuring enjoyment such that others have to submit to you or disappear inevitably produces violence factions- even if you achieve your goal, it won’t satisfy you so you come to find another scapegoat

McGowan 13 [Todd, Associate Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Vermont, *Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis*, Symploke, University of Nebraska Press (Lincoln, NE): 2013, p. 112-120]

There is, however, a different way of thinking about anxiety. Despite his kinship with Heidegger on so many points, Jacques Lacan defines anxiety in precisely the opposite way. For Lacan, anxiety does not involve a confrontation with absence — with what Heidegger calls the nothing — but with an overwhelming presence. Though the experience of castration establishes the scene where anxiety will play out, castration alone does not generate anxiety in the subject. The absence or nothingness that castration produces can have the effect of reassuring the subject: it provides the subject with a sense of distance from the other and breathing space for itself. The trauma of the rupture it occasions has a pacifying reverse side.

We experience anxiety when the absence that castration produces — the lost object, or objet petit a — ceases to be an absence. As Lacan puts it in his seminar devoted to the topic of anxiety, "It is this sudden appearance of lack in a positive form that is the source of anxiety."24 We expect the absence that is the lost object, but we encounter a field of representation where this gap has been filled.

Social authority appears nonlacking and ubiquitous, never allowing the subject the space to desire. Lacan says, "The possibility of absence makes up the security of presence. What is most anxiety-provoking for the child is precisely when the relationship on which he sets himself up, the relationship which makes him desire, is disrupted; it is the most disrupted when there is no possibility of lack, when the mother is all the time on his back, and especially when she is wiping his ass, which is the model of the demand that cannot fail."2s The total presence of the authority leads to anxiety because the child in this situation has no distance from the other's enjoyment. This situation proliferates from the parent/child relation to every social relation. The other's private enjoyment — its smell, its way of talking, its gestures — ceaselessly bombards the subject. This is an assault that occurs all the time in the contemporary social world.

During Clarence Thomas's confirmation hearing or Bill Clinton's impeachment trial, private enjoyment became a normal part of public discourse. The details of Thomas's alleged sexual harassment of Anita Hill and of Clinton's sexual involvement with Monica Lewinsky were a regular topic of discussion in newspapers, on the nightly news, and throughout the culture. At the time, one could find no respite from the obscene enjoyment of Thomas and Clinton, which had the effect of triggering anxiety —and calls for cleansing the public space by rejecting Thomas or impeaching Clinton — in large portions of the populace. But these celebrated cases only testify to a larger social phenomenon that occurs on a quotidian level today, though one can see it emerging even in the 1950s, the decade supposedly marked by strong paternal authority.

Though critics often dismiss the reductive Freudianism of Nicholas Ray's Rebel without a Cause (1955), it nonetheless exemplifies in a traditional way how the other's excessive presence produces anxiety. M The film stands as a cultural landmark for its expression of teen angst through the central character Jim Stark (James Dean). His anxiety stems not from an existential experience of nothingness but from the overzealous attention of his parents and the proximity of their displays of enjoyment. Jim's famous cry at the police station early in the film -"You're tearing me apart!" —represents his initial effort to escape the anxiety, but the final escape occurs during the film's denouement in a planetarium, where, with his friends, he finds freedom from anxiety at the site where earlier they witnessed a show on the vast nothingness and indifference of space. Rather than causing anxiety, nothingness in Rebel without a Cause functions as its cure.

The most common strategy for escaping the anxiety that inheres in today's subjectivity is the recourse to cynicism. The cynic adopts a posture of nonchalance toward the enjoyment of the other, seeing this enjoyment as nothing special. For the cynic, there is no such thing as real enjoyment, no object that has more value than any other. Cynicism allows the subject to see through the fiction of the impossible object and to see it as just another everyday object. For example, Diogenes, the parent figure of cynicism, masturbates in public in order to demonstrate that activities seemingly laden with enjoyment (like masturbation) are really just everyday affairs.

Through this transformation, the subject avoids the anxiety that emerges from its encounter with the enjoying other. To the extent that it works as it hopes to work, cynicism produces a world free of anxiety because it produces a world bereft of enjoyment.

But as theorists of contemporary cynicism have shown, cynical subjects don't really sustain a thoroughgoing cynicism relative to enjoyment. While they disbelieve in the possibility of enjoyment or authentic commitment, they do believe in belief. That is, they believe that there are others who really believe. Despite the cynical knowledge that this belief is false, the cynical subject does believe in the enjoyment that comes from belief, and as a result, cynicism doesn't offer the respite from anxiety that it initially promises.

Unlike cynicism, the opposite strategy — the attempt to restore prohibition and paternal law — involves an avowal of the lost object and its ability to deliver enjoyment. We try to create the requisite distance from enjoyment through our various efforts to resurrect prohibition, to return to the reign of traditional symbolic authority. These efforts most often take the form of various fundamentalisms. One of the chief appeals of fundamentalism is its promise to reintroduce a barrier to enjoyment into the experience of contemporary subjectivity. By reintroducing this barrier, fundamentalism promises to keep anxiety at bay, to allow us to attain some distance from the enjoying other.

But like cynicism, efforts to restore prohibition end up returning the subject to the situation of anxiety rather than providing relief Contemporary fundamentalism derives its energy not from the idea of restricting enjoyment but from the idea of unleashing it. It promises increased enjoyment through restriction, and it delivers on this promise, though in doing so it produces even more anxiety. As fundamentalism restores prohibitions, it creates more intense sites of enjoyment. Whereas the cynical subject sees no enjoyment in the revelation of an almost-naked body, the fundamentalist subject sees enjoyment proliferating with the baring of a small patch of skin. In a world of anxiety, even the attempt to create distance has the effect of creating more enjoyment. Both cynicism and fundamentalism emerge in response to the contemporary subject's anxious proximity to the present object. Both see distance from the enjoyment of the other as the only possible solution to the experience of anxiety.

The alternative — the ethical path that psychoanalysis identifies — demands an embrace of the anxiety that stems from the encounter with the enjoying other. If there is a certain ethical dimension to anxiety, it lies in the relationship that exists between anxiety and enjoyment. Contra Heidegger, the ethics of anxiety does not stem from anxiety's relation to absence but from its relation to presence - to the overwhelming presence of the other's enjoyment. In some sense, the encounter with absence or nothing is easier than the encounter with presence. Even though it traumatizes us, absence allows us to constitute ourselves as desiring subjects. Rather than producing anxiety, absence leads the subject out of anxiety into desire. Confronted with the lost object as a structuring absence, the subject is able to embark on the pursuit of the enjoyment embodied by this object, and this pursuit provides the subject with a clear sense of direction and even meaning. This is precisely what the subject lacks when it does not encounter a lack in the symbolic structure. When the subject encounters enjoyment at the point where it should encounter the absence of enjoyment, anxiety overwhelms the subject.

In this situation, the subject cannot constitute itself along the path of desire. It lacks the lack-the absence -that would provide the space through which desire could develop. Consequently, this subject confronts the enjoying other and experiences anxiety. Unlike the subject of desire - or the subject of Heideggerean anxiety-the subject who suffers this sort of anxiety actually experiences the other in its real dimension.

The real other is the other caught up in its obscene enjoyment, caught up in this enjoyment in a way that intrudes on the subject. There is no safe distance from this enjoyment, and one cannot simply avoid it. There is nowhere in the contemporary world to hide from it. As a result, the contemporary subject is necessarily a subject haunted by anxiety triggered by the omnipresent enjoyment of the other. And yet, this enjoyment offers us an ethical possibility. As Slavoj Zizek puts it, "It is this excessive and intrusive jouissance that we should learn to tolerate."27 When we tolerate the other's "excessive and intrusive jouissance" and when we endure the anxiety that it produces, we acknowledge and sustain the other in its real dimension.

Tolerance is the ethical watchword of our epoch. However, the problem with contemporary tolerance is its insistence on tolerating the other only insofar as the other cedes its enjoyment and accepts the prevailing symbolic structure. That is to say, we readily tolerate the other in its symbolic dimension, the other that plays by the rules of our game. This type of tolerance allows the subject to feel good about itself and to sustain its symbolic identity. The problem is that, at the same time, it destroys what is in the other more than the other - the particular way that the other enjoys.

It is only the encounter with the other in its real dimension - the encounter that produces anxiety in the subject - that sustains that which defines the other as such. Authentic tolerance tolerates the real other, not simply the other as mediated through a symbolic structure. In this sense, it involves the experience of anxiety on the part of the subject. This is a difficult position to sustain, as it involves enduring the "whole opaque weight of alien enjoyment on your chest."28 The obscene enjoyment of the other bombards the authentically tolerant subject, but this subject does not retreat from the anxiety that this enjoyment produces.

If the embrace of the anxiety that accompanies the other's proximate enjoyment represents the ethical position today, this does not necessarily provide us with an incentive for occupying it. Who wants to be ethical when it involves enduring anxiety rather than finding a way - a drug, a new authority, or something — to alleviate it? What good does it do to sustain oneself in anxiety? In fact, anxiety does the subject no good at all, which is why it offers the subject the possibility of enjoyment. When the subject encounters the other's enjoyment, this is the form that its own enjoyment takes as well. To endure the anxiety caused by the other's enjoyment is to experience one's own simultaneously. As Lacan points out, when it comes to the enjoyment of the other and my own enjoyment, "nothing indicates they are distinct/'29 Thus, not only is anxiety an ethical position, it is also the key to embracing the experience of enjoyment. To reject the experience of anxiety is to flee one's own enjoyment.

The notion that the other's enjoyment is also our own enjoyment seems at first glance difficult to accept. Few people enjoy themselves when they hear someone else screaming profanities in the workplace or when they see a couple passionately kissing in public, to take just two examples. In these instances, we tend to recoil at the inappropriateness of the activity rather than enjoy it, and this reaction seems completely justified. The public display of enjoyment violates the social pact with its intrusiveness; it doesn't let us alone but assaults our senses. It violates the implicit agreement of the public sphere constituted as an enjoyment-free zone. And yet, recoiling from the other's enjoyment deprives us of our own.

How we comport ourselves in relation to the other's enjoyment indicates our relationship to our own. What bothers us about the other -the disturbance that the other's enjoyment creates in our existence — is our own mode of enjoying. If we did not derive enjoyment from the other's enjoyment, witnessing it would not bother us psychically. We would simply be indifferent to it and focused on our own concerns. Of course, we might ask an offending car radio listener to turn the radio down so that we wouldn't have to hear the unwanted music, but we would not experience the mere exhibition of alien enjoyment through the playing of that music as an affront. The very fact that the other's enjoyment captures our attention demonstrates our intimate — or extimate — relation to it.30

This relation becomes even clearer when we consider the epistemological status of the enjoying other. Because the real or enjoying other is irreducible to any observable identity, we have no way of knowing whether or not the other really is enjoying. A stream of profanity may be the result of someone hurting a toe. The person playing the car radio too loud while sitting at the traffic light may have simply forgotten to turn down the radio after driving on the highway. Or the person may have difficulty hearing. The couple's amorous behavior in public may reflect an absence of enjoyment in their relationship that they are trying to hide from both themselves a..: the public.

Considering the enjoyment of the other, we never know whether it is there or not. If we experience it, we do so through the lens of our own fantasy. We fantasize that the person blasting the radio is caught up in the enjoyment of the music to the exclusion of everything else; we fantasize that the public kisses of the couple suggest an enjoyment that has no concern for the outside world. Without the fantasy frame, the enjoying other would never appear within our experience.

The role of the fantasy frame for accessing the enjoying other becomes apparent within Fascist ideology. Fascism posits an internal enemy—the figure of the Jew or some analogue — that enjoys illicitly at the expense of the social body as a whole. By attempting to eliminate the enjoying other, Fascism hopes to create a pure social body bereft of any stain of enjoyment. This purity would allow for the ultimate enjoyment, but it would be completely licit. This hope for a future society free of any stain is not where Fascism's true enjoyment lies, however. Fascists experience their own enjoyment through the enjoying other that they persecute. The enjoyment that the figure of the Jew embodies is the Fascists' own enjoyment, though they cannot avow it as their own. More than any other social form, Fascism is founded on the disavowal of enjoyment — the attempt to enjoy while keeping enjoyment at arm's length.31 But this effort is not confined to Fascism; it predominates everywhere, because no subjects anywhere can simply feel comfortable with their own mode of enjoying.

The very structure of enjoyment is such that we cannot experience it directly: when we experience enjoyment, we don't have it; it has us. We experience our own enjoyment as an assault coming from the outside that dominates our conscious intentions. This is why we must fantasize our own enjoyment through the enjoying other. Compelled by our enjoyment, we can't do otherwise; we act against our self-interest and against our own good. Enjoyment overwhelms the subject, even though the subject's mode of enjoying marks what is most singular about the subject.

Even though the encounter with the enjoying other apprehends the real other through the apparatus of fantasy, this encounter is nonetheless genuine and has an ethical status. Unlike the experience of the nonexistent symbolic identity, which closes down the space in which the real other might appear, the fantasized encounter with the enjoying other leaves this space open. By allowing itself to be disturbed by the other on the level of fantasy, the subject acknowledges the singularity of the real other—its mode of enjoying — without confining this singularity to a prescribed identity.

The implications of privileging the encounter with the disturbing enjoyment of the real other over the assimilable symbolic identity are themselves disturbing. The tolerant attitude that never allows itself to be jarred by the enjoying other becomes, according to this way of seeing things, further from really encountering the real other than the attitude of hate and mistrust. The liberal subject who welcomes illegal immigrants as fellow citizens completely shuts down the space for the other in the real. The immigrant as fellow citizen is not the real other. The xenophobic conservative, on the other hand, constructs a fantasy that envisions the illegal immigrant awash in a linguistic and cultural enjoyment that excludes natives. This fantasy, paradoxicaly, permits an encounter with the real other that liberal tolerance forecloses. Of course, xenophobes retreat from this encounter and from their own enjoyment, but they do have an experience of it that liberals do not. The tolerant liberal is open to the other but eliminates the otherness, while the xenophobic conservative is closed to the other but allows for the otherness. The ethical position thus involves sustaining the liberal's tolerance within the conservative's encounter with the real other.

#### Embracing the drive presents the most meaningful act that the judge can endorse --- the alternative’s negativity exposes the compulsion to repeat traumatic loss and confronts social violence at its foundations

McGowan 13 [Todd, Associate Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Vermont, *Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis*, Symploke, University of Nebraska Press (Lincoln, NE): 2013, p. 283-86]

There is no path leading from the death drive to utopia. The death drive undermines every attempt to construct a utopia; it is the enemy of the good society. It is thus not surprising that political thought from Plato onward has largely ignored this psychic force of repetition and negation. But this does not mean that psychoanalytic thought concerning the death drive has only a negative value for political theorizing. It is possible to conceive of a positive politics of the death drive.

The previous chapters have attempted to lay out the political implications of the death drive, and, on this basis, we can sketch what a society founded on a recognition of the death drive might look like. Such a recognition would not involve a radical transformation of society: in one sense, it would leave everything as it is. In contemporary social arrangements, the death drive subverts progress with repetition and leads to the widespread sacrifice of self-interest for the enjoyment of the sacrifice itself. This structure is impervious to change and to all attempts at amelioration. But in another sense, the recognition of the death drive would change everything. Recognizing the centrality of the death drive would not eliminate the proclivity to sacrifice for the sake of enjoyment, but it would change our relationship to this sacrifice. Rather than being done for the sake of an ultimate enjoyment to be achieved in the future, it would be done for its own sake.

The fundamental problem with the effort to escape the death drive and pursue the good is that it leaves us unable to locate where our enjoyment lies. By positing a future where we will attain the ultimate enjoyment (either through the purchase of the perfect commodity or through a transcendent romantic union or through the attainment of some heavenly paradise), we replace the partial enjoyment of the death drive with the image of a complete enjoyment to come. There is no question of fully enjoying our submission to the death drive. We will always remain alienated from our mode of enjoying. As Adrian Johnston rightly points out, "Transgressively 'overcoming' the impediments of the drives doesn't enable one to simply enjoy enjoyment.”1 But we can transform our relationship to the impediments that block the full realization of our drive. We can see the impediments as the internal product of the death drive rather than as an external limit.

The enjoyment that the death drive provides, in contrast to the form of enjoyment proffered by capitalism, religion, and utopian politics, is at once infinite and limited. This oxymoronic form of enjoyment operates in the way that the concept does in Hegel's *Logic.* The concept attains its infinitude not through endless progress toward a point that always remains beyond and out of reach but through including the beyond as a beyond within itself. As Hegel puts it, "The universality of the concept is the *achieved beyond,* whereas that bad infinity remains afflicted with a beyond which is unattainable but remains a mere *progression* to infinity.”2 That is to say, the concept transforms an external limit into an internal one and thereby becomes both infinite and limited. The infinitude of the concept is nothing but the concept's own self-limitation.

The enjoyment that the death drive produces also achieves its infinitude through self-limitation. It revolves around a lost object that exists only insofar as it is lost, and it relates to this object as the vehicle for the infinite unfurling of its movement. The lost object operates as the self-limitation of the death drive through which the drive produces an infinite enjoyment. Rather than acting as a mark of the drive's finitude, the limitation that the lost object introduces provides access to infinity.

A society founded on a recognition of the death drive would be one that viewed its limitations as the source of its infinite enjoyment rather than an obstacle to that enjoyment. To take the clearest and most traumatic example in recent history, the recognition of the death drive in 1930s Germany would have conceived the figure of the Jew not as the barrier to the ultimate enjoyment that must therefore be eliminated but as the internal limit through which German society attained its enjoyment. As numerous theorists have said, the appeal of Nazism lay in its ability to mobilize the enjoyment of the average German through pointing out a threat to that enjoyment. The average German under Nazism could enjoy the figure of the Jew as it appeared in the form of an obstacle, but it is possible to recognize the obstacle not as an external limit but as an internal one. In this way, the figure of the Jew would become merely a figure for the average German rather than a position embodied by actual Jews.  Closer to home, one would recognize the terrorist as a figure representing the internal limit of global capitalist society. Far from serving as an obstacle to the ultimate enjoyment in that society, the terrorist provides a barrier where none otherwise exists and thereby serves as the vehicle through which capitalist society attains its enjoyment. The absence of explicit limitations within contemporary global capitalism necessitates such a figure: if terrorists did not exist, global capitalist society would have to invent them. But recognizing the terrorist as the internal limit of global capitalist society would mean the end of terrorism. This recognition would transform the global landscape and deprive would-be terrorists of the libidinal space within which to act. Though some people may continue to blow up buildings, they would cease to be terrorists in the way that we now understand the term.

A self-limiting society would still have real battles to fight. There would remain a need for this society to defend itself against external threats and against the cruelty of the natural universe. Perhaps it would require nuclear weapons in space to defend against comets or meteors that would threaten to wipe out human life on the planet. But it would cease positing the ultimate enjoyment in vanquishing an external threat or surpassing a natural limit. The external limit would no longer stand in for a repressed internal one. Such a society would instead enjoy its own internal limitations and merely address external limits as they came up.

Psychoanalytic theory never preaches, and it cannot help us to construct a better society. But it can help us to subtract the illusion of the good from our own society. By depriving us of this illusion, it has the ability to transform our thinking about politics. With the assistance of psychoanalytic thought, we might reconceive politics in a direction completely opposed to that articulated by Aristotle, to which I alluded in the introduction. In the *Politics,* Aristotle asserts: "Every state is a community of some kind, and every community is established with a view to some good; for everyone always acts in order to obtain that which they think good. But, if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good.”3 Though later political thinkers have obviously departed from Aristotle concerning the question of the content of the good society, few have thought of politics in terms opposed to the good. This is what psychoanalytic thought introduces.

If we act on the basis of enjoyment rather than the good, this does not mean that we can simply construct a society that privileges enjoyment in an overt way. An open society with no restrictions on sexual activity, drug use, food consumption, or play in general would not be a more enjoyable one than our own. That is the sure path to impoverishing our ability to enjoy, as the aftermath of the 1960s has made painfully clear. One must arrive at enjoyment indirectly. A society centered around the death drive would not be a better society, nor would it entail less suffering. Rather than continually sacrificing for the sake of the good, we would sacrifice the good for the sake of enjoyment. A society centered around the death drive would allow us to recognize that we enjoy the lost object only insofar as it remains lost.

#### We don’t need an alternative besides our framework of analysis – the fantasy will reveal itself as long as we continue asking questions to expose their concealment of the lack – in other words, it’s your job to confuse and frustrate them via a refusal to partake in their politics

**Dean 6** [Jodi, Professor of Political Science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, *Zizek’s Politics,* Taylor & Francis: London and New York, 2006, p. xvii-xx]

By inserting popular culture into his writing, and himself into popular culture, Zizek enacts the way enjoyment colors or stains all thinking and acting. What this means, as I set out in detail in Chapter Three, is that there is a deep nonrational and libidinal nugget in even the most rational, formal ways of thinking. Again, it is not simply that popular culture is at the core of the theoretical enterprise of his books—it is that enjoyment is. Enjoyment is an unavoidable component of any philosophical effort (though many try to deny it). Zizek thus emphasizes the inevitable stain on philosophy, on thought, as he tries to demonstrate a way of thinking that breaks with (Zizek often uses Lacan's term traverses) the fantasy of "pure reason."

This leads to another key element of Zizek's thought: the possibility of taking the position of the excess. As I explain in discussions of his readings of St. Paul and Lenin, Zizek theorizes revolutionary politics as occurring through the occupation of this excessive place. Paul endeavors to put the Christian message to work, to establish new collectives beyond old oppositions between Greeks and Jews. Lenin also breaks with the given, arguing against all around him and against Marxist orthodoxy that the time for revolution is now, that it cannot be predicted, awaited, but must be accomplished with no assurances of success. Like Paul, he puts truth to work, organizing it in the form of a revolutionary political Party.

Zizek emphasizes that Lacan conceptualized this excessive place, this place without guarantees, in his formula for "the discourse of the analyst" (which I set out in Chapter Two). In psycho-analysis, the analyst just sits there, asking questions from time to time. She is some kind of object or cipher onto which the analysand transfers love, desire, aggression, and knowledge. The analysand, in other words, proceeds through analysis by positing the analyst as someone who knows exactly what is wrong with him and exactly what he should do to get rid of his symptom and get better. But, really, the analyst does not know. Moreover, the analyst steadfastly refuses to provide the analysand with any answers whatsoever. No ideals, no moral certainty, no goals, no choices. Nothing. This is what makes the analyst so traumatic, Zizek explains, the fact that she refuses to establish a law or set a limit, that she does not function as some kind of new master.7 Analysis is over when the analysand accepts that the analyst does not know, that there is not any secret meaning or explanation, and then takes responsibility for getting on with his life. The challenge for the analysand, then, is freedom, autonomously determining his own limits, directly assuming his own enjoyment. So, again, the position of the analyst is in this excessive place as an object through which the analysand works through the analytical process.

Why is the analyst necessary in the first place? If she is not going to tell the analysand what to do, how he should be living, then why does he not save his money, skip the whole process, and figure out things for himself? There are two basic answers. First, the analysand is not self-transparent. He is a stranger to himself, a decentered agent "struggling with a foreign kernel."8 What is more likely than self-understanding, is self-misunderstanding, that is, one's fundamental misperception of one's own condition. Becoming aware of this misperception, grappling with it, is the work of analysis. Accordingly, second, the analyst is that external agent or position that gives a new form to our activity. Saying things out loud, presenting them to another, and confronting them in front of this external position concretizes and arranges our thoughts and activities in a different way, a way that is more difficult to escape or avoid. The analyst then provides a form through which we acquire a perspective on and a relation to our selves.

Paul's Christian collectives and Lenin's revolutionary Party are, for Zizek, similarly formal arrangements, forms "for a new type of knowledge linked to a collective political subject."9 Each provides an external perspective on our activities, a way to concretize and organize our spontaneous experiences. More strongly put, a political Party is necessary precisely because politics is not given; it does not arise naturally or organically out of the multiplicity of immanent flows and affects but has to be produced, arranged, and constructed out of these flows in light of something larger.

In my view, when Zizek draws on popular culture and inserts himself into this culture, he is taking the position of an object of enjoyment, an excessive object that cannot easily be recuperated or assimilated. This excessive position is that of the analyst as well as that of the Party. Reading Zizek as occupying the position of the analyst tells us that it is wrong to expect Zizek to tell us what to do, to provide an ultimate solution or direction through which to solve all the world's problems. The analyst does not provide the analysand with ideals and goals; instead, he occupies the place of an object in relation to which we work these out for ourselves. In adopting the position of the analyst, Zizek is also practicing what he refers to as "Bartleby politics," a politics rooted in a kind of refusal wherein the subject turns itself into a disruptive (of our peace of mind!) violently passive object who says, "I would prefer not to."10 Thus, to my mind, becoming preoccupied with Zizek's style is like becoming preoccupied with what one's analyst is wearing. Why such a preoccupation? How is this preoccupation enabling us to avoid confronting the truth of our desire, our own investments in enjoyment? How is complaining that Zizek (or the analyst) will not tell us what to do a way that we avoid trying to figure this out for ourselves?11

## Psycho vs Policy Affs

### Link - Biotechnology

#### Risk management of NATO biotechnology creates is neurotic.

Jacobsen 20 [Jeppe T. Jacobsen is a Ph.D. candidate at the Danish Institute for International Studies and the Center for War Studies at the University of Southern Denmark. His primary focus is U.S. cyber armament, its motivation and consequences to international security. Mr. Jacobsen worked as cyber coordinator at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark where he coordinated Denmark’s cyber diplomacy.; “From neurotic citizen to hysteric security expert: a Lacanian reading of the perpetual demand for US cyber defence”; Critical Studies on Security; March 1, 2020; https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21624887.2020.1735830]//eleanor

The main analytical task of these scholars has been to highlight the contested and contingent ground upon which expertise is constructed and exercised. Leander (2014) offers an excellent example of the contestation and controversies over the production of expert knowledge in the case of the 2013 Sarin gas attack in Syria. And scholars such as Büger and Villumsen (2007) have shown repeatedly how ‘facts’ are produced through a web of practices. The production relates, for example, to the network of peace researchers, US policy-makers, NATO officials and bureaucrats that stabilised the ‘democratic peace thesis’, or to the practice of quantification, expert monitoring groups, and special advisors, which generate a specific form of knowledge on piracy (Bueger 2015). Similarly, a group of security scholars – the so-called Paris School – approaches security as a professional struggle between experts (the managers of unease), who, through their bureaucratic, everyday practices and routines, define what counts as insecurity (Bigo 2002; Huysmans 2006; Bigo and Tsoukala 2008). Whether drawing on the work of Bourdieu, Foucault or Actor-Network Theory, the existing contributions tend either to reduce security experts to the ‘scientific knowledge’ and tools for‘political interests’ or to treat security experts as passive deployers of security techniques. This tendency is particularly present in the many studies of security governance through risk. Here, the attention to technologies that represent the tools for generating ‘objective’ knowledge about risks has not only pushed the experts developing, proposing the use of, or applying the technologies to the background, but has also directed the analytical lens primarily towards the production of bionic subject-positions of those being ‘risk managed’. Amoore and de Goede (2008, 9–10) call the current usage of data-driven (surveillance) technologies to identify risky bodies and bodies at risk, the ‘techno-expert deployment of risk’. Biometric technologies are the prime example of the dominant mode of risk management, and they are used to illustrate how the technologies, rather than addressing the political subject, govern bodies with the aim of controlling the future through enforcing the (political) status-quo in the present (Bell 2006; Epstein 2008). But while experts are not the focus of these analyses, the literature on security-governance-through-risk contains an opening to ask new questions about security experts. Critical risk scholars such as Aradau and van Munster (2011) argue that governing through calculation and management of the future has fostered public concern about unknowable, future catastrophes, such as terrorism and natural disasters. This increasing focus on unknowable disasters and worst-case scenarios, some scholars have suggested, renders the subject neurotic and anxious (De Goede 2008; Walklate and Mythen 2010; Fournier 2014). The neurotic subject was first discussed in the context of risk by Isin, who draws on Freudian insights to account for citizens’ acceptance of the social effects of neoliberalism. Isin (2004, 225–6) argues that the subject called upon to adjust its conduct in times of emerging risks is not ‘a rational, calculating or competent subject’ but an affective subject that needs ‘soothing, appeasing and tranquillizing’ to manage anxieties. The neurotic subject-citizen speaks and makes demands: It wants the impossible (absolute security and safety) and is presented with new solutions to manage its affects (ibid: 232). The critical security contributions that find inspiration in Isin’s work all locate anxiety and neurosis at the level of the citizens who are being risk managed and in juxtaposition to the experts and government officials that mobilise these anxieties (Fournier 2014: 315–7; De Goede 2008; Eklundh, Zevnik, and Guittet 2017). Charlotte Heath-Kelly (2018) has taken an important initial step towards moving beyond the dichotomy between experts who mobilise anxiety and the anxious subject. She examines the role of anxiety among those experts and government officials who are in a position of securitising issues and who practice security towards various threat objects. With the change in focus, she has also switched the psychoanalytic starting point from Freud to Lacan. She introduces Lacan’s divided (or split) subject and related concepts such as drive, anxiety, enjoyment, and lack and applies them to the War on Terror to understand the continuous invention of new threat objects that occurs as soon as the old ones are destroyed (ibid.). Building on Heath-Kelly’s argument that the subject repeatedly invents insecurities to avoid confronting an ontological lack/insecurity, the next section proposes to situate the subject in Lacan’s most formalised methodological matrix, his ‘Four Discourses’. Lacan’s Discourses do no refer to specific content (e.g. legal, political, medical, etc.) but can be understood as structuring different social bonds between the subject and the social field, i.e. different modes of communication through which the subject identifies. The following section introduces the divided subject and develops an analytical strategy for approaching the neurotic expert-subject through a particular social bond, Lacan’s discourse of the hysteric.

### Link – Capitalism

#### Speculation of a growth-laden future abandons the idea of an endpoint and cedes the psyche to greed – that culminates in a “bad infinite” which leaves the subject terminally dissatisfied

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 163-167, 20 September 2016, MG)

Any investment in capitalism as a system demands an investment in the **idea of constant expansion**. Capitalism maintains its equilibrium not by sustaining a stable level of production but through increasing production, without any notion of an end to this increase. When the capitalist system confronts an obstacle (in the form, say, of **a crisis**), the answer is always increasing production. The future will necessarily be more productive than the present, just as the present is more productive than the past. Reversals can only be temporary.

One finds an expression of the insistence on constant expansion in almost every champion of capitalism. For instance, in his history of finance, Niall Ferguson contends, “There have been great reverses, contractions and dyings, to be sure. But not even the worst has set us permanently back. Though the line of financial history has a sawtooth quality, its trajectory is unquestionably upwards.”9 Ferguson’s choice of the term upwards conjures an image of **space exploration** in order to continue the expansion after the Earth itself became exhausted. **Thinking about capitalism requires the abandonment of the possibility of an endpoint** or of a static point where relations of production have completely stabilized.

Capitalism has developed through an unprecedented growth of population, income, and production. It both feeds this growth and feeds off it. In The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective, Angus Maddison provides a quantitative chronicle of this growth. He claims that there was almost no growth in the first millennium of the modern era and very little in the second before the development of capitalism. But then a radical change takes place. After 1820—after capitalism installs itself as the world’s economic system—growth changes exponentially. According to Maddison, “Since 1820, world development has been much more dynamic. Per capita income rose more than eightfold, population more than fivefold.”10 This incredible rate of growth relative to prior epochs of human history is not just a contingent fact but rather the sine qua non of capitalism.

The need for population growth to accommodate the expansion of capital leads even some defenders of capitalism to worry about the capacity of the system to include the excess population that it fosters.11 Capitalism demands an increasing population as both a labor force and a consumption force, but it also requires that there be too many laborers and too many consumers. Like capital itself, population expands to the point of instability rather than stability. In every aspect of capitalist society, expansion plays a central role because expansiveness inheres in the idea of capitalist production.12 For most of its champions, this is its great virtue; for many of its detractors, this is its great defect. But no one disagrees that one cannot even think the capitalist system without the idea that infinite expansion is possible. To render capitalism finite would be to destroy it.13 On the level of microeconomics, we can see the same requirement.

The idea of unending progress governs corporate behavior, investor decisions, and consumer choices. It functions in all aspects of economic planning within the capitalist system, from family budgets to the policy decisions of international economic organizations. At no point can anyone accept the possibility of stagnation or shrinkage. The worker must earn more next year than this year; the company must predict more growth next year; and the nation’s gross domestic product must increase next year. These demands stem from the structure of the capitalist system, not from greedy individuals or corporations. Greed for more is integral to the process of growth and thus has a central place in this system.14

Though greed as a structural necessity brings with it many **psychic difficulties**, the prominence of the bad infinity relieves capitalist subjects of the burden of the true infinite. This **psychic relief** is an essential part of capitalism’s appeal. The bad infinite focuses the subject on the future and the possibility of a form of satisfaction that will **never be realized**. As capitalism was in its nascent moments, Blaise Pascal considered why turning our attention to the future would provide respite. He notes, “the present is usually painful. We hide it from our sight because it distresses us; and, if it is agreeable, we regret seeing it slip away. We try to support it with the future and think of arranging things we cannot control, for a time we have no certainty of reaching.”15 Pascal reveals here why we look to future accumulation rather than contenting ourselves with what we have. He diagnoses the logic of capitalism. But Pascal’s description of the present nonetheless highlights the form of satisfaction associated with the true infinite. It includes an awareness of loss, whereas the bad infinite associated with the future posits a definite separation between the dissatisfaction of loss and the experience of satisfaction.

**Theoretical speculation about the goal of capitalist subjects** inevitably invokes the **bad infinite**, even as the conception of this goal undergoes significant changes. For classical economists, subjects pursued wealth, whereas for neoclassical economists they pursued the satisfaction of their needs. In both cases the point is that the object is infinite. I always require more wealth, and I always have more needs to satisfy (or I can satisfy them more fully). Even though neoclassical economists base their calculations on needs, they assume that these needs are not finite. Though a particular desire is necessarily finite—I can only eat so many packages of M&Ms— desires themselves are not.

In this sense, the multitude of different desires solves the problem of the finitude of particular wants. Our particular wants can reach a saturation point, but another want will always emerge in its stead. In his Principles of Economics, Alfred Marshall makes clear this basic principle of capitalist economics. He says, “There is an endless variety of wants, but there is still a limit to each separate want.”16 Marshall is able to grant some finitude within the economic structure, but the bad infinite of perpetual increase trumps it. Particular wants are finite; wants as such are infinite. Later, Marshall describes the infinite of endless progress in more detail, noting, “On every side further openings are sure to offer themselves, all of which will tend to change the character of our social and industrial life, and to enable us to turn to account vast stores of capital in providing new gratifications and new ways of economizing effort by expending it in anticipation of distant wants.”17 The capitalist subject will **never attain full satisfaction** because it cannot satisfy or even anticipate its “distant wants.” The infinite of desire justifies the infinite of production and consumption.

The infinite can even manifest itself within particular desires. If we examine, for instance, the very particular desire for potato chips, the infinite reappears in response to this limited desire. Capitalist production continues to add new products—and aims to do so infinitely—in order to expand this desire. Thus, the consumer can choose from regular chips, wavy chips, sour cream and onion chips, wavy sour cream and onion chips, and so on. Just when one imagines it’s safe to return to the supermarket without finding a new form of potato chip, Lays invents the wavy, fat-free chip flavored with sea salt. Capitalism has the capacity to transform an apparently limited desire into an infinite one.

The infinite does not only reside in different desires but also in the **subject’s overall project**. The project is infinite because its ideal is clouded in obscurity. This obfuscation starts at the **beginning of the attempt to understand capitalism** and continues without any abatement today. In The Wealth of Nations, Adam Smith posits the existence of a “natural effort of every individual to better his own condition.”18 He assumes no limit to this process of betterment, and the ambiguity of the terms better and condition makes it impossible to say when the project might have reached its end. This ambiguity becomes exacerbated as the **theorizing about capitalism** and the satisfaction it produces expands on and breaks from Smith’s initial account. Even when later theorists of capitalism reject Smith’s understanding of why people do what they do, they accept his assumption of an infinite movement forward.19

#### Arguing on behalf of capitalism dooms them to inevitable dissatisfaction and trauma

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 222-224, 20 September 2016, MG)

Though within the capitalist universe we tend to think of scarcity as the natural condition of humanity, many societies have existed on the earth **without** this threat constantly hanging over them. The original form of human society—the hunting and gathering society—was a society of abundance that dealt with only occasional bouts of scarcity rather than the constant threat that haunts us today. 1 The ease of finding food and shelter often allowed for a degree of abundance absent among all but the extremely wealthy within capitalism. But once capitalism arises, the threat of scarcity becomes the background against which exchange takes place.

Capitalism **doesn’t require that scarcity is real**—that there isn’t enough for everyone to have what they need to survive and find satisfaction—but it does demand that the threat of scarcity be credible. If subjects know that they can find an enjoyable life without capitalist relations of production, they will have **no incentive** to enter into these relations. Capitalism depends on the **subject’s sense of insecurity** and on the belief that an absence of plentiful resources looms just around the corner. Living under capitalism means living with this constant threat and thus in perpetual unease about tomorrow. This is one of the lures with which capitalism seduces its subjects.

Though we imagine that scarcity and insecurity are what we seek to avoid, they actually provide an integral part of capitalism’s appeal. When we exist in a state of perpetual insecurity or scarcity, we can posit an **external obstacle—the source of our insecurity—as the barrier to our satisfaction**. In this way, we avoid confronting the internal obstacle that prevents complete satisfaction. By ensconcing us in scarcity, capitalism enables us to avoid the trauma of an always **partial satisfaction**.

One of the principal justifications for a capitalist economy is the limited quantity of natural resources. The inequalities generated by the market offer a way of dividing up the resources that the natural world provides without recourse to physical violence.2 If the natural world were abundant, there would be no need for capitalism’s unflagging effort to squeeze the maximum productivity out of labor for the least possible cost. There would be no need for competition. This is why all proponents of capitalism presuppose scarcity. Without this presupposition, the desire to accumulate would undergo a radical transformation.3

The role that scarcity plays in capitalism becomes evident as capitalist economists work out the variegations of the market. In his Principles of Political Economy and Taxation, David Ricardo develops his version of a labor theory of value and theorizes profit within the contours of this theory. As he does so, he includes the assumption that “the laws of nature…have limited the productive powers of the land.”4 Ricardo never develops a proof for natural scarcity, but simply asserts it as a given. He refuses to countenance the possibility that the productive powers of humanity might increase to such an extent that this natural scarcity, even if it exists now, might be overcome. For him, natural scarcity must have the status of an immutable law. This is a presupposition that he shares with every other defender of capitalism. There are no exceptions.5

In fact, economics as a science only develops on the basis of scarcity. It doesn’t exist prior to the capitalist epoch, and its calculations about human behavior depend on the idea that the world is not abundant or plentiful.6 Economists can make mathematical calculations about the functioning of markets because they know that there are a limited number of resources that society must distribute. If these resources were unlimited, economic equations would become instantly incalculable. It would be as if one placed a zero in the denominator of a fraction: division of resources only makes sense as long as we have a finite amount to divide.

Capitalist economist Lionel Robbins, for one, claims straightforwardly that scarcity is the sine qua non of economic science. He says, “Every where we turn, if we choose one thing we must relinquish others which, in different circumstances, we would not wish to have relinquished. Scarcity of means to satisfy ends of varying importance is an almost ubiquitous condition of human behaviour.”7 If nature provided abundance or society achieved it, there would be no struggle to allocate resources and no need to distribute them unevenly. Capitalism would have no place in the abundant world. In other words, if scarcity didn’t exist, capitalism would have to invent it. And when scarcity begins to disappear, capitalism does embark on the task of reinventing it over and over again. **Arguing on behalf of capitalism requires an investment in the inevitability of scarcity as an article of the faith**.8

But just as the defenders of capitalism cling to scarcity as an absolute presupposition of existence, they also present **capitalism as a solution to scarcity**. If we stick to its demands, capitalism will lead us out of the desert of scarcity to the promised land of abundance. As a solution to scarcity, capitalism’s investment in the promise becomes clear. It is the promise of a **better future** with no possibility for the fulfillment of that promise. As far into the future as we can plan, resources will be scarce, though we can imagine a time when they won’t be.

This contradiction besets every attempt to champion the capitalist future, but nowhere does it become as clear as in the thought of Deirdre McCloskey. 9 McCloskey’s project champions the virtues that capitalism produces along with material wealth. In contrast to those who lament capitalism’s deleterious effect on morality, McCloskey highlights its moral benefits and sees the malfeasance of investment bankers as a betrayal of the capitalist ethic rather than its expression. Like Ricardo, she emphasizes that “scarcity in your own life seems essential for a real human life.”10 Without scarcity, we would cease to strive and thereby cease to be virtuous.

### Link – Climate Change

#### Climate politics represent a broad project of disavowal of the Real of capitalism that culminates in broad paranoia and eco-catastrophe

Fletcher 18 (Robert Fletcher – Environmental Anthropologist and work in the Sociology of Development and Change group at Wageningen University in the Netherlands , “Psychoanalysis and the GlObal”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 69-71, 1 September 2018, MG)

Conclusion: Enjoying Climate Change

What all of this suggests, from the psychoanalytic perspective explored here, is that climate politics increasingly represents a **glObal effort to disavow** both the Real of capitalism as an economic system riddled with internal contradictions that make it inherently unstable unless continually expanding (Wilson 2014; Kapoor 2015) and the Real of nature as both a finite source of inputs for this system and a sink for its outputs whose fundamental limits have been exceeded (Stavrakakis 1997a). In this sense, the various forms of “**magical thinking”** outlined earlier could be understood as different stages in the process of disavowal. As Healy asks, “Could it be that the ‘post-politics’ of **carbon markets** described by Swyngedouw, the promises of an easy cure in the form of the **utopian city** described by Davidson, and the denials issued by the **Heartland Institute**, are simply a vacillation between admission and denial” (2014, 192), which is precisely what disavowal is about? In short, the neoliberal environmentalism increasingly dominating climate politics might be seen, like neoliberalism in general, as “an increasingly desperate struggle to hold reality together, against the traumatic incursions of the Real of Capital” (Wilson 2014, 315).

In response to this, the quintessential Lacanian injunction is to encourage subjects to “traverse the fantasy.” As Michael Brearley summarizes this process, “the task of the ego (is) to wean itself away from its early reliance on magical and wishful thinking and painfully attempt to represent to itself what really is the case” (2013, 160). In the instance considered here, this would entail fully acknowledging the Real of capitalism as a self-destructive system driving us toward the brink of ecological catastrophe. And this, of course, would require consciously confronting the pain resulting from both loss of attachment to the capitalist society of enjoyment and recognition of the environmental devastation this society has wrought to break the cycle of melancholia and perversion. As Mishan asserted some time ago, “The psychic cost of such a move into recognition is the cost of the move from the ~~paranoid-schizoid~~ toward the depressive position. The cost is the **psychic pain of guilt** at damage done, and the necessity of mourning of our grandiose fantasy of self-sufficiency and immortality. Without such a move we risk **eco-catastrophe**, because we cannot assess the true threat” (1996, 65). Or as Healy puts it, we need to experience “a kind of hitting bottom in our relation to oil addiction as a precondition for moving beyond it” (2014, 193).

More than a lack of practicable alternatives, in other words, it may be our unconscious attachment to the contemporary capitalist order despite our expressed desire to transcend (or at least substantially transform) it that helps to hold it in place, raising the sobering prospect that many of us may not be nearly as willing to make the dramatic changes we know are necessary to develop a just and sustainable world as we would like to believe (see chapter 4). From the psychoanalytic perspective advanced in this chapter, achieving effective change requires generating the desire for attachment to a new situation sufficient to motivate subjects to face the pain of and then undergo the process of mourning necessary to break attachment to present circumstances. As Margaret Rustin phrases this dilemma, “Moving out of the ~~paranoidschizoid~~ into more depressive ways of thinking and feeling can be found too painful to endure, if there are no internalized good objects to sustain a belief in the existence of good objects outside the self” (2013, 175). Yet if this new desire is merely for further unfulfillable fantasies, then **nothing will have been gained**. Hence, the aim must be to mobilize novel forms of “postfantasmatic enjoyment” capable of traversing fantasy and accepting the impossibility of either achieving or escaping jouissance (Byrne and Healy 2006). Žižek (2010) suggests that this requires moving through Kübler-Ross’s (1969) classic stages of grief from denial through anger, bargaining, depression, and finally to full acceptance.

Herein lies the crux of our present predicament. Assessments of our environmental problems overwhelmingly tend to envision an **apocalyptic future** in which depletion of natural resources will lead to either fierce competition for, or strict rationing of, what is left—a perspective that Swyngedouw (2010) evocatively calls forecasting “apocalypse forever.” Both situations are generally depicted as quite grim and pleasure-less. It is difficult for even those of us gravely concerned by ecological degradation and highly motivated to address it to be inspired by such prospects, particularly when this entails **giving up a lifestyle** that does in fact provide the promise (if not achievement) of jouissance in myriad forms. And so while we may in fact claim that we desire the dramatic change we know is needed, we may secretly fear this change as well, engaging in our own disavowal concerning the depth of our commitment to the cause. Thus, Renee Aron Lertzman highlights “the power of **unconscious desires**: that we may in fact want our cars and cheap flights and also want to avoid global climate-induced catastrophes” (2013, 120), generating a deep-seated ambivalence toward the change we (half-)know is needed.

### Link – Cyber

#### The deeming of “threats” to cyberspace speaks on behalf of the master signifier which designates the Other to discriminate against while preserving our own “liberal values”

Jacobson 20 (Jeppe T. Jacobson - Assistant Professor at the Institute for Military Technology, Royal Danish Defence College, “Lacan in the US cyber defence: Between public discourse and transgressive practice”, Review of International Studies, 20 March 2020, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/review-of-international-studies/article/abs/lacan-in-the-us-cyber-defence-between-public-discourse-and-transgressive-practice/38646AE140D77651862DCD1683BFBF35>, MG)

Reading China as the symptom of the (impossible) US cyber defence

The symptomal reading of the US cyber defence community comes in two steps. First, it engages in a discursive reading of the community’s self-representation as well as **representations of the object** that prevents the community from reaching its ‘true potential’. The second step examines the displacement of ‘truths’. Let me start with the first reading.

The Office of the US Director of National Intelligence (ODNI)’s annual Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community as well as the US Department of Defense Cyber Strategy are the authoritative documents for determining **what counts as threats to the United** States and what national security looks like. Those in the US cyber defence community who speak through these documents speak **on behalf of the master signifier**: Whatever is proclaimed as threatening in these documents has the status of truth, and they give meaning and clear direction to a broader system of signification, namely national security politics in cyberspace. The documents, in short, fixate what the US cyber defence community is defending and what it is defending against.

The 2015 DoD Cyber Strategy allows, for example, a clear representation of the American self, which the DoD is tasked to protect in cyberspace:

The United States is committed to an open, secure, interoperable, and reliable Internet that enables prosperity, public safety, and the free flow of commerce and ideas. These qualities of the Internet reflect core American values – of freedom of expression and privacy, creativity, opportunity, and innovation. And these qualities have allowed the Internet to provide social and economic value to billions of people.58

Through (Lacanian) discourse analytical lenses, the Internet emerges as that which **enables the United States to be who it really is: free, creative, opportunistic, and prosperous**. The United States is altruistic, a global force of good that brings social and economic well-being to billions of people. The document further links the United States, or particularly the DoD, to transparency and restraint: ‘We’re going to execute our mission while being as transparent as possible, because that’s also who we are.’ 59 And similarly, in the DoD Cyber Strategy: ‘[T]he United States will always conduct cyber operations under a doctrine of restraint … and in accordance with the law of armed conflict.’ 60

Officially, the US military **implements these values**. Pentagon’s use of cyber weapons against ISIL in Syria and Iraq illustrates the attempt to be transparent and show restraint.61 Here, the Pentagon went public and announced that it ‘dropped cyberbombs’ in the attempt to disrupt propaganda, command and control servers, as well as payment of fighters. Not only did this decision signal openness, it also signalled restraint: instead of exploiting the anonymous potential of cyberspace to maintain deniability, the United States showed through its actions that it follows the Laws of Armed Conflict – specifically the principles of proportionality and distinction.62 Officials cited by the Washington Post emphasised, for example, that commanders could choose cyberattacks only when it reduced the odds of civilian casualties.63

Yet, the US threat assessments clearly indicate that US cyber defence has **not been successful in defending the nation in cyberspace**.64 And as the rest of the section shows, the cyber threats from China are articulated as that which prevents the United States from being able to fully enjoy the ‘core American values’ it represents and promotes in cyberspace. In the Lacanian vocabulary, **the US cyber defence community’s representation of China echoes the subject’s attempt to conceal its dividedness** by inventing a fantasmatic object that prevents it from enjoying a ‘whole’ secure identity. In other words, ‘China in cyberspace’ emerges as a central fantasy figure who steals our enjoyment by transgressing the legal and normative restraints that bound the US cyber defence. Chinese transgressions of the values promoted by the United States in cyberspace give the US cyber defence an excuse for why it fails to bring security to an open, free and prosperous cyberspace.

In the US threat assessments, China appears to be among the states ‘shaken by the role the Internet has played in political instability’, which is why it pursues a different model for governing the Internet – a model that involves technological measures to control content in the name of political stability.65 This model of state-centric content control threatens to undermine ‘our policy goals, particularly those to protect freedom of expression and the free flow of online information and ensure a free marketplace for information technology products and services’. 66 The Chinese government’s ambition of political stability – that is, the consolidation of power through prioritising economic growth and military preparedness – is also articulated as the background for the threat from excessive cyber-enabled Chinese intellectual property theft.67 To the US defence, Chinese economic cyber espionage transgresses the rules promoted by the United States with regard to economic competition between states, and is articulated as a serious national security concern: Everything of value flows to China; it is ‘the biggest transfer of wealth in history’ as then Director of the NSA and commander of the US Cyber Command, General Keith Alexander famously proclaimed.68 And ‘China in cyberspace’ is a threat object that takes on additional meanings, for example, when it is further articulated in less official sources.

The ‘real scary part’ of the Chinese content control, as a US Army Officer underlined in an interview, is **not simply the filtering of content**: state ownership, control of service providers, and constant technological optimisation allow the Chinese government to surveil and identify all users, and in so doing create a constant risk of punishment, which leads to self-censorship. ‘This is the real power of the Chinese domestic cyber policy’, the Officer stated, and further emphasised that: ‘[It] ends up making people want what the government wants.’ Such homogenisation is not only the ultimate form for regime stability but it transgresses the core US principle of protecting the privacy of the individual as well. Homogenisation is also tied to another threat from China in cyberspace: the threat from patriotic hackers.

When a state enjoys full obedience from its citizens, it is threatening because it allows for hackers with no clear connection to the Chinese government to pursue the government interests while offering ‘plausible deniability’. 69 This obfuscates the international legal distinction between state and private responsibility promoted by the United States. ‘In Chinese society, independence from government direction and control does not carry with it the idea of separation from the state’, as former US Army linguist Scott J. Henderson has underlined when discussing the opaque connection between Chinese hackers and the government.70 And because the Chinese government is believed to exert implicit power over loyal, patriotic hackers, as Colonel Jayson M. Spade suggests, it is sufficient for the Chinese government to organise ‘hacking competitions to encourage hackers to develop CNE [cyber espionage] techniques and software’. 71 In other words, in the US defence articulation, there seems to be something within the Chinese subject that makes it prone to fulfilling the will of the government. While Spade also identifies concerns in the Chinese government over potential negative implications of patriotic hacking, an influential RAND report written for the Office of the Secretary of Defense on the Chinese Military concludes that the Chinese government, if worried about negative consequences, simply gives indirect orders to the patriotic hackers through ‘unsigned editorials’ in the state-run media.72

In short, the US cyber defence community represents **China’s behaviour in cyberspace as a threat that transgresses the values and norms the United States officially follows and promotes**. China is everything the United States is not. The Chinese government has an omnipresent gaze, enabled by excessive use of surveillance techniques and censorship, which challenges and violates the respect for and protection of freedom of expression and privacy that the United States promotes online. The Great Firewall represents to the US cyber defence community an attempt to secure the power of the Chinese government and the United States seeks to secure liberal values for all in cyberspace. Thus, Chinese government’s primary interest in consolidating its own centralised power by draining the economic power of others through cyber theft of intellectual property undermines the United States’ official ambition of becoming the global force for good that brings economic prosperity to billions all over the world. Lastly, the opaque Chinese government/patriotic hacker relationship is a transgression of the idea of a transparent and lawabiding state that the United States publicly promotes and defends.

### Link – Cyber (China)

#### Fantasizing about a China threat in cyberspace is a move towards an infinite and impossible fantasy rooted in the logic of transgression

Jacobson 20 (Jeppe T. Jacobson - Assistant Professor at the Institute for Military Technology, Royal Danish Defence College, “Lacan in the US cyber defence: Between public discourse and transgressive practice”, Review of International Studies, 20 March 2020, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/review-of-international-studies/article/abs/lacan-in-the-us-cyber-defence-between-public-discourse-and-transgressive-practice/38646AE140D77651862DCD1683BFBF35>, MG)

First, ‘China in cyberspace’ displaces the fact that there are more uncomfortable and disavowed ‘truths’ about the cyberspace politics in the United States, ‘truths’ that are **pushed to the margins of the US cyber defence discourse**. Prior to the Snowden revelations, this was, for example, the fact that American privacy online is under pressure, not only from Facebook but also from the intelligence agencies’ attempt to prevent terrorism. Similarly, one can detect a process of **displacement** in relation to the fact that the United States’ pursuit of military superiority in cyberspace involves exploiting vulnerabilities in IT systems used by Americans as well as allies, which ultimately reproduces an environment that is technically insecure. Pushed to the margins by the Chinese fantasy is also the fact that the US cyber defence community itself is **riddled with tensions**, for example, over funding or who should have authority over the US cyber capabilities – that is, whether to use software exploits (cyber weapons) for intelligence (NSA) or military (US Cyber Command) purposes. Thus, ‘China in cyberspace’ is a **symptom of more fundamental tensions**. It plays a role as the object that **prevents the US cyber defence community from confronting the fact that it is neither defending cyberspace nor is a homogenous whole**. In other words, China is not only our other, it is that which enable us to keep the illusion that we are a ‘whole’ American self, and that which allows us to identify with this self. It prevents the US cyber defence community from confronting the fact that the very social field it represents is structured around an impossibility – that **fulfilling a fantasy does not deliver the enjoyment it promises.**

Second, the displacement is supported by a condensation: the Chinese cyber threat takes on contradictory features. While more ‘traditional’ discourse analyses would see such inconsistencies as evidence of a less stable discourse,73 the symptomal reading draws the opposite conclusion. It was noted above, how the Chinese government through its Great Firewall is perceived to exert total control over its citizens and how the government enjoys total homogenisation with these subjects. Yet, it is also commonly understood among members of the US cyber defence community that the technical restrictions deployed by Chinese government authorities are easily circumvented by Chinese netizens and that the general level of cybersecurity in China is low. This is illustrated, for example, by a US Cyber Command official who explained in an interview that the NSA with ease had penetrated networks in Chinese universities, mobile phones, fibre-optic cables and servers controlled by the Chinese government, and second, by an official US policy that invests millions of dollars in technologies to promote freedom online, including tools for citizens to circumvent censorship regimes.74

According to the logic of condensation, the perception of the weaknesses of Chinese cybersecurity **exacerbates**, rather than dampens the perception of China as a threat. In an interview, a US official working with cyber defence policy worried that the insufficient Chinese cybersecurity allows other groups to route their cyberattacks through Chinese networks, while permitting China to deny responsibility for any hostile cyber activity with reference to a possible third party having penetrated its IT infrastructure. In other words, China is **both a cyber superpower and cybersecurity novice** – and threatening for both reasons. However, what hold these conflicting narratives together is what they have in common. In both cases, the Chinese government enjoys what the US cyber defence community cannot have: plausible deniability due to poor cybersecurity and totalitarian control with its citizens. This is the role of condensation.

Importantly, while China is a symptom that displaces other more fundamental ‘truths’, **these ‘truths’ return**. Thus, the Snowden revelations symbolise ‘a return of the repressed’. Snowden and other whistleblowers revealed how the US cyber defence **community is not simply defending a unified United States from Chinese threats** from cyberspace but is conducting excessive surveillance and cyber exploitation practices; as will be elaborated in the following, the US cyber defence entities undermine global network security, collect data on its own citizens, and bribe private companies to share more user data than necessary – and they lie to Congress about it. As I will argue, these transgressive practices should **not be understood as being detached from the official US cyber defence discourse** characterised by restraint, transparency and clarity, but as constitutive hereof. **Transgression is closely connected to the fantasmatic distinction** between an idealised harmonious self and the Chinese symptom. The last section elaborates this claim by extracting the kernel of enjoyment that work to sustain the US cyber defence discourse.

### Link – Cyber threats

#### Their understanding of “cyber threats” produces neurotic subjects, to be sacrificed on the alter of the cult of policy expertise.

Jacobsen 20 [Jeppe T. Jacobsen is a Ph.D. candidate at the Danish Institute for International Studies and the Center for War Studies at the University of Southern Denmark. His primary focus is U.S. cyber armament, its motivation and consequences to international security. Mr. Jacobsen worked as cyber coordinator at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark where he coordinated Denmark’s cyber diplomacy.; “From neurotic citizen to hysteric security expert: a Lacanian reading of the perpetual demand for US cyber defence”; Critical Studies on Security; March 1, 2020; https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21624887.2020.1735830]//eleanor

The goals of security policy experts – a term used collectively here to describe independent consultants and think tankers that produce policy recommendations and advise the US Administration – keep shifting. A case in point is the extensive policy discussion on cyber deterrence. Improving deterrence of cyberattacks against the US has been a recommendation put forward by task forces and commissions at regular intervals during the Obama Administration (National Research Council 2010; CSIS 2017; DSB 2013; DSB. 2017). The Administration’s attempts to accommodate these recommendations have invariably been met by new and different sets of proposals and demands, and a reluctance on the part of experts in the cyber community to stand by previous policy proposals. By way of a brief summary, elaborated further in the body of this article: Before 2010, policy experts called for more offensive cyber capabilities to ensure a cyber deterrence posture. Around the time that the Administration provided these capabilities, the cyber deterrence problem ceased to be attributed to a cyber capability problem and was now thought to result from a lack of signalling. Shortly thereafter, the Administration responded by signalling a willingness to respond strongly to cyberattacks, at which point the expert community began calling instead for resilience in both civilian and military US networks to achieve cyber deterrence. This demand for cyber resilience was put forward in such vague terms that it is impossible to determine when it is achieved. The dependency on increasingly complex socio-technical systems in contemporary society has rendered reliance on experts unavoidable. And with their rise to ubiquity in policy circles, expertise has also become a frequent object of study in social sciences. In critical security studies, the sociological approaches have been particularly attuned to the study of expertise. Within this field, security scholars have focused largely on how the everyday practices of professional experts play a role in categorising what constitutes an insecurity – and ultimately, in (re)producing particular ‘regimes of truth’ (Bigo 2002; Berling and Bueger 2015). In so doing, these contributions see experts as the embodiments of specific forms of knowledge that is practised or articulated as part of a dominant rationality of government (or dispositif or field). This article introduces a strategy for studying security policy experts that does not reduce the expert to the embodiment of a knowledge regime or a tool for political interests. It suggests that paying attention to how the expert subject identifies with and performs its role as an expert vis-à-vis the government that takes policy decisions, advances our understanding of the expert’s role in reproducing insecurities. The article takes its cue from the writings of those critical security scholars that show how today’s risk governance has led to increasing public awareness and general concerns in society about unpredictable and catastrophic events (Aradau and van Munster 2011; Aradau, Lobo-Guerrero, and van Munster 2008). Such concerns about uncertainty, the critical security scholars argue, have not only led to the government introducing precautionary and pre-emptive strategies for governing security but has also given rise to anxious and neurotic subjects (De Goede 2008; Walklate and Mythen 2010; Eklundh, Zevnik, and Guittet 2017). Scholarly contributions within this field have so far almost exclusively diagnosed the neurotic subject among citizens being governed. In fact, the neurotic subject is treated somewhat disconnected from or even juxtaposed to the experts that implement or propose the current security governing strategies and thus can be said to mobilise collective anxieties (Fournier 2014). Experts are, apparently, unaffected by anxieties about future uncertainties. This article extends the notion of the neurotic subject to the expert, and asks: How does a reading of the expert as a neurotic subject advance the way we study the reproduction of insecurities? For answering this question, the Freudian-inspired work on the neurotic citizen by Isin (2004), which is the main inspiration for the above-mentioned turn to anxiety and neurosis in the risk literature, is a useful stepping-stone. However, the article switches the theoretical point of departure from Freud to Jacques Lacan – the latter of which enjoys increasing attention in critical security studies recently (Mandelbaum 2016; Heath-Kelly 2018; Danil 2018; Eberle 2019). To date, the Lacanian contributions within this literature have generally introduced Lacan’s notion of the divided subject – and one or a few concepts related to it – to extend the analytical power of existing critical security and IR approaches (Epstein 2011). However, Lacan offers a – largely unexplored1 – systematic strategy for locating and studying the divided subject in different social relations, his matrix of the ‘Four Discourses’ (Lacan 1998, 2007). The article zooms in on one of the four discourses, Lacan’s discourse of the hysteric, introducing it as an analytical strategy for studying policy experts as neurotic subjects. Lacan defines the Four Discourses as abstract ways to structure our communication and identification. The Hysteric Discourse, one of the four discourses, is a social bond where a neurotic subject constantly protests and demands that an ‘other’, in the position of the master signifier, delivers what the subject desires (for example, absolute security) (Fink 1995, 129–37). The article focuses on US policy experts in the field of cyber defence.2 US cyber defence is as an apt case study not only because ‘cyber’ is officially considered the biggest threat to US national security, but also because cyberspace is articulated in the US as an uncertain, unpredictable and insecure domain where governments rely on assistance from outside experts to solve problems (Dunn Cavelty 2013; Hansen and Nissenbaum 2009). As the neurotic subject is likely to emerge from uncertainty and as experts hold a privileged position in the cyber policy debate, the social bond between the US cyber defence experts and the government is an ideal case for examining the expert as a neurotic subject that communicates through the Hysteric Discourse as well as what it means for the reproduction of insecurity. Through the case study of the US cyber policy experts, the article contributes to the emerging body of critical security studies on experts. It introduces a Lacanian-inspired hysteric strategy for advancing the analysis of security experts. First, the article locates the drifting of desire in the public expert documents on cyber deterrence and argues that the US cyber policy experts’ ever-evolving and ultimately elusive demands are illustrative of a desire for a desire unfulfilled, which reproduces cyber insecurity as a national defence priority. And second, the article shows that the social bond between the cyber policy expert subject and the US government is sustained – despite the former taking up employment in the executive branch – by the subject pushing the object of desire in front of it to the point of ultimately returning to the position as outside experts. Together, the two readings illustrate a critical security strategy for studying the reproduction of insecurity through the experts’ neurotic identification as experts.

### Link – Cyber policy

#### The affirmative’s demand for government cyber policies to strengthen cyber [deterrence/defense/resilience] is a neurotic relationship to both the government and cyberthreats, BUT, the object of desire is always out of reach – their inability to confront their desire makes their impacts inevitable by reproducing cyber as a security threat.

Jacobsen 20 [Jeppe T. Jacobsen is a Ph.D. candidate at the Danish Institute for International Studies and the Center for War Studies at the University of Southern Denmark. His primary focus is U.S. cyber armament, its motivation and consequences to international security. Mr. Jacobsen worked as cyber coordinator at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark where he coordinated Denmark’s cyber diplomacy.; “From neurotic citizen to hysteric security expert: a Lacanian reading of the perpetual demand for US cyber defence”; Critical Studies on Security; March 1, 2020; [https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21624887.2020.1735830]//eleanor\*\*modified](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21624887.2020.1735830%5d//eleanor**modified) for ableist language

Experts supposedly offer impartially and evidence-based knowledge and lay out possible ways forward. Experts are not enmeshed in normative partisan politics. At least, US think tanks emerged in the beginning of the 20th century on this foundation (Rich 2004, 34–41). Traces of this ideal still exist, although there are clear political divisions across US think tanks today (Abelson 2018). In the ongoing policy debates on how to defend the nation in cyberspace, non-partisan task forces and commissions put forward policy recommendations based on their ‘objective’ assessment of the nature of cyberspace and the actors acting within it. One of the most iterated recommendations revolves around how to achieve credible cyber deterrence. Yet, the next subsection reviews the policy recommendations related to cyber deterrence made by commissions and task forces during the Obama Administration and in doing so, challenges the idea of experts as nothing but the embodiments of a dominant knowledge regime. The first subsection reads the relationship between policy expert and government as a hysteric social bond where cyber deterrence is kept out of reach by constantly changing demands or demands that are articulated so vaguely that they are impossible for the government to meet. The second subsection analyses the US cyber policy experts’ entry into the government as a break with the hysteric social bond that risks forcing the neurotic subject to confront its own desire, but it shows that such a move is accompanied by a constant reinvention of excuses as to why the expert-turned-master is unable to provide the cyber defence it is responsible for, ultimately leading to a definition of the object of desire as that which the subject cannot currently do: criticise and make demands. In this way, the hysteric social bond between experts who reproduce insecurities through demands for policy change and a government that seeks to accommodate these demands is sustained. The desire for a desire unfulfilled At the end of 2008, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) brought together policy experts to develop cybersecurity recommendation for the incoming president. Under the headline ‘Military Doctrine and Deterrence’, the commission report emphasised the importance of ‘the need for a credible military presence in cyberspace to provide a deterrent against potential attackers’ (CSIS 2008, 24). The following quote from the report, however, calls in to question the commission’s own recommendation:

Deterrence in cyberspace is particularly complicated because of the problems with attribution and identification. If a country does not know who is attacking, it is difficult to create appropriate and proportionate responses in ways that reduce the chance of escalation. A signal that a country is contemplating a response that goes to all potential attackers will not deter and could actually create more conflict (ibid.: 26).

In short, if the attacker is not attributable and hence does not fear retaliation, then even the most potent cyber military is superfluous. To make a policy recommendation and in the same breath call into question the soundness of this policy is a hysteric communication par excellence. It avoids the anxiety that emerges when the specific object of desire (offensive military capabilities) is achieved by already introducing a new object of desire (better attribution). Tellingly, the Administration’s decision to establish the US Cyber Command, the cyber branch of the US military, was immediately criticised as insufficient. CSIS director James Lewis underlined, for example, that ‘the U.S. is widely recognized to have pre-eminent offensive cyber capabilities, but it obtains little or no deterrent effect from this’ (cited in Markoff, Sanger, and Shanker 2010). In other words, the government should do a better job defending against and identifying the culprits in cyberspace. Then Deputy Secretary of Defense, William J. Lynn III was ready with a plan for improving cyber defence capacities. Presenting the Department’s cyber strategy, Lynn underlined that ‘[US cyber] deterrence will necessarily be based more on denying any benefit to attackers than on imposing costs through retaliation’ (Lynn III 2010, 99–100). The newfound priority of cyber defence did not appear to reassure the expert subject. As a case in point, the National Research Council (NRC) hosted a 2010 workshop with policy experts on cyber deterrence. And shortly after, the independent Defense Science Board (DSB) created a task force on Resilient Military System and the Advanced Cyber Threat to provide recommendations on how to maintain deterrence in the cyber era. Neither the NRC workshop nor the DSB report found offensive cyber capabilities or cyber defence to be the solution to the cyber deterrence problem. Instead, the desired object had drifted along: Now, the Administration needs to clearly articulate the willingness and the capacity to respond to cyberattacks not only with cyber weapons but with all available tools – ultimately nuclear weapons (DSB 2013: 15; Rosenzweig 2010, 247). Articulating the willingness to respond to cyberattacks with any means was first introduced by the Obama Administration in the 2011 International Strategy for Cyberspace and subsequently iterated in both the Department of Defense (2015) Cyber Strategy as well as in a White House cyber deterrence white paper of late 2015 (Obama 2011: 14; Department of Defense 2015: 11; Otto 2015). However, as is prototypical in a hysteric social bond, getting close to the object of desire – that is, having more steadfast articulations about the willingness to retaliate – causes anxiety that prompts a slide towards a new object of desire. In this case, manifesting in a redefinition of the meaning of cyber deterrence. Two subsequent commission reports on cyber deterrence, namely the CSIS cyber recommendations to President Trump and the 2017 DSB follow-up report on cyber deterrence (CSIS 2017a; DSB. 2017), no longer focused only on large-scale cyberattacks against the US critical infrastructures as that which needed to be deterred. In fact, the government’s cyber deterrence’s efforts including the articulation of a willingness to respond with all means necessary seemed to have worked, as no serious, ~~crippling~~ [devastating] cyberattacks against US critical infrastructures had taken place – despite the experts’ continuous criticisms of US national cyber insecurity. What the US did not prevent, however, was economic cyber espionage and minor, non-destructive disturbances of public and private networks. Thus, in the new commission reports, the anxiety over such malicious cyber activity was now included as that which needed to be deterred. Once again, anxiety pushes desire along, now in the form of a desire for better defining a proportional response to cyberattacks on private entities and economic espionage. This drift to better declaratory policy also offers an explanation as to why the government – when it finally delivered on the previous demand for better attribution – failed to satisfy the expert’s desire for cyber deterrence. In 2014, the US successfully attributed and indicted Chinese government hackers for commercial cyber espionage, but as the expert’s desire for cyber deterrence now involved a desire for a strong national security response to cyber espionage, the US government’s attributions only reinforced the demands for economic sanctions (Nakashima 2015). In short, as soon as the government delivers, the expert subject’s desire shifts, from offensive military capabilities in cyberspace to better attribution, to an articulation of willingness to respond, and most recently, to the need to define proportional responses to non-military cyber activity. With the drift, the cyber threat continues as a pertinent national security challenge – to which the solution remains always just out of reach. Yet, the constant drift in the object of desire is only one manifestation of a hysteric social bond. Another is a demand for the unachievable. One of the policy recommendations that seems most persistent is cyber resilience: The 2013 DSB report demanded investments in resilient systems to ensure a ‘survivable strike capability’ (DSB 2013, 41), which was reinvented as the demand for resilient ‘thin line strike capabilities’ in the 2017 DSB report (2017, 17–8). And both the 2008 and 2017 CSIS report (2008: 27; 2017a: 6), and the NRC workshop proceedings (Rosenzweig 2010, 256) call for more cyber resilience initiatives. As an element in a hysteric social bond, the persistent demand for resilience ties to the lack of clarity that accompanies this policy recommendation. The same reports that call upon the Administration to implement resilience-building measures, call into question the feasibility of resilience. The DSB. (2017: 4, 10) underlines that the Internet of Things ‘will only exacerbate an already tenuous posture and make defense even more challenging in the coming years’, and consequently that ‘offensive cyber capabilities continue to grow and are likely to outpace cyber defense and resilience’. The CSIS (2017a, 6) is equally sceptical: ‘While there have been good advances in the network protections of leading defence contractors, this has only encouraged opponents to become more inventive and more persistent’. The assessment that resilience in cyberspace is unfeasible is understandable. Resilience is defined as ‘the ability to provide acceptable operations despite disruption: natural or manmade, inadvertent or deliberate’ (DSB 2013, 2). But when is something ‘acceptable’? And, how do you determine whether resilience efforts are deterring the adversary? These questions remind unanswered. The critical risk literature has explained how resilience, along with precaution, premediation and imagination are styles of reasoning that have come to dominate security governance, for example, in the response to terrorism or natural disasters (Aradau and van Munster 2011). As the above has shown, this also applies to cyberspace; however, reading the expert subject’s call for cyber deterrence through the hysteric social bond reveals the shortcomings of reducing the expert to the provider of security techniques such as resilience. Truly embracing risk or uncertainty management would force expert subjects at least to recognise the need to discuss what ‘acceptable’ levels of cyber risks and ‘resilient enough’ look like. The lack of attention given to questions such as these suggests that the expert subject occupies a social position not simply for managing cyber risks and uncertainties but where identification takes place through making demands that keep the space for criticism open. With reference to uncertainty, the expert subject can always insist that current strategies do not sufficiently manage the cyber insecurities, keep the confrontation with its desire at a distance, and ultimately reproduce ‘cyber’ as a national insecurity. The first part of the case study showed how a hysteric social bond can be applied as a reading strategy in security studies. Through the analyses above, the article suggests that by identifying the expert subject’s object of desire, it becomes possible to show how experts contribute to the reproduction of cyber deterrence as a national security issue. The next subsection studies the moment when a hysteric social bond appears to break down, i.e. when the policy experts’ take on the master position by entering the executive branch. The subsection explores the implications for the object of desire as well as what it means for the hysteric social bond.

#### Their claim that debates over government cyber policy spill up to produce better policy making is yet another deferral of the confrontation with the object of their desire.

Jacobsen 20 [Jeppe T. Jacobsen is a Ph.D. candidate at the Danish Institute for International Studies and the Center for War Studies at the University of Southern Denmark. His primary focus is U.S. cyber armament, its motivation and consequences to international security. Mr. Jacobsen worked as cyber coordinator at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark where he coordinated Denmark’s cyber diplomacy.; “From neurotic citizen to hysteric security expert: a Lacanian reading of the perpetual demand for US cyber defence”; Critical Studies on Security; March 1, 2020; [https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21624887.2020.1735830]//eleanor\*\*modified](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/21624887.2020.1735830%5d//eleanor**modified) for ableist language

Contrary to the expectations generated by Lacan’s hysteric social bond, the revolving door between the executive branch and the US think tanks suggests that the expert subject pursues its desire to become the master. To be master does not sit comfortably with Lacan’s divided, hysterical subject, who always recourses to another subject (master) to organise its desire (Žižek 2008, 212). The question then is how the expert subject avoids a confrontation with its own desire when it becomes the master. The following locates the different stages that enable the expert subject who takes up a role in the executive branch to avoid confronting the ontological lack at the heart of desire. First, the obligatory public speeches that senior officials and politicians tend to deliver when taking office usually follow a template of criticising predecessors’ policies before announcing a new set of policies. The previous government always failed to live up to its obligations and when in office, things are always worse than expected; or, as the then President Trump’s Homeland Security Advisor, former Atlantic Council fellow, Tom Bossert underlined in the context of the cyber threat: ‘I feel like I have reawoken from a long eight-year nap and I have found a world that is on fire’ (cited in CSIS 2017b). In other words, the expert-turned-master pre-empts his immediate failure to provide the promised enjoyment (a solid cyber defence): The object standing in for objet petit a remains out of reach, and the illusion of the master as a master (rather than divided subject) is able to continue. However, as time goes by, blaming the predecessor becomes an increasingly inadequate excuse and another reason for the lack of enjoyment must be invented. The commonly articulated object that prevents US cybersecurity is the nature of cyberspace: The fact that the domain is complex, and innovation moves fast means that the US ‘[cyber] vulnerability has continued to expand’, as President Obama’s cybersecurity coordinator, Michael Daniel explains (Marks 2017). Several interviews with former policy-experts-turned-government-employees suggest an additional reason. They suggest that the symbolisable lack that prevents the subject from confronting objet petit a is predominantly internal. On the one hand, the missing object takes its form as a cross-departmental disagreement, i.e. the fact that different departments cannot agree on one cyber issue and neither can the Department of Defense nor the members of National Security Council. Internal political disagreements as well as petty personal grudges and departmental power struggles are pointed to as obstacles to progress. On the other hand, the former policy experts face a large and rigid bureaucracy, slower and more frustrating than expected. Here, the symbolisable lack becomes the extensive lines of approval and countless processes that steal the time from a thorough and in-depth analysis that could have laid the proper foundation for a historic cyber policy initiative. Former CIA and NSA director, Michael Hayden (2016: xiii), captures this frustration from his position at the top of hierarchy: ‘[A director] can move (or get more) money, move boxes on an organizational chart, change out people, and exhort and inspire. That’s just about the whole toolbox.’ Rather than causing a confrontation with the void behind their desire, the desire of the expertturned-master continues to slide. Until, invariable, one day the new object of desire becomes the enjoyment that awaits when leaving office; the anticipation of not having to deliberate over and endlessly edit every sentence in a slow-moving bureaucracy with multiple and competing interests. It is the yearning to return to the role as an outside expert who is free to criticise. Thus, several government officials interviewed before they left the Obama Administration in favour of think tank or consultancy jobs emphasised how they were looking forward to speaking in public without scripted talking points and to travel the world to share their expertise in panels and debates aware that the things they said did not have to take bureaucratic hindrances and politics into account. Thus, after the detour in government, the expert subject returns: back to criticising and making demands, or as former Defense Secretary Ash Carter (2017) did shortly after he joined the Harvard Kennedy School, air the disappointment he had felt by the military’s cyber campaigns against ISIS during his time in office. Yet, once back in the role of expert outside government who reproduces insecurities through criticism and demands, the object of desire also takes another form – of that which is no longer there, i.e. the time when one made a sacrifice to make a difference for the country. Former CIA and NSA director, Michael Hayden recollects – with nostalgia – the mental stress of being constantly surrounded by security escorts after appearing in an Iraqi deck of cards identifying American targets (Hayden 2016, 62). And former Deputy Director of the NSA, Chris Inglis recalls with illconcealed pride how he fought to defend NSA’s reputation ‘in front of a madding crowd’ during the days of the Snowden revelations, and participated in 42 hearings in Congress even though he is a ‘raving introvert’ (Inglis 2015). In several of interviews that went into this study, current US cyber policy experts – without being asked about it – told me that their time in government had not only meant a sacrifice of a normal work-life balance but had also been the formative experience that they continue to draw on. Some even explained how the policies they authored laid the foundation for how we think about cybersecurity policy today. The articulations of such nostalgic recollection of ‘paying one’s dues’ and making a ‘real’ difference suggest that the expert subject continues to desire the master position despite its previous failure to produce full enjoyment. In conclusion, the expert subject who enters government postpones the confrontation with objet petit a by producing excuses for why cyber defence (full enjoyment) is not achieved. Even when the illusion about a master who can solve all insecurities risks becoming exposed as an illusion through the expert’s own experiences in the executive branch, the subject avoids confronting the void at the heart of its desire. And desire to return to the position as an expert remerges. Interestingly, when back in her previous position, the expert subject cannot escape the nostalgic recollection of the sacrifice made and hence a desire for ‘truly making a difference’ inside the government. Constantly postponing the fulfilment of desire ends up sustaining a social bond between policy expert and government that keeps cyber defence out of reach. Conclusion The article advances critical security studies on expertise by proposing a strategy for studying how the experts’ identification as experts contributes to the reproduction of insecurities. By studying the policy experts as neurotic subjects, the article – based on Lacan’s Hysteric Discourse – moves beyond the current distinction in the critical security literature between a neurotic, ‘risk managed’ citizen and an expert who is reduced to the embodiment of a particular knowledge regime, and thus mobilises anxieties without itself being influenced by them. The Lacanian strategy encourages the analyst to analyse the object of desire in the policy expert’s communication vis-à-vis the government, and the article turns to the US cyber defence experts and their production of policy recommendations as an illustrative case study. Through the case study, the article shows the drifting of desire in the policy documents on cyber deterrence and argues that the experts’ ever-evolving and ultimately elusive demands for new deterrence policies suggest a desire for a desire unfulfilled. The drifting of desire reproduces cyber insecurity as an ever-pertinent, still-unsolved national security issue. Furthermore, the article suggests that renewed analytical attention to the shifting object of desire also offers insights into how a hysteric social bond between policy experts and government is re-established and sustained when policy experts in think tanks take up a position in government. The expert-turned-master avoids confronting the void at the heart of desire by constantly reinventing excuses as to why s/he is unable to provide the cyber defence s/he is now responsible for. Ultimately, the drifting of desire leads to redefinition of the lost object as that which the subject cannot currently do in government, i.e. criticising and demand solutions from the master. Thus, after the stint in government, the expert subject returns, and subsequently looks upon its time in government with nostalgic recollection. Such a drift of desire, the article suggests, sustains a social bond where more cyber defence to overcome the eternal cyber threat, is always in demand. 10 J. T. JACOBSEN The introduction of Lacan’s Hysteric Discourse as a reading strategy and its application to the case study of the US cyber policy expert has hopefully served to inspire future critical security studies on expertise to bring additional analytical attention to the ways in which desire manifests itself in the subject’s identification as an expert and how such a perspective furthers our understanding of the reproduction of insecurity.

### Link – Death

#### Promulgating an image of death to be avoided instills guilt and total despair onto bodies – unless we’re dying from twinkies, their project is an attempt to obfuscate trauma

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 173-176, 20 September 2016, MG)

In this sense, moral philosophers like Sandel who insist on sustaining some terrain outside capitalist production are indispensible for the functioning of the capitalist system. This is not to say that Sandel is a capitalist stooge or a double agent planted by capitalist powers in the world of moral philosophy—though, given his involvement with MOOCs, one can’t be sure—but that the challenge to capitalism **cannot** occur through the attempt to limit the system. If capitalism requires a limit to transcend (which it does), every introduction of a new limit will be inherently self-defeating for the would-be limiter of the market’s reach. One must instead rethink the form that the limit takes.

By articulating the difference between the bad and the true infinite, Hegel anticipates the psychoanalytic understanding of how the subject satisfies itself. Though the subject consciously imagines itself making **infinite progress toward its goal of total satisfaction**, it never arrives at this goal because the totally satisfying object **exists insofar as it is lost**. When the subject successfully obtains the object that it seeks, this object ceases to embody the lost object. But capitalism promulgates images of the bad infinite and hides the inescapability of the true infinite. The concept of the true infinite was Hegel’s way, given the conceptual tools available to him at the time, of formulating the self-limiting structure of subjectivity.

By structuring our existence around the bad infinite and its ideal of constant movement forward, capitalism focuses all our despair on **death and aging.** Though human beings have always despaired in the face of death, capitalist society brings this despair to a head. The end of one’s individual existence implies a **failure of growth**, the keystone of the system. The imminence of our death and our inability to continue growing becomes the **fundamental limit that we must confront**. And it comes to us as an external limit. Unless we drive wildly on the wrong side of the highway or take eighty-five pills of Valium or **eat Twinkies with abandon**, most of us **will not cause our own deaths**. Though we work to find ways to prevent death or offset aging, we know that ultimately we will fail in these efforts. This is the cause of incredible despair for the subjects of capitalism.

This despair leads us to spend vast amounts of money on products that promise to help keep the body fit, hide signs of aging, or hold death off as long as possible.30 To be aging or dying is to **betray the bad infinite**, to cease to develop, which adds to the **existential horror**. Not only does one cease to exist, but one also feels **guilty** for succumbing to this cessation. One should have done more to stay young looking (like tanning) and to avoid death (like staying out of the sun). The imperative of infinite progress manifests most clearly in the anxiety produced by aging and death under capitalism.

Even though he is certainly an anticapitalist philosopher, one could not imagine Martin Heidegger constructing a philosophy around the problem of death prior to the capitalist epoch. According to the early Heidegger, death **individualizes** us and creates the possibility for authenticity because it is the one event that no one can do for us. While we talk, eat, and work following the model of others, no one can die in this way. Death brings an end to our possibilities and forces the recognition of our constitutive finitude. Its very unavoidability gives death its **existential importance** for Heidegger. 31 Certainly, capitalist life helps people to elude this confrontation with death, and this is a large part of why Heidegger thinks of capitalist modernity as a grave danger. But this danger elevates the significance of death and its centrality. Though people died in traditional society, death was not yet an ontological scandal.

Death is certainly a problem of existence. But when one lives according to the demand of the bad infinite, the centrality of this problem becomes **magnified** and obfuscates **other, more traumatic, problems, such as that of eternity**. The problem of eternity, however one considers it, is more vexing than that of death. On the surface, this verdict seems absurd. We might understand it coming from God or some other eternal being, but coming from a human being it appears to reflect an inadequate understanding of the finitude of earthly existence. If subjects were simply finite beings, this objection would be a winning one. But we are burdened by the weight of our infinitude as well as our finitude. We are beings not only of infinite striving toward the future but also of the true infinite—an encircling of our own limit.

Despite his opposition to Hegel, Søren Kierkegaard provides an almost perfect formulation of the true infinite through his conception of the sickness unto death. The idea of a sickness unto death seems to imply, as with Heidegger, a concern with anxiety in the face of one’s imminent demise. But Kierkegaard has something entirely different in mind. For him, the sickness unto death is the result of the subject’s confrontation with eternity.

Unlike other animals, the subject, as Kierkegaard sees it, cannot simply die. As he puts it, “to be sick unto death is to be unable to die, yet not as if there were hope of life; no, the hopelessness is that there is not even the ultimate hope, death. When death is the greatest danger, we hope for life; but when we learn to know the even greater danger, we hope for death. When the danger is so great that death becomes the hope, then despair is the hopelessness of not even being able to die.”32 Despair is the result of an inability to find respite in death, of a confrontation with eternity. One need not have Kierkegaard’s belief in eternal life to recognize the nature of his insight here. He sees that the focus on death actually causes us to miss the real existential bind that ensnares us as subjects. We must find a reason to act, a passion to drive us, and no reason is given to us by the universe.

The eternal is the realm in which one must find a **reason for acting in the world**. Many of our actions have a motivation in finite exigencies—like the desire for food. But we need a reason to continue living and not simply to abandon ourselves to death. This is where we encounter the eternal. In eternity everything is possible, and nothing makes a lasting difference because no temporal constraints exist. There is an unlimited time to explore all alternatives. This eternity is constantly present for us when we confront the decision of our existence. We face the burden of having to act and to posit the **cause of our own act**. In this act, we take part in the true infinite with no assistance from external sources. But capitalism relieves us of this burden of the true infinite by translating the **existential problem into a question of survival**.33

### Link – East Asia Competition

#### Their anxiety over a “rising East Asia” who will “overtake the economy” is born of a psychic shift that relegates East Asia as a racial aberration in a violent nostalgic fantasy

Sioh 18 (Maureen Sioh PhD – Associate Professor in Global Asian Studies at DePaul University , “Psychoanalysis and the GlObal”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 50-52, 1 September 2018, MG)

Insurgent East Asia

Anxiety about the West, as represented by **the United States being “defeated” by an economically insurgent East Asia**, was on display in the 2016 American presidential election, most prominently in Donald Trump’s “Make America Great Again” campaign slogan. But anxieties about the West’s position of preeminence have been voiced less bombastically with regard to East Asia (Panitch 2014; Hutton 2013; Cox 2012; Jacques 2009). These anxieties have **pivoted around economic gains**, because in the contemporary world the ultimate assertion of superiority lies in the **financial arena**. Financial prestige, long the privilege of the West, was now threatened by the competitor’s success. Hutton (2013) asserts that even an emergent East Asia is the creation of Western values so that emergent East Asia is conceptualized as an extension of the West. Recalling Kohut’s (1973, 637–38) description of the selfobject as inseparable from the self, we can say that **East Asia is perceived as the selfobject of the West**. Therefore, even East Asian success could be considered an approving mirror of the West. While much of contemporary Western anxiety has to do with the rise of China, it has roots in the fears of Japanese competition in the 1980s and the bloc of Asian countries—South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, and to a lesser extent Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand—in the 1990s. The significance of East Asian financial success lay in two factors: it proved that Japan was not a **racial aberration** in economic development, and it represented an indigenous development model acceptable to the West, as opposed to the socialist-inflected Latin American import-substitution model. In the early 1990s, the World Bank described the East Asian economies as a miracle (Birdsall et al. 1993). Until the 1997–98 financial crisis, they were the poster children, to invoke Bollas, for the “militant ideology” (2011, 168) of the neoliberal policies promoted by the IMF and World Bank that were supposed to create a safe and prosperous future.

So why was a financial crisis tacitly reframed in the international, and largely Western, media within the cultural and psychological parameters of a debate on Asian values? While Western opprobrium targeted all the governments affected by the crisis, Malaysia was especially singled out for its defiance of the IMF in imposing currency controls. Originally a controversial decision, it is now accepted that the move stabilized the Malaysian economy (Kaplan and Rodrik 2001; IMF 2012). But even in 1998 it was accepted that Malaysia’s ability to defy the international financial community rested on its healthy reserve-to-debt ratio (Jomo 2001, 41). This would have long-term consequences in the buildup of foreign reserves by all East Asian states. In January 2016 the figure for the affected East Asian states, as well as Japan and China, came up to over $5.9 trillion (Trading Economics 2017). In the immediate aftermath of the crisis, an IMF-led Western intervention forced countries that appealed for external help to restructure their economies, resulting in massive local social unrest. Instead, by overlooking the material hardship and social upheaval, I argue that the Western media reframed the financial crisis as a **referendum on Asian values**. Finance, race, and human worth became yoked together in a relationship of logical equivalence (see chapter 1).

Before the financial crisis in 1997, poverty in Malaysia was down to 8 percent from 60 percent in 1970 (Jayasankaran and Hiebert 1997). By the mid-1990s GDP growth was averaging 9 percent a year (Fox 1998, 100). The Financial Post described the Malaysian model of privatization as one of the most successful in the world (Wheeler 1995, 29). On the left of the political spectrum, Mahmood Mamdani (2008) held up Malaysian development to African countries as a model of the material benefits and dignity that development could deliver. Globalization as the savior of the developing world was primarily a trope referring to East Asian countries. Their success offered hope to the rest of world that exiting poverty was possible through their own agency (Sheridan 1997, xiii; Ghesquire 2007). Malaysia, like the other East Asian economies, was admired for its pro-capital, pro-West policies (Khanna 2008, 267). But even before the crisis, Malaysia and the other East Asian economies were rebelling against the model student image of one who has succeeded by simply copying the West (Inoue 1999, 39). This rebellion manifested itself in the promotion of the developmental state, itself implying a socialistic turn toward state intervention. More subtly, **the conflation of race and nation-state, a legacy of colonialism**, meant that the promotion of the role of the state set the stage for arguing that culture and race played a role in success. This indirect appeal became overt through the promotion of Asian values. Freud (1959, 1962, 2004) would have noted the significance of race as the libidinal tie that was strengthened through competition with the West in globalization.

Malaysia became a focal point for Western critics because of its combative prime minister at the time, Mahathir Mohammad. As the Guardian described him, “Nobody has symbolized East Asia’s confidence in itself and its ability to take on the world single-handedly more than the [now former] Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohammad” (Brummer 1997, 19). What exactly was Mahathir taking on? Development, after all, as Kasese-Hara (2004, 547) notes, is construed as an indicator of racial potential for progress. In asserting that the economic improvement of East Asian national economies was a product of controversial Asian values, proponents implicitly argued that race and culture, the traits that condemned East Asians to official and unofficial colonization, were now the basis of Asian success. A number of Asian commentators observed that Western unease over this Asian success is rooted in **Western anxiety over the region’s rise** from former colonies to competitors (Lim, Ho, and Yee 1998; Inoue 1999; Mahbubani 2002). Admittedly, the position of East Asia in the colony role precludes official colonized status—colony is used here to indicate a differential power relationship. If in Kohut’s (1973, 637–38, 644) framework, the former colonies are selfobjects meant to provide an approving mirror to the West, then the success of the East Asians is now construed as an **offense to the West**. Mahathir’s pronouncements convey the new confidence that emerged in the region at the time of record-breaking economic growth. The Asian values controversy signaled a **psychic shift** that got underway in the 1980s with Japan and was continued by the other East Asian countries and now China.

### Link – Economic Competition

#### **Fears of “economic competition” are born out of narcissistic injury that only culminates in aggression**

Sioh 18 (Maureen Sioh PhD – Associate Professor in Global Asian Studies at DePaul University , “Psychoanalysis and the GlObal”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 47-50, 1 September 2018, MG)

Aggression

Freud (1962, 39) suggests that people will repress their aggression and anxiety sufficiently to **bind themselves to some people**, as long as there are others left to be the recipients of their aggression. Just as the fear of others binds a group, complicity in inflicting aggression onto an **external scapegoat** binds the perpetrators together. Freud (1962, 23) suggested that the oppression of others is a precondition of a group’s satisfaction and that the acceptable form of aggression through mastery of others in competition and ranking is pleasurable. Aggression is a means to achieving both security and pleasure. Peter Gay (1994, 4–5) describes aggression as ranging from confident self-advertisement to sadistic torture. Verbal aggression is less fatal but still unmistakably aggressive, as is flaunting one’s possessions, overcoming a rival in love, making social comparisons, and winning competitions or prizes in sports, politics, trade, art, and literature. Gay (1994, 6) notes that the kind of aggressiveness a culture rewards depends on the times and circumstances, but the point is everyone recognizes aggression because it leaves casualties in its wake. In our time, the obvious acceptable place for aggression and the ultimate assertion of superiority **lies in the financial arena**. An act of aggression is transactive (Gay 1994, 6–7). It must be recognized by both sides in order for the effect to register, and so must have culturally commensurable meaning. Economic globalization has meant that signals of economic contests are now widely culturally commensurable.

Freud postulated that aggression was a “**drive to mastery**” (1962, 8) and therefore linked to libido, but he also thought that aggression was subsumed within the death instinct. Gay suggests that aggression rises out of a “capacity to be aggressive which works itself out in a wide variety of circumstances. It is mobilized by whatever is experienced as unpleasurable, whether external pressures or internal impulses” (1994, 536). For my purposes, I argue that earlier historical manifestations of colonial or imperial aggression are now acceptably channeled into finance. Ironically, for postcolonial states in globalization, econ**omic space is the safe space that they try to** create. When Freud (1959, 18, 27) suggests that prestige is a sort of domination exercised over us by an individual but is lost in the event of failure or, similarly, by a competitor’s success, it is easy to understand why the proposition of Asian values as a cultural basis for their economic success came to be experienced as a **narcissistic injury by the West**. Within the hegemonic framework of global capitalism and its antecedents in colonialism, the East Asian assertion of an indigenous basis for success was culturally commensurable as a challenge to the old order.

Narcissistic Injury and Rage

Understanding the Asian values discourse in the wake of the financial crisis requires an understanding of why it evoked such an emotional response. Much of the contemporary scholarly work applying psychoanalysis to the role of group identity in international aggression focuses solely on nationalism and military conflicts (see Rachjman 1995; Rose 2004, 2005, 2007). Yet the most common contemporary deployment of aggression in the international arena lies in finance. Old patterns of hegemonic identity are being superseded by those that are finance-oriented because **that is where the stakes are** highest. I argue that because the prestige of a group’s identity is so closely associated with its **economic status**, a change in that status is experienced **as a narcissistic injury**. This section expands on the related concepts of narcissistic injury and rage developed by Heinz Kohut (1973) to explain how the antagonistic Asian values debate was played out.

Kohut (1973) reconceptualizes narcissism using the term “selfobject” to refer to any narcissistic experience in which the other is in the service of the self, the latter being defined as a structure that is required for an individual’s sense of psychic coherence and well-being. He sees a selfobject as inseparable from the self so that the other person’s functions are related to the self (Kohut 1973, 637–38). The selfobject offers support for the vulnerable self through an approving mirroring response, which Kohut (1973, 628) envisions as forming the basis for realistic self-esteem. But he argues that if the subject’s prior experience has not allowed for transformation of the narcissistic cathexis with the grandiose self into a healthy self-esteem, then deprived of an “approving mirroring response” (Kohut 1973, 628) from the selfobject, the self will experience a narcissistic injury and respond with extreme rage. In this chapter, I extend the concepts of self and selfobjects to encompass groups.

Bollas (2011, 81) suggests that under intense emotional pressure such as envy or anxiety, an individual or group’s negative traits will be projected externally to coalesce into allegories or stereotypes of other groups. Likewise, Kohut proposes that defensive responses, of which narcissistic rage is an extreme version, are activated because the recalcitrant selfobject is not seen as an autonomous source but as a “flaw in a narcissistically perceived reality” (1973, 644; emphasis in original), over which the narcissistically vulnerable self had expected to exercise control. Thus, the selfobject’s independence or difference is experienced as offensive. This is the **crux of Western behavior to challenges**, real or perceived, to its authority under globalization. Given that Kohut (1973, 643–45) posits that a narcissist must exert absolute control over his or her environment and demand unconditional availability of the approving mirroring for the maintenance of self-esteem, the narcissist must grind down the opponent who dares to outshine him or her because this contradicts the self-image of the grandiose self. **Global economic competitions create intense anxiety even among the winners**, and envy among those who perceive themselves as losers, even if this loss is only relative (see introduction and chapter 5). When the only identity that counts is an economic one, and this is coupled with a sense of historically based racial entitlement, then by the above logic, the success of rivals becomes a defeat of the self and is experienced as narcissistic injury. The success of the East Asian emerging economies destroyed the sense of unconditional approval of Western social organization, especially when the East Asian states put forth a cultural and racial basis (Asian values) for their economic success. Their subsequent stumbling and weakness during the financial crisis then seemed to invite the moralistic punitiveness of the IMF and Western commentators. It is in this context that I argue that the vaunting of Asian values as the cultural or racial basis of East Asian economic success became a flashpoint for the economically punitive austerity programs that were imposed on East Asian countries, as well as for gloating by Western pundits in the wake of the financial crisis.

Humiliation

Kohut (1973, 642) argues that we can recognize that narcissistic rage is involved when an individual is **excessively preoccupied with a situation involving other people**, which he attributes to the narcissistic individual’s inability to recognize others as independent subjects. We see this in the West’s response to the Asian financial crisis, which focused on denigrating the cultural basis for East Asian success. Kohut (1973, 637–38) suggests that narcissistic rage occupies a specific position in the spectrum defined by an obsession for revenge because of an archaic fixation. I suggest Kohut is making the point that narcissistic rage is as much a reaction to a past relation rather than the one ostensibly at hand, and in the case of the Asian values discourse, the rage was a function of a historic sense of Western entitlement. Bollas (2011, 176) goes on to hypothesize that extreme reactions occur as part of an unconscious restructuring of past trauma in which the subject puts others through an equivalent, if different, trauma. In this logic, aggressive narcissists identify only with those aspects of their identity that provide them with admiration and a sense of superiority (Bollas 2011, 82). Western contempt and ridicule of Asian values is a reflection of narcissistic rage at the economic challenge, but it could also be a function of the West projecting its **own anxieties of the social dislocation** inherent in the rising inequality in their home countries that accompanied the transition from a manufacturing to service economy from the 1970s onward. And while both Western and East Asian responses during the crisis originate in defensiveness, the West is defensive and outraged at the perception that its culturally privileged position has been assailed, whereas East Asian outrage is driven by fear or anxiety at their relative lack of power in economic globalization. In any case, the East Asian response to the humiliating economic policies imposed on them in the aftermath of the financial crisis was tempered by their inability to retaliate.

For Bollas (2011, 83–87), the shame of narcissistic injury must be projected elsewhere in the “**circuit of depersonalization**” (87) in which a psychopathic subject dehumanizes his or her victims in the name of a militant ideology. Here, it is the ideology of neoliberalism that asserts its higher purpose to create a prosperous world through its proponents’ intellectual superiority. Bollas (2011, 168–71) describes a militant ideology as an active process involving seduction, the promise of a false safe space, and the development of a dependent relationship so that the subsequent shock of betrayal becomes even more traumatic. The goal is to cause the victim to lose perspective and induce a traumatic experience, leaving the victim more likely to comply with further victimization (Bollas 2011, 171–73). This process makes sense when it is applied to the promises of financial deregulation in globalization. In globalization, **Western financial institutions present freedom for capital** to developing countries as the solution to their poverty. In the event of asset bubbles, and subsequent unsustainable debt leading to capital flight and a liquidity crisis, the false hope of prosperity is replaced by the imposition of shock therapy in the form of austerity by the very institutions that once promoted the asset bubbles. In tandem with the material betrayal, the trauma is reinforced through a **parallel humiliating discourse that dehumanizes the victim**s. This form of the narcissistic injury is inflicted through the following practices: stereotyping through aggregate group identity, distorting the victims’ views so that they appear less intelligent, and belittling and caricaturing the victims, which can include character assassination of specific individuals (Bollas 2011, 88–89). All of these practices were present in the Asian values discourse during the financial crisis in 1997–98 as we shall see later.

### Link – Emancipatory Politics

#### Emancipatory politics work only in theory, not in practice – attaching desire to their politics works to retroactively create the global system and ensure loss

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 42-44, 1 July 2013, MG)

The prevalence of nostalgia has perhaps its most obvious impact in the shaping of contemporary political programs. The entirety of the contemporary right-wing social and cultural agenda has its basis in the nostalgia for a time of plenitude. Nostalgia fuels the demand for school prayer, the **opposition to gay marriage**, the effort to eliminate abortion, the support for the death penalty, and so on. According to contemporary American conservatism, the abandonment of school prayer, for instance, has helped to bring about many of the social ills (teen pregnancy, school violence, incivility, etc.) that plague contemporary American society. Champions of school prayer see the epoch when students prayed in school as time prior to loss.

At this earlier historical moment, subjects enjoyed a direct relation with their privileged object and achieved a perfect satisfaction. We exist in the **aftermath of a fall**, and from the perspective of the fall, we can see the possibilities for **complete satisfaction** in the world we have lost. Similarly, eliminating the threat of gay marriage allows conservatives to imagine a time when marriage itself was a pure institution, a bond that permitted a direct link to one’s object. Within the nostalgia framework that conservatism offers, loss has a place only as a limit to overcome through the return to a nonlacking past. Conservatism cannot admit the notion of a constitutive or necessary loss.

Though right-wing political activity is unthinkable without nostalgia, **emancipatory politics** often succumbs to its power as well. Within certain forms of environmentalism, the alternative medicine campaign, and the **antiglobalization movement**, we can see prominent examples of this. In each case, the leftist political goal — protecting the environment, providing people more health options, **countering global capitalism** — becomes intertwined with the idea of a return to an earlier epoch and to a less alienated way of relating to the world. Implicit in this idea is the image of a nonlacking subjectivity, and this image stains the political goal with the tint of nostalgia.

Those who argue for a return to harmony with nature, for privileging non-Western and homeopathic forms of medicine, and for forsaking global capitalism by supporting only local producers all take up a politics of nostalgia. The idea that we might return to a stable relation with the natural world posits a prior time in which this stability existed, a time lost with the onset of subjectivity. By appealing to the inherent nostalgia of subjects, the forces of emancipation undoubtedly gain adherents. Many people drawn to the idea of “buying local” would not otherwise find common cause with emancipatory projects, for instance. But the long-term cost of this strategy is not worth the supporters that it wins for the emancipatory politics. Though conservatism doesn’t have a monopoly on nostalgia, nostalgia does have an inherently conservative structure to it.

Nostalgia is fundamentally conservative insofar as it works to **obscure the gap within the social order**. It posits the possibility of an order that works without interruption and thus leaves no room for subjectivity itself. The freedom of the subject depends on the imperfection of the social order, its inability to achieve completion or harmony. A political philosophy that represses this failure also inherently represses the opening through which freedom emerges. In effect, the nostalgic subject longs to access a past prior to its subjectivization. To retreat into nostalgia is to flee one’s own freedom. In order to accomplish this and to close the gap within the social order, nostalgic projects necessarily rely on a strong authority figure who promises to reinvigorate the lost past rather than on the freedom of the subject.34 The emancipatory goal placed in a nostalgic appeal **loses touch with the overall emancipatory project** of freeing the subject from its submission to authority figures. What’s more, nostalgia **works only in theory, not in practice**.

Nostalgic appeals always create disappointment in the last instance. We long for a time before loss, but this time only comes into existence with its loss: the birth of subjectivity **retroactively creates the object that it loses**. The politics of nostalgia involves never actually following through on the nostalgic promise, as contemporary conservatism’s social politics makes evident. In contrast to their vigorous pursuit of a conservative economic program, Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush (the two great proponents of a politics of nostalgia in the last fifty years) did not actively try to enact their social agenda. For Reagan and Bush, the dream of a return has a political effectiveness that an actual return could not have. If school prayer again became the norm in public classrooms, the nonexistence of the former wholeness would be revealed. If the threat of the gay lifestyle were really eliminated, the banality of heterosexual marriage would once again show itself. Nostalgia remains a useful political tool only insofar as one doesn’t effectuate it. **This is the limit of its power.**

### Link – Environment

#### Voting aff is a dangerous palliative that gives us the illusion of control by affirming our mastery over nature

Dodds 12 [Joseph, MPhil, Psychoanalytic Studies, Sheffield University, UK, MA, Psychoanalytic Studies, Sheffield University, UK BSc, Psychology and Neuroscience, Manchester University, UK, Chartered Psychologist (CPsychol) of the British Psychological Society (BPS), and a member of several other professional organizations such as the International Neuropsychoanalysis Society, Psychoanalysis and Ecology at the Edge of Chaos, p. 27]

Why psychoanalysis? On the face of it, it seems frankly irrelevant. Surely it is the basic sciences of geology, ecology, biology, and climatology that we need, combined with various hi-tech engineering? Yes and no. The science informing us of the risks and possible technical solutions has run far ahead of our psychological state. We are not yet at the point emotionally of being able to clearly grasp the threat, and act accordingly. We need to ask why this issue, despite its current prominence, fails to ignite people's motivation for the major changes science tells us is necessary. This concerns not only the 'public' but the academy and the psychoanalytic community. In spite of the fact that Harold Searles was already writing in 1960 that psychoanalysts need to acknowledge the psychological importance of the non-human environment, until very recently his colleagues have almost entirely ignored him.

In this section we explore some of the theories with which we may be able to construct a psychoanalysis of ecology. Fuller elaboration will involve incorporating approaches from the sciences of complexity and ecology, and Deleuze and Guattari's 'geophilosophy' or 'ecosophy', which itself emerged in critical dialogue with psychoanalysis and complexity theory. However, we first need to explore the ecological potential within psychoanalysis itself, as without the latter's methods and theories for unmasking hidden motivations and phantasies, this investigation will not be able to proceed.

Renee Lertzman (2008), one of the first psychoanalytically informed social scientists to engage with the ecological crisis, describes a common surreal aspect of our everyday responses to 'eco-anxiety', the experience of flipping through a newspaper and being suddenly confronted with:

the stop-dead-in-your-tracks, bone-chilling kind of ecological travesties taking place around our planet today ... declining honey bees, melting glaciers, plastics in the sea, or the rate of coal plants being built in China each second. But how many of us actually do stop dead in our tracks? Have we become numb? ... if so, how can we become more awake and engaged to what is happening?

Environmental campaigners have become increasingly frustrated and pessimistic. Even as their messages spread further and further, and as scientists unite around their core concerns, there is an alarming gap between increasingly firm evidence and public response. The fact that oil companies donate millions to climate 'sceptic' groups doesn't help (Vidal 2010). Nor does the fact that eight European companies which are together responsible for 5-10 per cent of the emissions covered in the EU emissions trading system (Bayet, BASF, BP, GDF Suez, ArcelorMittal, Lafarge, E.ON, and Solvay) gave $306,100 to senatorial candidates in the 2010 United States midterm elections who either outright deny climate change ($107,200) or pledge they will block all climate change legislation ($240,200), with the most flagrant deniers getting the most funds (Goldenberg 2010; Climate Action Network 2010). These are the same companies that campaign against EU targets of 30 per cent reductions in emissions using current inaction in the United States as a justification, while claiming their official policy is that climate change is a major threat and they are committed to doing all they can to help in the common cause of dealing with the danger (for the full report see Climate Action Network 2010).

Recent opinion polls show climate scepticism is on the rise in the UK as well. In February 2010 a BBC-commissioned poll by Populus (BBC 2010a, 2010b) of 1,001 adults found that 25 per cent didn't think global warming was happening, a rise of 8 per cent since a similar poll in November 2009. Belief that climate change was real fell from 83 per cent to 75 per cent, while only 26 per cent believed climate change was established as largely man-made compared with 41 per cent in November. A third of those agreeing climate change was real felt consequences had been exaggerated (up from a fifth) while the number of those who felt risks had been understated fell from 38 per cent to 25 per cent (see Figure 3). According to Populus director M. Simmonds, 'it is very unusual ... to see such a dramatic shift in opinion in such a short period ... The British public are sceptical about man's contribution to climate change and becoming more so' (BBC 2010a).

Most remarkable here is the discrepancy between public and expert opinion. According to the chief scientific advisor at the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Professor Robert Watson: 'Action is urgently needed ... We need the public to understand that climate change is serious so they will change their habits and help us move towards a low-carbon economy.' Why this shift? Whilst the poll took place with the background of heavy snow and blizzards in the UK, always a convenient backdrop to climate sceptic jokes, the BBC (2010a) article focused on a high-profile story concerning stolen emails alleging scientific malpractice at the University of East Anglia (UEA). While this was a very serious accusation, no mainstream scientific body seriously imagines it changes in any real way the overall science, and yet this is not how the public perceived it.

Subsequently, the UK Parliament's Commons Science and Technology Committee completed its investigation into the case (BBC 2010c). The MPs' committee concluded there was no evidence that UEA's Professor Phil Jones had manipulated data, or tried 'to subvert the peer review process' and that 'his reputation, and that of his climate research unit, remained intact' (BBC

2010c). The report noted that 'it is not standard practice in climate science to publish the raw data and the computer code in academic papers' and that 'much of the data that critics claimed Prof Jones has hidden, was in fact already publicly available' (BBC 2010c) but called strongly for a greater culture of transparency in science. The report concluded that it 'found no reason in this unfortunate episode to challenge the scientific consensus that global warming is happening and is induced by human activity' (BBC 2010c).

This story was followed closely by another in January 2010 when the IPCC admitted a mistake concerning the timetable of Himalayan glacial melting. In such a lengthy report of over 3 000 pages, produced from the combined efforts of the world scientific community on a topic with as many variables as climate change, it is unsurprising some estimates need revising. Undoubtably there will be more revisions in the future, some major. It is important to emphasize that for the world's scientists the overall picture has not been affected, but public perception is completely different, with triumphant claims of proof 'it is all made up'. No doubt many sceptics will use the Parliamentary committee's report as further evidence of an institutional cover-up.

The important psychological point is that people are ready for such events, indeed eager for it - the psychosocial equivalent of a sandpile in a state of self-organized criticality (Palombo 1999; Bak 1994), when a single grain can cause a major avalanche cascading through the whole system. Understanding such subtle shifts, and the often unconscious motivations behind them, is where psychoanalysis perhaps more than any other discipline has a lot to offer. As Lertzman (2008) writes:

What if the core issue is more about how humans respond to anxiety? ... [Environmental problems ... conjure up anxieties that ... we are done for, and nothing can really be done ... To help me understand more, I turn to Freud ... because I have found few others who speak as eloquently, and sensitively about what humans do when faced with anxiety or anxiety-provoking news.

Freud, civilization, nature and the dialectic of the Enlightenment

Is Freud really relevant to understanding our current crisis? While he was very much engaged in relating psychology to social issues, from war to racism, group psychology and the discontents of civilization (Freud 1913a, 1915, 1921, 1927, 1930), he was writing during a period when the possibility that human activities could bring the Earth's ecosystems to the brink of collapse would have been hard to contemplate. Romanticism may have complained about 'unweaving rainbows' and industry's 'dark satanic mills', but by Freud's day this could be seen as Luddite anti-progress talk, especially for those working within the Weltangschung of science and the Enlightenment to which Freud (1933) pinned his psychoanalytic flag. However, much of our current bewildering situation can be understood as rooted in part in a world view that was at its zenith during Freud's day and, as Lertzman (2008) suggests, in our responses to anxiety. In addition, Freud did offer us some crucial reflections on our relationship with nature:

The principle task of civilization, its actual raison d'etre, is to defend us against nature. We all know that in many ways civilization does this fairly well already, and clearly as time goes on it will do it much better. But no one is under the illusion that nature has already been vanquished; and few dare hope that she will ever be entirely subdued to man. (Freud 1927: 51)

Here we can see an interesting ambivalence in Freud's rhetorical style, which perhaps unwittingly captures two crucial aspects of our civilization's relationship to 'Nature' and thus begins to open up a psychoanalytic approach to ecology. First, he depicts a series of binary oppositions typical for his era, and not so different in our own: human versus nature, man versus woman and (more implicitly) order versus chaos. Here we find the classic tropes of the Enlightenment, modernity, patriarchy, industrialism and capitalism, which Jungian ecopsychologist Mary-Jane Rust (2008) calls the myths we live by. The myths she is referring to in particular are the 'myth of progress' and the 'myth of the Fall'. She argues that in order to create a sustainable future, or indeed any future, we need to find other stories, other myths, through which to live our lives, to rethink how we have fallen and what it means to progress. Freud's work suggests that Western culture views civilization as a defence against nature, and against wildness, inner and outer, but as Rust (2008: 5) writes, at 'this critical point in human history we most urgently need a myth to live by which is about living with nature, rather than fighting it.' Thus, according to Rust, we find ourselves ... between stories (Berry 1999), in a transitional space ... of great turbulence, with little to hold onto save the ground of our own experience. Our therapeutic task ... is to understand how these myths still shape our internal worlds, our language, and our defences ... [S]omewhere in the midst of 'sustainability' ... lies an inspiring vision of transformation ... We need to dig deep, to re-read our own myths as well as find inspiration from the stories of others. (ibid.)

The myth of progress enters the climate change debate in calls for geo-engineering and Utopian techno-fixes such as putting thousands of mirrors in space, and in the dismissal of even gentle questioning of current economic models of unlimited growth. We will later look at Harold Searles' (1972) approach to our fascination with technology and its role in the current crisis. Returning to Freud, however, there is, as always, another side, an implicit awareness that the feeling of mastery civilization gives us is in many ways a dangerous illusion. Behind our need for mastery lies our fear and trembling in the face of the awesome power of mother nature.

There are the elements which seem to mock at all human control: the earth, which quakes and is torn apart and buries all human life and its works; water, which deluges and drowns everything in turmoil; storms, which blow everything before them ... With these forces nature rises up against us, majestic, cruel and inexorable; she brings to our mind once more our weakness and helplessness, which we thought to escape through the work of civilization. (Freud 1927: 15-16)

Here is the other side of Freud's writing on the relation between 'Nature' and 'Civilization', with humanity portrayed as a weak and helpless infant in awe and fear of a mighty and terrible mother. The lure and horror of matriarchy lie behind the defensive constructs of patriarchal civilization, just as Klein's paranoid-schizoid fears of fragmentation, engulfment, and annihilation lie behind later castration threats (Hinshelwood 1991).

With each new earthquake or flood, nature erupts into culture -similar to Kristeva's (1982) description of the eruption of the 'semiotic' into the 'symbolic' - and we are thrown back into a state of terror. The 'illusion' in the title of Freud's 1927 essay The Future of an Illusion was meant to refer to how religion arose to deal with these anxieties. However, the structural function of the myth of progress, while undoubtably more successful in terms of practical benefits, can also be included here. In these words of Freud we have already a deep understanding, albeit largely implicit, of our own current crisis: a relationship to nature based on a master-slave system of absolute binaries, and an attempt to maintain an illusory autonomy and control in the face of chaos.

There is often a tension in Freud, between the celebration of Enlightenment values found in works such as The Future of an Illusion (1927) and the more Romantic Freud who won the Goethe prize and constantly emphasized the elements Enlightenment rationality leaves out such as jokes, dreams, slips and psychological symptoms. Thus, as well as being a perfect example of the Enlightenment with its call to make the unconscious conscious and give the 'rational' ego greater power over the wilds of the id, psychoanalysis also provides a serious challenge to this way of thinking. There will always be something beyond our control. We are not, and never can be, masters in our own house, and the core of who we are is irrational, and often frightening. Marcuse (1998) touched on a similar tension when declaring Freud's (1930) Civilization and Its Discontents both the most radical critique of Western culture and its most trenchant defence. Psychoanalysis, as always, is exquisitely ambivalent.

Ultimately, for Freud, both the natural world and our inner nature are untamable and the most we can hope for are temporary, fragile, anxious compromises between competing forces (Winter & Koger 2004). The chaos of nature we defend against is also the chaos of our inner nature, the wildness in the depths of our psyche. Civilization does not only domesticate livestock but also humanity itself (Freud & Einstein 1933: 214). However, attempts to eliminate the risk have in many ways dangerously backfired, comparable to the ways that the historical programmes aiming to eliminate forest fires in the United States have led to far bigger and more uncontrollable fires taking the place of previously smaller and more manageable ones (Diamond 2006: 43-47).

The control promised by the Enlightenment, the power of the intellect to overcome chaos (environmental and emotional), is therefore at least partly a defensive and at times dangerous illusion. In our age of anxiety, with the destruction of civilization threatened by nuclear holocaust, ecosystemic collapse, bioweapons and dirty bombs, Freud's warning is more relevant than ever:

Humans\* have gained control over the forces of nature to such an extent that with their help they would have no difficulty in exterminating one another to the last man ... hence comes a large part of their current unrest, their unhappiness and their mood of anxiety. (Freud 1930: 135)

Freud's binaries 'masculine/Enlightenment/control/autonomy' versus 'feminine/nature/chaos/dependency' also lead us to consider what Gregory Bateson (2000: 95) called the 'bipolar characteristic' of Western thought, which even tries 'to impose a binary pattern upon phenomena which are not dual in nature: youth versus age, labor versus capital, mind versus matter - and, in general, lack[s] the organizational devices for handling triangular systems/ In such a culture, as with the child struggling to come to terms with the Oedipal situation, 'any "third" party is always regarded ... as a threat' (ibid.).

Deleuze and Guattari describe such dualistic forms of thinking using the ecological metaphor of the tree with its fork-branch patterns (although they would not use the term metaphor): 'Arborescent systems are hierarchical systems with centers of signifiance and subjectification ... an element only receives information from a higher unit, and only receives a subjective affection along preestablished paths' (Deleuze & Guattari 2003a: 16). However, Freud's 'arborescent' system of binaries can also show us the way out, capturing the psychological bind we are now in. As Deleuze and Guattari (2003a: 277) write: 'The only way to get outside the dualisms is ... to pass between, the intermezzo.' Deconstructing these dualisms allows us to think about how our destructive urge to dominate and control is connected to our fear of acknowledging dependency on this largest of 'holding environments', the ultimate 'environment mother' (Winnicott 1999,1987).

#### These pathologies distort not only how we respond to crisis but also why and to which crises – as such, your primary role is to investigate the aff’s psychological investment in technomangerialism is an exercise in reprogramming our position in a non-linear and inevitably chaotic world.

Dodds 12 [Joseph, MPhil, Psychoanalytic Studies, Sheffield University, UK, MA, Psychoanalytic Studies, Sheffield University, UK BSc, Psychology and Neuroscience, Manchester University, UK, Chartered Psychologist (CPsychol) of the British Psychological Society (BPS), and a member of several other professional organizations such as the International Neuropsychoanalysis Society, Psychoanalysis and Ecology at the Edge of Chaos, p. 198]

The metaphor of an acrobat on a high wire referred to by Bateson (2000: 506) is particularly apt for us now. The acrobat, in order not to fall, requires maximum freedom to 'move from one position of instability to another.' This is the paradox of order and disorder that we discussed in Chapter 11. In our current ecological crisis we must face the possibility that achieving the freedom and flexibility that we need to survive requires a fundamental re-examination of many of the basic coordinates of our lives, and some of our most cherished theories. In analyzing the rise and fall of past civilizations, we find that a 'new technology for the exploitation of nature or a new technique for the exploitation of other men ... gives elbow room or flexibility' but that 'the using up of that flexibility is death' (Bateson 2000: 503).

Like the patient stuck on a local optima that we discussed in Chapter 12, unable or unwilling to cross the threshold to a more adaptive peak, entire species, and civilizations, have in the past found themselves in dangerous dead ends and unable to change. These dead ends include those within the ecology of mind, ways of thinking and being that become pathological if they fail to evolve along with the constantly shifting relations in the constitution of natural and social ecosystems. Ecopsychoanalysis, which draws on the tools and ideas of nonlinear science, understands that our world is governed by nonlinear dynamics, to the extent that the prediction and control promised by Enlightenment rationality will always remain to some degree illusory. Instead, we need to engage with the creativity of the Earth, and follow the lines of flight we uncover, exploring 'the potential for self-organization inherent in even the humblest forms of matter-energy' (DeLanda 2005:273).

Our species has experienced such severe existential threats before. One of the most extreme examples was an evolutionary bottleneck which molecular biology shows us occurred approximately 70,000 years ago, when the human species was down to the last few thousand individuals or even less. Geological evidence suggests that this near extinction may have been linked to the Toba supervolcano in Indonesia, whose eruption triggered sudden climate change with major environmental impacts (Dawkins 2004). We do not know how we emerged from that particular crisis, or how close we may have come to extinction at various other times in our history.

We might reflect on these experiences as applying to the whole species an idea that Winnicott (1974: 104) once discussed in terms of the fear of breakdown in individual psychoanalysis. For Winnicott, this fear refers to a breakdown that has already occurred, but it was a catastrophe which took place before there was yet a subject to folly experience it with a reflective consciousness. At the risk of anthropocentrism, we might do well to consider Dennett's (2003: 267) point that in many ways we do occupy a unique position in the history of the Earth, as 'wherever lineages found themselves on local peaks of the adaptive landscape, their members had no way of so much as wondering whether or not there might be higher, better summits on the far side of this valley or that.'

Despite all the defensive reasons to not know which we explored in Chapters 4-7. we are, to some extent at least, becoming conscious of the enormity of the danger which confronts us. Today we are forced to think in these complex terms, to wonder about other valleys and other peaks on the plane of immanence, our virtual realm of possibility, to find a path through the current deadlock. As we saw in Part I of this book, these are difficult times. As Bateson (2000: 495) writes, the 'massive aggregation of threats to (hu)man(kind) and his ecological systems arises out of errors in our habits of thought at deep and partly unconscious levels.'

The contribution of psychoanalysis is precisely to help us to overcome such errors through investigating their unconscious roots. Ecopsychoanalysis recognizes the need for a radical questioning of our theories, whether psychoanalytic, philosophical, scientific or political, and the corresponding ways of living individually and collectively that they make possible and reflect. However, it does so through a respectful engagement with the best that our various traditions have to offer, entering into uncanny new symbioses, making these disciplines strange to themselves not in order to destroy them but to make them more vital and alive.

Despite the gravity of our situation, there are 'patches of sanity still surviving in the world' (Bateson 2000: 495), ideas in the ecology of mind worth exploring, helping us to construct a new alpha function we can only hope is capable of dreaming at the precipice. This book has sought to uncover what some of the components of this might be, focusing in particular on the constructive synergy between psychoanalysis, complexity theory, ecology, and the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari. Ecopsychoanalysis wonders whether it is precisely in the very severity of the desperate ecological situation we face that a great opportunity lies for re-imagining the human, our societies, and our place in the world. It is in the ecopsychological spirit of nurturing hope while facing despair that this book was written.

However, there is no 'big Other' (Zizek 2007) to guarantee our success, or even our future existence. In a chaotic world without certainty, ecopsychoanalysis can turn to the experimental pragmatics of Deleuze and Guattari (2003a: 161): 'Lodge yourself on a stratum, experiment with the opportunities it offers ... find potential movements of deterritorialization, possible lines of flight, experience them, produce flow conjunctions here and there, try out continuums of intensities segment by segment, have a small plot of new land at all times.'

Assumptions according to which we have long lived our lives collapse as we begin to feel the disturbing effects of the hyperobject of climate change on the ecology of mind. Ecopsychoanalysis itself can be viewed as a hyperobject in that it does not yet fully exist. It should not be seen as an end state but a process of becoming, a work in progress, a meshwork emerging at the interstices of the three ecologies, and the elaboration of an alpha function that is able to think and dwell in our new uncanny home. As Bateson (2000: 512) writes, 'we are not outside the ecology for which we plan - we are always and inevitably a part of it. Herein lies the charm and the terror of ecology.' Ecopsychoanalysis can never occupy an outside from which to explore and engage with the new strange ecology(s), but is always already extimate with it (Lacan 1992: 139).

For all its chaos, because of all its chaos, the world is still a place of wonder, and we can only hope that we find ways of staying in it at least a little while longer. The nonlinearity and chaos of nature, and the forms of thinking required to sustain our relationship to it beyond the limited horizons of our experience, are both frightening and liberating. Yet, despite the anxiety, guilt and terror that climate change forces us to face, this moment of crisis can also offer us an opportunity for a more open vision of ourselves, as subjects, as societies, and as a species among the interconnected life systems of the Earth.

### Link – Environmentalism

#### Palpating a fantasy of Green Ideology is a form of disavowal and half-knowing where we internalize the true inevitable loss inherent in ecological crisis in exchange for submission to the global and psychic pain

Fletcher 18 (Robert Fletcher – Environmental Anthropologist and work in the Sociology of Development and Change group at Wageningen University in the Netherlands , “Psychoanalysis and the GlObal”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 65-67, 1 September 2018, MG)

Psychoanalysis and the Environment

From Joseph Mishan’s (1996) formative “First Thoughts” on the relationship between psychoanalysis and environmentalism, consideration of the connection has progressed slowly but steadily, producing a small yet insightful stream of academic literature. Stavrakakis draws on Lacan to describe a “Green ideology” aiming “to refound and recreate the political, social and economic foundations of western societies on the basis of a political project that is constructed around a **certain conception of nature**” (1997a, 260). He views this ideology as symptomatic of the “limits to growth and economic expansion, limits imposed **by the Real of nature**” (Stavrakakis 1997b, 124), evidenced by the **environmental crises giving rise to Green ideology itself**. Meanwhile, Swyngedouw (2011) references Žižek (1992) to describe environmentalism as the “**new opium for the masses**” in its tendency to obscure the fundamentally political nature of ecological damage in positing purely technocratic solutions for these problems. Paul Robbins and Sarah Moore (2013) diagnose a growing “ecological anxiety disorder” manifest, for instance, in scientific debate concerning the merits of novel ecological systems. Building on all of this, elsewhere I have described how neoliberal environmental discourse **resorts to fantasy to conceal the gap between its lofty promise and meager results in practice** (Fletcher 2013a, b, 2014) as well as the way overpopulation serves as a scapegoat for the failure of sustainable development policies (Fletcher, Breitling, and Puleo 2014).

Increasingly, this literature has come to focus on **climate change in particular**. Hence, Swyngedouw (e.g., 2010, 2015) describes mainstream responses to climate change, in the form of carbon markets and related mechanisms, as a kind of “post-politics” that offers the fantasy of a purely technical fix for what are in reality deeply political issues demanding dramatic socioeconomic transformation. Mark Davidson analyzes mounting discussion of “sustainable cities” as a similar fantasy offering the (im)possibility of “continued economic growth without necessary reductions in carbon emissions” (2012, 14). Building on this, Healy (2014) describes the fossil fuel dependency propelling global warming as a form of “**addiction**,” contending that this is sustained by a capitalist “economy of enjoyment” that lures subjects into deep attachment to an unsustainable society of which global warming constitutes a key symptom.

More ambitiously, Sally Weintrobe (2013a) has assembled a collection of psychoanalysts and others to explore the psychic mechanisms inhibiting effective climate change response. The key concept in this collection is, as one might expect, “**denial**.” While denial has been a frequent topic in critique of climate change politics, most centrally with respect to efforts on the part of oil producers and others to impede or discredit scientific evidence affirming the problem (see, e.g., Oreskes and Conway 2011; Healy 2014), psychoanalysts focus on the ways in which particular subjects may impede their own awareness of events. Weintrobe (2013b) thus distinguishes three forms of denial. Denialism comprises “campaigns of misinformation about climate change, funded by commercial and ideological interests” (Weintrobe 2013b, 7), such as the ultraconservative Heartland Institute (Healy 2014). Negation “involves saying that something that is, is not” (Weintrobe 2013b, 7), as in efforts to directly refute the overwhelming scientific evidence documenting global warming. A third form of denial, disavowal, is more insidious, in that “reality is more accepted, but its significance is minimized” (Weintrobe 2013b, 7). Phrased differently, disavowal is a **simultaneous admission and denial**, or a state of “half-knowing,” that operates according to the formula “**I know very well, but still** . . .” (Žižek 1989, 12). As a result, Weintrobe asserts, disavowal “is a more serious and intractable form of denial,” for “while negation says no to the truth, it does not distort the truth. Disavowal, by contrast, can be highly organized at an unconscious level and can become entrenched. It distorts the truth in a **variety of artful ways.** Disavowal can lead us further and further away from accepting the reality of climate change. This is because the more reality is systematically avoided through making it insignificant or through distortion, the more anxiety builds up unconsciously, and the greater is the need to defend with further disavowal” (2013b, 7).

Such disavowal commonly manifests as perversion, a dysfunctional state involving a “**turning away from the truth**” (Layton 2010, 209) as “a way of not coming to terms with loss” (Hoggett 2013, 59; see also chapter 12 in this volume). In the case of climate change, Paul Hoggett thus asserts, “The majority of us in the West ‘**know’** the facts, but we turn away from what we know” (2013, 60). Or more precisely, “We ‘know’ and yet we seem ill-equipped to bear the pain of what we know. In the perverse state of mind reality is not rejected outright but is simultaneously acknowledged and disavowed” (Hoggett 2013, 61). To facilitate this “halfknowing,” rather than outright denying the problem disavowal characteristically “involves an **entrenched ‘quick fix’ approach to problems**” rather than serious inquiry into their complex causes and solutions (Weintrobe 2013b, 8).

This is, as I have suggested earlier and elsewhere (Fletcher 2013b), precisely **how neoliberal environmentalism tends to function**. By disavowing the reality of neoliberal capitalism’s contributions to ecological degradation, this discourse sustains the fantasy that degradation can be redressed through the same mechanisms that perpetuate it if we are only able to “get the market right” by internalizing environmental (and social) costs of production, thereby sending the proper market signals to producers and consumers. Visions of carbon markets and green cities smoothly paving the path to a post-carbon society thus serve as “**palliative fantasies that offer an ‘easy fix’**” for a problem demanding substantial socioeconomic transformation (Healy 2014, 182).

In this respect, neoliberal environmentalism functions in much the same manner as Žižek’s oft-cited example of the chocolate laxative, an actual product that claims to be the antidote to the problem—constipation—that it itself precipitates (Fletcher 2014). When Klein (2014) calls this approach “**magical thinking**,” from a psychoanalytic perspective this indeed can be seen as an extension of an infant’s magical efforts to avoid the reality principle and preserve a sense of omnipotence in the face of increasing awareness of its limited power to control the larger glObe (Mishan 1996).

Mourning and Melancholia

Advocacy of neoliberal environmentalism in order to preserve the status quo of mainstream capitalist society is rendered more paradoxical still by evidence that for a significant segment of the population, including many societal elites, this way of life is far from a satisfying one. Signs of discontent within modern society have been growing for some time (Freud 1962), expressed in all manner of media and cemented by a growing body of research demonstrating a fundamental disconnect between subjective happiness and material wealth beyond a certain minimum threshold (see, e.g., Anielski 2007). In other words, both those denied the benefits of modern society and those receiving them are **rendered unhappy by its excesses**. Why, then, do many remain so attached to a way of life that not only degrades the planet but makes them miserable as well?

For psychoanalysts, attachment is cemented by the jouissance it delivers. While this jouissance, as noted earlier, is rarely unequivocally pleasurable, rather offering pleasure and pain in equal measure, the fleeting pleasure it does provide reinforces commitment via the **fantasy** that the pain can be **overcome** and pure pleasure attained. Breaking attachment therefore requires the loss of both this fantasy of total fulfillment and the limited jouissance actually experienced. Facing this loss entails a process of mourning for the pain of separation and deprivation of pleasure (see chapter 11). To avoid this pain, we tend to retain attachment at all costs, or when forced to endure loss, we turn away from and repress the pain, in which case mourning is replaced by **melancholia**, a state of low-level depression precipitated by the inability to mourn and therefore dissipate the negative emotion (Freud 1925). Melancholia is supported by a variety of defense mechanisms, but one of the most significant is disavowal, which allows subjects to **half-acknowledge their pain** while simultaneously denying its significance. Manifest as perversion, this entails, paradoxically, **a (largely unconscious) “‘choice’ to feel pain rather than suffer the painful truth”** (Layton 2010, 309). One of psychoanalysis’s most important insights is that this dynamic of attachment occurs even with respect to circumstances that subjects consider negative and that they may explicitly claim to want to end. In short, as Žižek asserts in the epigraph, attaining “freedom hurts.”

#### Optimistic calls for an environmental future fail to elude Scylla of Finitude and Charybdis of the Bad Infinite – that ensures their project is inevitably undermined as they retrench the system

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 170-172, 20 September 2016, MG)

One popular alternative in the ecological movement, Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger’s Break Through, tries to counter the narrative of the acceptance of human finitude proffered by earlier environmentalists like Carson and James Lovelock (in The Revenge of Gaia). Against this narrative, which they label “tragic,” they call for an **optimistic ecology**. 26 At the end of their treatise, they ask those concerned about the current ecological crisis to have the courage to **dream about large-scale transformative projects** that would enable humanity to shatter the limits that have hitherto functioned as absolute boundaries for both thought and action.

Nordhaus and Shellenberger’s political program successfully escapes the lure of finitude that ensnares earlier environmentalists like Carson. They will not just erect **another limit that capital will attempt to transcend**. But their success is ultimately also what **undermines this program**. Rather than react against the logic of capitalism like the environmentalists they attack, they freely **adopt** this logic through their insistence on the wealth of possibilities for the future. In this sense, they produce an ecology even more in tune with the demands of capitalism.

An ecological alternative to capitalism must elude the **Scylla of finitude** and the **Charybdis of the bad infinite**, the Scylla of Rachel Carson and the Charybdis of Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger. Doing so requires reconceiving nature not as an external limit to capitalism nor as a site of infinite possibility but as the **internal limit of human society**. The social order requires the natural world in order to function, but the unpredictability of this world constantly throws off social progress. Whether it’s an earthquake in Lisbon, the eruption of Mt. Krakatoa, or widespread death of honeybees, nature has the capacity at any time to throw social productivity out of joint. But this limit—this unpredictability and violence of the natural world—can become an **internal limit of the social order**, the basis for a true infinite.27 By starting with this unpredictability as the limit, social production would orient itself around addressing this limit without any possibility of ever transcending it.

FAKING THE LIMIT

Other attempts to erect barriers to the expansion of capitalism inevitably run into the **same problem that besets environmentalism**. The barriers do not deter but rather inspire the process of commodification. Michal Sandel’s What Money Can’t Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets and Debra Satz’s Why Some Things Should Not Be for Sale both lament this increasing commodification and propose that we set limits on it. Sandel claims that we are now witnessing “the growing reach of money and markets into spheres of life once governed by nonmarket norms.”28 Sandel is particularly upset about the intrusion of advertising into the sports arena, but he also documents the introduction of private inequalities into formerly public domains, like highway lanes in which one can pay extra for the privilege of using. Sandel wants to introduce some finitude into capitalism’s infinite expansion, and he argues for this position on the basis of moral grounds. As he sees it, the claims of the market should not decide every question. Some things are priceless.

But there is really nothing to separate Sandel’s position from that of MasterCard. In its very successful advertising campaign touting the ability of MasterCard to pay for almost everything, the company admits that there are some objects that have no price. Perhaps the most famous of these commercials depicts an elephant assembling a care package for his ailing keeper. The elephant takes a MasterCard to various stores, and as he purchases the supplies, a voiceover announces their cost. The voiceover says, “Hot soup: $4. Cold medicine: $11. Tissues: $1. Blanket: $24. Making it all better: priceless.” Just like Sandel, MasterCard is perfectly willing to grant that some elements of life cannot be figured in terms of the market. The company doesn’t just use the fantasy of a terrain outside the market to sell their product. Capitalism actually **requires** this barrier in order to **constitute itself** as infinitely expanding. What is priceless today, one can be sure, will have a price tomorrow, when something else will miraculously become priceless.

### Link – Europe

#### The fantasy of helping Europe impose “good governance” reflects and supplants racialized notions of responsibility onto ethnicized others

Bousfield 18 (Dan Bousfield - professor in the Political Science department at Western University, “Psychoanalysis and the GlObal”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 38-40, 1 September 2018, MG)

The problem of capital as a unitary force is the substitute of faith for an understanding of the historical and geopolitical trajectory of societal relations. The concept of Europe is **more** than an issue of identity; it is a source of accumulation, profitability, and exclusion. It helps to define just practice, legality, and the terrain of political and social possibility. This stems from an equation of capital as a unitary object with sovereign order, a top-down perspective of control whereby the goal of all power and counterpower consists of people having a unitary identity. Indeed, this understanding of power is tainted by the issue of faith—that the ability to impose order itself is inevitably subjective. As Žižek explains, “Sovereignty always . . . involves the **logic of the universal** and its constitutive exception: the universal and unconditional rule of Law can be sustained only by a sovereign power which reserves for itself the right to proclaim a state of exception, that is, to suspend the rule of law(s) on behalf of the Law itself—if we deprive the Law of the excess that sustains it, we lose the (rule of) Law itself” (2006, 373).

From the Lacanian perspective, fantasy is significant because its existence sustains the semblance of law, sociality, and order (see chapter 3). This is **typified in the concept of Europe**, an identity that both **justifies and retroactively legitimates decisions** made in its defense. Order is maintained by drawing on institutional and contingent power by presenting that power as inevitable and inescapable. Social order is maintained by the transgressions and excesses that are inherent to sustaining order. This is a necessarily irrational and subjective condition of capitalism, which stems from the structural foundation of the state’s authority and introduces a **deeply political and contested core** to any assertion of capitalist power. Order is never simply fully constituted, no more than it is apolitical or ahistorical.

More to the point, Marx’s notion of primitive accumulation addresses this problem directly and continues to argue that struggle is inherent in the most universalized forms of capitalization. As he argues:

Direct extra-economic force is still of course used, but only in exceptional cases. In the ordinary run of things, the worker can be left to the “natural laws of production,” i.e. it is possible to rely on his dependence on capital, which springs from the conditions of production themselves, and is guaranteed in perpetuity by them. It is otherwise during the historical genesis of capitalist production. The rising bourgeoisie needs the power of the state, and uses it to “regulate” wages, i.e. to force them into the limits suitable for making a profit, to lengthen the working day, and to keep the worker himself at his normal level of dependence. This is an essential aspect of so-called primitive accumulation. (1977, 799– 800)

The experience in common between developed capitalist workers and communities facing forms of primitive accumulation is the use of partisan political force to ensure the expansion and deepening of capitalist commodification. This means that all power is **inherently fantastic**: it involves configurations and contingent conjunctures (i.e., the Real) of subjective events that are defined by their inherent subjectivity rather than their moments of abstract similarity. Identification with order as objective represents an effort to avoid the complicated and contested political practices that defy oversimplifications of reason and predictability. Fantasy is important because it undermines claims of objectivity and exposes the desire to sublimate subjectivity. As an extension of this power, politics needs to be seen as inherently fantastic, in that it is capable of projecting a vision of the world that is greater than that which exists. The supplemental belief of society’s members is what renders politics possible; there is a seeming cohesiveness, which is split by their participation in processes of accumulation through which the benefits are distributed by partisan, not abstract, processes. Lacanian fantasy provides a foundation for challenging the myth of a universal capital while thoroughly politicizing the nonrational and psychoanalytic foundations of the contemporary capitalist system. However, unlike Jean-François Lyotard’s (1993) efforts to develop a libidinal economy, here fantasy provides clear insights into both the politicization and the need for counter-politicization of struggles over capital. Psychoanalysis has not been able to develop a libidinal (nonrational) foundation for economic analysis precisely because it has assumed a totally subjectivized response to the objectifying processes of capitalism (with the body as the starting point). Such an approach misses the way in which capital itself is necessarily subjective and therefore politicized from the outset.

There are thus three key aspects of the European response to the crisis and its relationship to faith and fantasy:

1. Analysis of the problem: While responses to the crisis persistently refer to systemic collapse, there is little direct consideration of the systemic issues involved in the crisis. Unlike in the New Deal or even after the 1997 East Asian financial crisis, little effort has been made to change the fundamental practices that led to the problem, and the ECB responses only further deepened the role of the market in Europe. Analysis of the crisis could be said to follow Naomi Klein’s (2007) **shock doctrine thesis** in that it compartmentalized any larger analysis or possible connections with other political issues (such as the failure to establish adequate funding for European migration in these same regions). It also follows Klein’s thesis that the crisis has led to a deepening of **neoliberal privatization efforts and** that this response **reflects historical and racialized notions of responsibility**. When economic crises emerge, existing hierarchies of power are able to hoist responsibility on ethnicized others, so Greek, Spanish, and Portuguese debtors are scrutinized for cultural deficiencies, whereas French and German creditors demand “reasonable” solutions.

2. The role of fantasy: The extent to which the economic crisis was driven by a belief that debt would result in economic failure in new eurozone members sustains a fantasy imposed by core ECB actors. Debt ratios and the need for economic austerity are as much a product of the vision of Europe as they are about underlying economic fundamentals.

3. The role of faith: Despite the early and persistent argument about public interest in ECB discussions on the goals of the intervention, the constitutional separation of the ECB and fiscal policy mechanisms is a persistent and ongoing matter of dogma. The notion of fantasy is important here for the way in which it both remakes the glObal through faith, while simultaneously **occluding the truth of the mechanisms** that expand and contribute to market civilization. The **ability to impose mechanisms with no legal or constitutional basis and yet accept limited responsibility** for bearing the costs of austerity is a project of **historical and geopolitical power**. Greek and even IMF objections to the ECB’s plan were framed as hysterical and unreasonable. The language of mastery in economic policy occludes the lack of an “objectivity” from any actor in the context of the crisis. As Lacan argues, the hysterical subject is one that acts out against the certainty provided by order (what he calls the “Name of the Father”), trying to occupy the position of authority but without the means to do so (see chapter 12). The geopolitical core of the European project utilizes the margins **as the place of failure to impose “good governance**.” The goal of a (psycho)analysis of capital is to question the core assumptions of the current economic system and to provide an alternative framework of interpretation of these events.

### Link – Existential Threats

#### The 1AC’s invocation of apocalyptic imaginations is a product of the death drive – through their repetitive simulation of destruction and salvation from [x impact], we come to enjoy an illusion of control over the presence and absence of the world, a fort-da game with human kind.

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson, PhD is Associate Professor of Public Deliberation and Civic Life and the incoming Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh.; “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”; 2015; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/210598703.pdf]//eleanor

This is the central argument of this dissertation: the fascination and terror of nuclear destruction are essentially connected by their perceived reference to an unmediated Real. Because the Real cannot be perfectly represented, our efforts to mediate it necessarily fail to completely capture reality, but the investments that sustain our repeated efforts guarantee that they continue, for our very beings demand connection with the world and each other. That efforts to capture the Real do not succeed in that aim is not to say that they are not productive, that rich array of theoretical tools in communication studies should be abandoned, or that they are not important. Indeed, these efforts are quite literally our entire world. To square our existence as subjects marked off from the totality of the Real with our desire to experience it without mediation, we come to enjoy the illusion of control over the presence and absence of the world, as in Freud’s fort-da game. In the nuclear context, we repetitively simulate destruction and salvation, worlds without us and ones made present for our habitation. Nuclear imaginations persist after the Cold War and their various tropes have metastasized into new apocalyptic imaginations: environmental destruction, terrorism, pandemics, even zombies. While the Bomb did not inaugurate apocalyptic fear, the tropes and habits developed by its mediation in the intense crucible of the Cold War influence the way these other crises are mediated. More fundamentally, the economy of cathectic investment that animates these cultural assemblages is a product of the death drive—perhaps unfortunately named because it is not a wish for death but a wish for unmediated experience evident only in the constant attempts to mediate that same experience. As that drive has communication at its core, the tools of communication studies are the appropriate means to study it and the various discourses, material practices, and technological artifices that arise from its operation. To do so might reveal much about communication itself, along with the limits and possibilities of how we respond politically to the threat of human extinction. I do not intend to create a complete, self-contained system to schematize the Real. Such a thing is impossible because the Real is by definition that which escapes symbolic assimilation. In suggesting that the Real is the intrusion of the non-human world into the symbolic network of the social, I aim to explore how the perceived limits of communication inform what discourses develop to explain and order nuclear weapons.

### Link – Existential Risk Cooperation

#### Attempting to cooperate over existential risks is a failed project – their desire to impose continuity and order onto chaos is an illusion of mastery.

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson, PhD is Associate Professor of Public Deliberation and Civic Life and the incoming Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh.; “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”; 2015; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/210598703.pdf]//eleanor

This dissertation does not have an answer for Lenin’s most famous question. Nuclear warfare is still a possibility. Every few months a crisis occurs where the Bomb lurks in the shadows—the Korean DMZ, the Kashmir Line of Control, the Spratly Islands, the Kurile Islands, Iran, Israel, the Crimean Peninsula and Donbass. The major change from the Cold War might not be that nuclear war is less probable, or even less likely to wipe out humanity (if that was ever possible), but that it is no longer seen as the only likely threat capable of doing so. Climate change, itself identified and modeled with the help of simulations designed initially for modeling the effects of nuclear war, has become a more prominent issue. The term replaces “global warming” because it ostensibly reflects the Earth’s reality more accurately. It shares much with the Bomb: apocalyptic predictions, survivor and disaster fiction, and the sense of humanity destroying itself through advancements in technology. Both issues have inspired much spilled ink, many conflicts between politicians, news media, and public figures, solemn efforts for international cooperation, and very little effective change. The brief, euphoric atmosphere of global unity as the Warsaw Pact states dissolved did not result in a permanent communion between the Earth’s peoples. But to expect harmony is to believe in the impossibility of an eventual triumph of automaton against the caprice of tuché. The many pledges for global cooperation from Kellogg-Briand to BushGorbachev have all unraveled. Continuity and order in this sense appear to be impossible so far, and in their failures the contingency of the Real emerges. We still attempt to bridge these rifts, but we also seem to enjoy the vertigo that comes with staring into them. We are enjoined to stay on the bridge, to step back from the edge. After all, one single mistake could destroy everything, and the logic of infinite risk is part of the sign of survival that disciplines us when we drift too far towards the forbidden enjoyment of apocalyptic imagination. The command to survive pins the discourse of nuclear weapons together. Survival is such an overwhelmingly powerful site for cathectic investment that it can outshine all others, allowing any risk to be run along the way. The basic foundation of deterrence is the threat of nuclear retaliation, ultimately against cities. The United States, attacked by Russia, would detect incoming weapons and launch its own in return before they could be lost (“use it or lose it,” in Cold War parlance). Of course enemy military power would already be incoming; it would be pointless to destroy empty missile silos, so at least implicitly, the threat is against tens of millions of Russians who might not even know that the war had started. In other words, the basic national strategy of NATO, Russia, China, and other nuclear states relies on planning to commit genocide on an unprecedented scale against people that each of them argues are oppressed by their own government. The rational reason to threaten a nuclear war is to prevent a nuclear war. Thus, nuclear weapons threaten survival in the name of protecting it. Every atrocity and degradation of life that does not threaten human extinction is tolerable to prevent one that does, in a “tyranny of survival” (Callahan 92-100). This tolerance for risk applies equally to disarmament—after all, the chief argument made against it is that it weakens deterrence and allows the “other side” freedom to initiate a nuclear conflict without fear of reprisal. Nuclear strategists treated human survival like poker, but to seek a justification for this policy is closer to Three-card Monte. The investment in survival cannot be rational. Despite the immense importance we attach to it, at bottom, there is nothing but a void. Why survive at all? This might be one of the last truly forbidden questions to which we have failed to generate an answer. If there is some cosmic plan for humanity in the Real, it eludes us. Any assertion of value—that we are intelligent life, that death brings suffering, that we are obliged to future generations, and so forth—simply leads to another “why,” in the kind of game toddlers routinely play. Efforts to avoid nuclear war, both through deterrence and disarmament, rely on supposedly rational means to reach a goal that is fundamentally irrational. One reaction has been “virulent nihilism,” as in Nick Land’s book of that name, or Thomas Liggotti’s declaration that human existence is “malignantly useless” and consciousness a “long con.” Ray Brassier, who wrote an introduction to Ligotti’s book, expresses similar sentiments in Nihil Unbound. There is even a Voluntary Human Extinction Movement (VHEMT, pronounced “vehement”) and a Church of Euthanasia which councils suicide and cannibalism, amongst other solutions. If there is no reason for survival, why bother? Why keep looking for something we will never find? The insights of the death drive seem to lead to a very bleak conclusion: we cannot live in the Real, at least not in a way meaningful to others. We are condemned to seek after an object that we cannot have, endlessly falling short, endlessly cracking the artifice of the Symbolic walls that contain us, and, seeing the light filter through, repairing them rather than tearing them down.

### Link – Globalization

#### Discourses of globalization are an ideological fantasy that acts as cover for the logic of social apartheid that constructs anxiety, fear, and resentment towards the Other

Kapoor 18 (Ilan Kapoor - professor of Critical Development Studies at the Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change at York University in Toronto, “Psychoanalysis and the GlObal”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 20-22, 1 September 2018, MG)

Seen in this light, the discourse of globalization is a kind of **rebranding of imperialism** (Halliday 2002, 77), attempting to obscure its many symptomatic ills (the Real), ranging from inequality and environmental destruction to “illegal” migration and cultural deracination (or, to riff on the “vulgar” sexual overtones of “hole,” globalization discourse is a bid to disavow capital’s unceasing penetration [invagination?] and buggery of the glObe). As Žižek (2008, 102) points out, increasingly we have greater mobility of capital but declining movement of people, with the construction of physical and politico-legal barriers to better and more strictly regulate the flow of people (e.g., “fortress Europe,” walls between Israel and Palestine and the United States and Mexico, gated communities, slum cities). The human dimension of globalization is thus greater immobility. To ensure its smooth functioning, global capitalism requires a **logic of social apartheid**, positioning people as either “inside” or “outside” the formal social economy. It is this other side of globalization—its fissures, gaps, and exclusions —that several chapters in this book make it a point to examine: the “disempowered” women of the global South (chapter 6); the favelas in Recife, Brazil (chapter 11); the dispossessed and unemployed in Egypt who rise up against authoritarianism and austerity (chapter 12); and the enraged white working classes that elect Trump or vote for Brexit (epilogue).

But if globalization is often a code word for economic discipline and social apartheid, it is also a **cover for hostility and war**. The never-ending “war on terrorism” is just a recent manifestation of this, but there are countless other conflicts (e.g., the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, the toppling of the Allende regime in Chile, perhaps even the First World War—if Lenin [1917] is to be believed) that are also the product of the violence, inequality, and imperialism that lie at the core of globalization. In this regard, in chapter 5, Anna Secor focuses on the war in Syria and its production of human suffering and refugees. She reflects on the affective dimensions of conflict and migration—their circuits of anxiety and obscene enjoyment—underlining once again the **libidinal underpinnings of the Real of globalization**. Her intervention strikes a cautionary note for those who **too easily rejoice at the greater exchange**, communication, and border crossing enabled by globalization: despite human suffering and need, the Other—the neighbor, the refugee, the migrant—is not necessarily a welcome friend. Psychoanalytically speaking, the Other can in fact be a **traumatic intruder**, whose sociocultural differences trouble or threaten us (see Žižek 2006). As a consequence, the closeness of the Other brought about by global flows, far from being a cause for celebration, can instead yield to **anxiety, fear, resentment, or even envy** (see the epilogue).

Psychoanalysis, in the way that it is deployed in this book, therefore, is a way of doing an ideology critique of globalization. To the extent that the **discourse of globalization constructs an ideological fantasy**—“the spread of capitalism yields prosperity,” “free trade is beneficial to all,” “globalization brings about greater mobility and mutual understanding”—the role of psychoanalysis is to help uncover the Real (excess, anxiety, hostility) that such a fantasy disavows. Following Žižek (1989), the contributors of this book argue, in fact, that ideology can no longer be prosecuted only through ideas; it increasingly requires **identifying the kernel of enjoyment** on which ideology is founded. In a world where critique is easily blunted or coopted (e.g., green- and pink-washing, the granting of minority civil rights as opposed to broader socioeconomic or land rights), ideology critique must happen not just at the level of the intellect—identifying its blind spots or exclusions—but, more important, at the level of affects—reckoning with its production, maintenance, and circulation of (unconscious) desire. And here, only psychoanalysis can offer us insights.

Finally, a note about the potential for change associated with such a psychoanalytic perspective: because the Real at the core of the global is so **destabilizing**, this very destabilization can be grounds for a transformative politics. Unconscious desire or enjoyment may well bind us to (capitalist) globalization, but its excess and unpredictability may also open up spaces for liberation. This is the import of Fletcher’s and MacDonald’s contributions (chapters 3 and 4, respectively), each arguing for the need to reorient desire toward an alternative global political economy. If our unconscious attachments to the contemporary global order are what help hold it in place, then drawing on other modalities of desire or struggling to turn our jouissance to alternative ideological practices may be **our only way out**. In chapters 11 and 12, Pieter de Vries and I agree with the need for such a reorientation, but we each warn of the perils of so doing: in the context of the local politics of Recife, de Vries pins the disarray of the Left on its having compromised its desire for change in the face of neoliberal market forces, and similarly, in the context of Egypt’s 2011 revolution, I analyze how a radical “hysterical” political movement is seduced by the comfort and stability of the status quo. Thus, a politics of the Real rooted in the difficult struggle to reorient our unconscious desires is promising but never guaranteed; it can **all too easily be diverted by the hegemony of the glObal**.

### Link – Images

#### Images do nothing but preserve the status quo – all the radical usage of it did was create anxiety of the Other

Secor 18 (Anna J. Secor PhD – Profesor of Cultural Geographies at Durham University , “Psychoanalysis and the GlObal”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 96-98, 1 September 2018, MG)

The image as it circulated incited an **eruption of affective politics**—that is, politics framed not by ideology but as a passage a l’acte riding on a surge of feeling. This event manifests what Brian Massumi calls the role of “images as the **conveyers of forces of emergence**, as vehicles for existential potentialization and transfer” (2002, 43). Massumi places the mass circulation of images within the context of an affective theory of late capitalist power, wherein they perform as relays for the transmission of potential that is then inhibited in its emergence as part of the **cultural-political functioning of the media** and connected apparatuses. This idea of the image as the bearer of affective power owes a debt to Walter Benjamin’s “dialectical image,” or the image that emerges in a flash to threaten the **preservation of the status quo** with the instantaneous irruption of the now (2002, 473, N9,7). As an event, the image of the dead child can be seen as just such a blast of now-time—though whether the measures taken in the wake of the explosion dislodge the “continuity of history” is a question to which I will return (Benjamin 2002, 474, N9a,6).

But first, what affect is transmitted in the circulation of the Kurdi image? O’Neill, the journalist quoted earlier, refers to “a self-satisfied feeling of sadness.” But rather than sadness, I will argue that anxiety is the primary affective register of the image within the politicaleconomic context of its circulation. And I wager that my focus on anxiety makes sense, psychoanalytically speaking: for Lacan (2014), anxiety is really the **affect**, the only one that matters. It is that which does not deceive. **Sorrow, anger, joy, shame**—these may be red herrings, leading the conscious subject away from that which it cannot bear. But anxiety is always true.

Second, how does the Kurdi picture solicit anxiety? And what is the topological structure of that anxiety? According to Lacan, if we are anxious, it is because we have been confronted with the **unbearable loss at the root of our desire**. This loss is not the loss of a little boy’s life. Although we see ourselves as being moved by his death, in our effusions we are **not mourning** Alan Kurdi so much as we are being stirred to anxiety. So how, then, does this photograph, in the sociopolitical context of its circulation, make us anxious? In other words, how does it confront us with the Real of human inconsistency, with the fear of the radioactive Otherness that inhabits us?

Manifestly, the image calls forth **expressions of responsibility**, of shared humanity, of an obligation to act. It speaks the language of what Didier Fassin calls “humanitarian reason”: “the vocabulary of suffering, compassion, assistance, and responsibility to protect forms of our political life” (2012, 2). The child is the hook for this humanitarian discourse because, as Miriam Ticktin explains, “The quintessential humanitarian victims bear no responsibility for their suffering. Their innocence is what qualifies them for humanitarian compassion. As innocents, they are pure, without guile, and without intent—they are seemingly outside politics and certainly outside blame for their misfortune. Yet who are these perfect victims? Interestingly, children are usually the face of humanitarianism; they are represented as innocent victims of famine, war, or natural disaster” (2015, para. 4).

Kurdi serves as such an innocent victim of the war in Syria and the international regime that lets refugees die and wash up on the shore like so much “wreckage, dreck, and waste” (Rich 1991, 4). The innocence of the dead body is what gives the photograph its affective charge. The obscenity of India Today’s photograph of Chinese dissident artist Ai Wei Wei posing as Kurdi on the shore of Lesbos arises from the dissonance between the scripted innocence of the dead child and the staged manipulation attributed to the (live) man (fig. 4; Chung 2016).

What follows the “viral” circulation of the Kurdi image—the surge of statements, signatures, money—is a **discharge of political action** that rides the affective wave. Like the student that ejaculates when he hands in his final exam (Lacan 2014, 169), the political rush comes at the height of our anxiety. Why? Because, for Lacan, jouissance protects the imaginary body from encountering the **impasse of the Real** (see chapters 3 and 7). The surge of action—however short-lived or rhetorical—following the international dissemination of the photograph thus appears as a response to the intimate geopolitical anxieties incited by the circulating image. In this response, there is an attempt to annul the anxiety produced by the unbearable pain of lack with actions that serve to **(re)constitute a consistency of meaning** around the image of the dead child.

In the passage to action that follows the Alan Kurdi photo, there is a moment of bliss—a moment when the boundary between us seems to dissolve, when humanity appears as one— followed by the inevitable end of this ecstatic transport and the return to the stability of the known order. The affect of anxiety moves the subject along the trajectory between jouissance and its lethal end (detumescence, castration, or death). Thus, in eroto-politics, short bursts of political action give pleasure in the first moment and then offer us a return to known consistencies in the second moment. The trajectory between these moments assuages our anxiety and deflects our encounter with the traumatic real.

To this point I have been staging my analysis as though there is a dyadic relationship between the image and our desire. Yet I do not think this is an adequate topological structure for either a political-geographic understanding or a psychoanalytic understanding of the anxiety that the image calls forth. It is not just between the image and our lack (our desire) that the anxiety and the jouissance of action take place. The image **does not exist in isolation**; what we are talking about when we talk about the Kurdi photograph is the image and the sociosymbolic-political context of its circulation. The image of Kurdi is thus bound to its affective load—to the anxiety that signals an opening to the impasses of the Real—through a third party, through the Other. Because, although it is true that we become anxious, the image does not primarily aim at our unwinding; what puts us on the hook is the desire of the Other, and thus it is the **Other’s anxiety that is the primary target of the photo**. In other words, the image does not provoke our anxiety directly; it does not itself interrogate us at the point of our desire. But instead it works on us through its call for God’s anxiety—that is, the anxiety of the **Other** whose law it is that recognizes in the child’s corpse a debasement of the human.

### Link – Nukespeak

#### The aff sustains the ‘nuclear priesthood’ of debate – in an attempt to control the absolute contingency of the Real, we repetitively invest in a practice of control over nuclear weapons which becomes a form of violent repetition compulsion that turns the case.

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson, PhD is Associate Professor of Public Deliberation and Civic Life and the incoming Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh.; “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”; 2015; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/210598703.pdf]//eleanor

It is tempting to answer this question as many disarmament advocates are wont to do by citing the folly of ignoring ongoing dangers of nuclear war. Indeed, some persistent nuclear threats which have the potential to kill millions, or perhaps billions, of people were a few things to go quite wrong. Russian-American nuclear tension is rising sharply after recent violence in Ukraine, and there is talk of a “new Cold War.” Nuclear weapons are still maintained in a state of readiness that increases the chance of an “accidental” nuclear war. While safeguards are supposedly in place to reduce the chance that such a catastrophe might occur, there are reasons to doubt their efficacy. It has come to light that the codes for U.S. Permissive Action Links (PALS) were set to a string of zeroes by the Strategic Air Command (SAC) to circumvent the safety measure, while personnel and safety problems continue to plague nuclear forces (Blair 2004; Hoff 2014). Meanwhile, tensions with North Korea, ongoing disputes in South Asia, and the increase in Chinese military might has some Pentagon analysts thinking again about just how fiery the Pacific Rim might become. The argument has been made that the public must be reminded of nuclear horror for only the immediacy of danger conveyed in lurid descriptions of societal destruction can turn us away from our impending doom and encourage us to demand democratic oversight. In communication studies, the peak of nuclear weapons scholarship occurred in the 1980s following Jacques Derrida’s call for “nuclear criticism” and the psychological work of Robert Jay Lifton (Derrida “No Apocalypse;” Lifton). Although not universally present, much of this work exhibits a concern with accountability and democratic responsibility, assuming that it is ultimately more deliberation that will curb the excesses of nuclear warfare. A number of rhetoricians participated in this debate by emphasizing their field’s traditional concern for public deliberation, although often in novel ways. David Cratis Williams attempted to combine Derrida’s approach with the insights of Kenneth Burke (Williams). Barry Brummett relied on Burke’s language of perfection and motives to explain several nuclear debates current in the decade (Brummett). Bryan C. Taylor is one of the few scholars of rhetoric who has continued to write about nuclear weapons (“‘A Hedge Against the Future;’” Nuclear Legacies; “Nuclear Weapons and Communication Studies;” “Our Bruised Arms;” “Radioactive History”). Outside the field of rhetoric, Carol Cohn’s work on the language of defense intellectuals has significant affinities with these pieces (Cohn). William Chaloupka’s book Knowing Nukes also treats the rhetoric of nuclear weapons from a poststructuralist standpoint (Chaloupka). These various works tend to focus on the rhetoric of nuclear weapons as an instrumental concern. They focus primarily on organization for political action, the formation of public attitudes, or the content of specific metaphors, as in Ron Hirschbein’s Massing the Tropes: The Metaphorical Construction of American Nuclear Strategy. More materially-oriented work has also been done to expose elements of the nuclear complex, even as the topic has increasingly been eclipsed by the study of newer technologies (drones, surveillance, and so forth). Jeremy Packer and Joshua Reeves’s work on the SAGE nuclear warning system, for example, compares it to increasingly automated drone warfare to locate a logic of anthropophobia (Packer and Reeves). Peter van Wyck has studied the attempt to communicate the danger of nuclear waste at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (Van Wyck). Rey Chow’s The Age of the World Target uses the atomic bomb to examine a larger epistemological shift in relation to visual mediation, an argument which I will expand in Chapter 3 to note the Bomb’s differential effect on the dynamics of race and class across space. Explicitly or subtly, the implication of much of this work is that criticism should aim at uncovering the logics, artefacts, and ongoing consequences of nuclear war preparations, if not as a solution, then at least as a necessary precursor to one, and therefore resembles the more rhetorically-oriented work of the 1980s and after. Although this work is important and helpful, I will argue that much of it downplays the very attributes that make nuclear war unique. It is unsurprising that scholarship in communication studies tends to focus on the potential for political awareness and change based on language or symbolic action. Rhetorical criticism has roots in the deliberative discourse of ancient Athens and emphasizes the important link between rhetoric and democratic change. To call for more public deliberation or transparency on nuclear war is to treat it like any other issue of national politics that can be studied, debated, and ultimately addressed as rhetoric motivates political action. Indeed, a great deal of media exists to make meaning out of the Bomb, organize its potential use, and describe its political significance. In the Bomb’s inaugural moment at Trinity, however, the immediate reaction was silence, followed by a conviction that language was an inadequate tool to convey the experience. The “unthinkable,” “unspeakable,” and “unsayable” qualities of nuclear war have since been repeatedly affirmed. The Bomb seems to escape symbolization, to gesture towards something beyond mediation. Many commentators struggle to speak at a limit where “language no longer acts as currency,” to borrow from Georges Bataille (Erotism 276). What happens when the crisis in which we must intervene is one defined in part by the failure of the symbolic efficiency of language? How can we communicate a political response when the advent of the Bomb is understood to sunder mediation itself? The awesome power of the Bomb reveals the fundamental inability of language to fully capture the universe beyond human reality, the precariousness of our existence, and the arbitrariness of our beliefs. But with all the horror of the unknown, there is also an unmistakable fascination with the promise of unmediated continuity with reality. My argument here is not that communication inevitably fails, although certainly it often does. Language is not too small for the task. Reality is too big. Sometimes, especially when we attempt to understand something that threatens human extinction, we are confronted with the fact that the universe far outstrips our capacity to understand, that the world we build for ourselves does not exhaust all chance and possibility but sometimes appears to teeter on the edge of the meaningless chaos intimated by a universe in which we are the center only for ourselves. There is an excess that is understood as beyond mediation, but our efforts to communicate continue. The awestruck silence of the Bomb still works on the language that we do produce as we attempt to find the means to describe it. For Bataille, there was continuity—the unmediated world without distinctions imposed by human classification, the world we seek in love and death (Bataille, Erotism 12-13). For Heidegger, what lurked in the shadow of human artifice was the “gigantic” (das Risige), an intimation of some incalculable greatness (135). For Longinus, the sublime was the force of “greatness” that made language overwhelm rather than persuade, the power beyond language that could only be partially intimated by its skillful use (4). These concepts all dovetail with Lacan’s Real, deliniated more completely in Chapter 1. The Real is not the world of non-human objects and forces but the eruption of that world into the mediated world of human society constructed and maintained by our communication with one another. Excess, whether approached through the language of the Real, the sublime, continuity, or Heidegger’s “gigantic,” shapes the field of language around it like the gravity well of a black hole observable by its distortions. These distortions guide our investments in some tropes over others and shape the economy of affects1 that animate meaning and create the durable constructs through which we attempt to connect with one another. We cannot respond to the Bomb by exposing its “reality” in writing, speeches, films, or any other media without implicitly playing its game by insisting that language can accurately convey the excess of the Real because the question is not one of greater precision in language but whether any medium is capable of assimilating the Real, a task which is impossible by definition. In acting as if this was not the case, we participate in the desire for unmediated access to reality that maintains the Bomb’s power in the first place. Too much debate over nuclear policy sidelines this sense of the Bomb as infinite, focusing on the techniques of organization and persuasion to the detriment of the ultimate questions that make the Bomb so powerful and creating a linguistic framework in which these questions are written off, or at best appended as “useful embellishment,” only “received into mainstream discourse when presented as appendages to currently debated political options” (Chernus, Nuclear Madness 59). The Real of the Bomb reveals the incompleteness of this world and motivates attempts to find what we imagine is concealed beneath it. Nuclear obliteration is to its devotees perhaps even a promise of divine Truth that offers transcendence of the fallen world of mediation in which reality is never complete. With such a contradictory set of attachments, it is hard to imagine that efforts to think about the Bomb can achieve their goals—while they might demonstrate their own consistent logic, the rationality of nuclear politics is warped by the intrusion of the Real and the desire to commune with it directly. Communication studies is full of cogent analyses of instances where language or other media worked very well indeed to organize political responses, persuade audiences, bind people together around texts, and change attitudes, but these accounts are incomplete without attention to the Real. The subject of nuclear war challenges how we think about communication itself and demands new thinking on the limits of mediation. The central question of this dissertation is not how should we talk about nuclear war, but what can nuclear war show us about how we attempt to mediate that which we understand to exceed the limits of mediation itself? For attempt we do. The vertiginous hole in the whole of reality is only the first part of the Bomb’s relationship to desire. Nature abhors a vacuum, and so does the symbolic order through which the human world is built. The Symbolic, as Jacques Lacan styles it, cannot tolerate the revelation of its inadequacy in the Real, the tears left in our map by the inhuman world. We endlessly attempt to heal the rifts of the Real, to feign unicity where it has failed (Lundberg 2-3). The response to chaos is control; order is imposed against contingency in an effort to re-impose coherence. This dynamic of automaton (order) scripted over tuché (contingency) is developed in Chapter 2. When these attempts fail—and because the Real by its nature cannot be assimilated, they must—we simply try again. In Lacanian psychoanalysis, this dynamic is the repetition compulsion, in which the subject tries again and again to control the conditions for presence and absence, enjoying not the outcome but the exercise of subjectivity itself in the capacity to act and to choose. Subjectivity requires the sacrifice of continuity through the formation of the alienating identity of the mirror phase, a process explained more in Chapters 1 and 2. Discontinuous subjects are organized in part around the lack—something that would make them whole again, represented in an object that is never more than a partial stand-in for this missing completion. Frustrated in the quest for something outside, we enjoy our own subjectivity.2 In the context of nuclear war, this meant ever more sophisticated simulations of a phenomenon about which we remained basically uncertain. This is the second movement of desire in (or for) the Bomb. The enjoyment of our reasserted control over the Bomb manifested in the repeated attempts to simulate its use and predict its aftermath. The fort-da game described by Freud and explained here in the first two chapters is an important tool for unpacking this dynamic because it posits a sense of control over presence and absence as the condition for a subject’s enjoyment. Fort-da refers to the game in which a child makes an object disappear and reappear in succession, simulating her or his mother’s coming and going and the possibility of her eventual disappearance. Enjoyment comes from the subject’s control over these states of presence and absence, a small example of imposing order in a world of seeming chaos (Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle 13-17). Understanding this is necessary to draw the common threads between the cold-blooded excesses of Pentagon nuclear plans, the compulsion that leads survivalists to stockpile rooms full of MREs, and the appeal that apocalyptic videogames hold for millions of players. In all of these pursuits, the world is made absent in the fantasy of destruction and present again in the myth of reconstruction, survival, and rebirth.

### Link – Nuclear Deterrence

#### The aff’s repetitive process of imagining scenarios of nuclear deterrence failure and strategizing about how to improve deterrence is an illusion of mastery – but, this game of poker playing denies the Bomb’s symbolic place beyond rational calculation which means their project inevitably fails.

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson, PhD is Associate Professor of Public Deliberation and Civic Life and the incoming Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh.; “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”; 2015; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/210598703.pdf]//eleanor

The disturbance of Symbolic order by the contingency of the Real is met with an attempt to restore order, to respond to chance with law. Lacan describes this dynamic as the interplay of tuché and automaton: Where do we meet this real? For what we have in the discovery of psycho-analysis is an encounter, an essential encounter—and appointment to which we are always called with a real that eludes us… First, the tuché, which we have borrowed…from Aristotle, who uses it in his search for cause. We have translated it as the encounter with the real. The real is beyond the automaton, the return, the coming-back, the insistence of the signs, by which we see ourselves governed by the pleasure principle. The real is that which always lies behind the automaton…it is this that is the object of [Freud’s] concern. (Lacan, Four Fundamental Concepts, 53-54, italics in original) This is the central element of the repetition compulsion. Driven to make our encounter with the Real, we are perpetually disappointed, but the Symbolic world of reality abhors a vacuum. Automaton describes the endless attempts to reach the Real which are doomed to failure but cannot be surrendered, so are repeated again and again. These repetitive behaviors thus develop an aspect of order, and are, paradoxically, orderly attempts to reach the chaos of contingency. They are also linked by Lacan gambling, death, and signification (“Purloined Letter” 28-29). Nuclear deterrence can be read in this frame as an attempt to secure the world against the contingency of the Real, the uncertainty of nuclear war. It is the STRATCOM automaton’s answer to the chaos of the Bomb’s tuché. But the attempt to restore order has at its heart a desire to encounter the Real. In a history of nuclear defense intellectuals, Fred Kaplan described them in the 1980s at the height of their power having come with the mission “to impose order,” but lacking any means to control the wild abandon of the Bomb in a hypothetical war for which there was no precedent, “in the end, chaos still prevailed” (Kaplan 391). Desire is the motive force, and that what we desire cannot be attained is what requires repetition. When the chaos of tuché reigns, automaton does not surrender, but comes to be an end in itself, a site of investment. Repetition itself becomes enjoyable. In repeatedly simulating nuclear war, defense intellectuals who could not experience the Real of nuclear violence could enjoy the illusion of mastery over the terror and fascination inspired by the Real by appearing to simulate the conditions of presence and absence—in this case, the presence of the world-for-us and its absence in the Bomb’s inferno. Langdon Winner distinguishes between risk (a term prevalent in both nuclear war and poker) and threat or hazard on these grounds: risk always has an implied benefit to it, an element of desire and an opportunity for control (145). There is little empirical basis for nuclear war simulations and the calculations of probability they rely on, so nuclear war plans always require a good deal of faith, and thus to adopt them is a risk—a calculation of both hazard and reward (Ghamari-Tabrizi 8). Their parameters are set arbitrarily by the personnel who design them. In other words, they are games of chance in which we also manipulate the rules. This is the obscene supplement of nuclear deterrence that Vice Admiral Giardina could not be allowed to reveal: we don’t just repeat nuclear simulations again and again because we think that they will someday be perfect. War games are fun, and we don’t always care about the rules. Poker, after all, was rumored to be the genesis of game theory at the RAND Corporation, prominent modelers of nuclear war, and was a favorite pastime of the defense intellectuals who sought to tame the world with human reason (Arbella 51-53). This chapter will begin with an exploration of war games as media for access to the Real of nuclear war and sites of cathexis that permit the subject to enjoy its discontinuity, using the videogame First Strike as an example of enjoyment even amongst those who claim to resist the nuclear status quo. War games were supposed to model the conduct of war, but they were also supposed to predict when and how it might occur. John von Neumann’s game theory and Kenneth Arrow’s resulting rational choice theory, both elaborated at the RAND Corporation, attempted to quantify human conduct to explain the world. The second part of this chapter will deal with a problem that arises from attempts to make decisions based on nuclear war predictions. Because the Bomb as a herald of the Real occupies a place beyond rational calculation, the mathematical language of nuclear war attempts to calculate the incalculable. The result is a theological impasse which provides argumentative resources equally to activists and their enemies, illustrating the unassimilable distortions worked by the contingency of the Real in the Symbolic attempts to contain it. War Games Herman Kahn and Bernard Brodie, perhaps the most prominent American strategists of the early Cold War, tried to make nuclear war “thinkable” in the sense that they tried to explain how such a war might start and what options would exist for national leaders. At the same time, both acknowledged that the outcome of a full-scale nuclear war was indescribable. In Brodie’s words, to “make an intellectual prediction of the likelihood of war is one thing, to project oneself imaginatively and seriously into an expected war situation is quite another” (Ghamari-Tabrizi 149). The unwillingness or inability to think “seriously” about a nuclear war—in other words, to understand it instrumentally rather than through dislocating language of the sublime—was met by organizations like the RAND Corporation with an attempt to systematize nuclear strategy and develop the intellectual and technical means to actually fight and control a nuclear war. Before RAND exercised its power through the “Whiz Kids” of the Kennedy Administration, the Strategic Air Command’s “Sunday punch” nuclear plan, enshrined in SIOP-62, was an all-out nuclear attack on the USSR, Eastern Europe, and the People’s Republic of China. It might have killed 285 million people in the initial attack (Kaplan 269). Despite its intricate planning and detailed execution strategies, SIOP was immensely inflexible. Asked whether the U.S. had any options to attack without striking China, which might not even be a combatant in the war, General Thomas Power replied “Well yeh [sic], we could do that, but I hope nobody thinks of it because it would really screw up the plan” (Kaplan 270, emphasis in original). Starting in the 1960s, a set of war games of various complexity was developed to test a broader range of nuclear theories and attack options at RAND and elsewhere (Arbella 35). Games like them continue to be used for strategic military planning today (Raatz). Most of these games—or at least their results—are classified, as they became the basis for US nuclear plans. In politicomilitary games, a number of military officers, civilians, and generally mid- to lowranking government officials would play various roles as US and/or foreign decisionmakers. Another group, “control,” would feed them information about the actions of countries or groups not played by the participants or about world events that might influence the context of their actions. In more limited military simulations, extant or proposed war plans would be evaluated by computer or human players to identify possible flaws and improvements. The games themselves never had a guarantee of accuracy and were often quite obviously flawed. In one Navy game, American aircraft carriers were declared to be unsinkable. In others, the Soviet Union was assumed to have no effective airpower. Because factors like air pressure, prevailing winds, defense effectiveness, early warning, and missile failure rate were largely random or incalculable, a “fudge factor” simply declared estimated success. Even their designers sometimes admitted that the games were inaccurate, unprovable, or simply wishful thinking (Ghamari-Tabrizi 8; Allen 78). Especially in the case of nuclear war, these games cannot possibly be understood as accurate simulations of a real-world system, because there is no empirical data on the compound effects of many near-simultaneous nuclear explosions and no data on what factors cause states to cross the nuclear threshold against other similarly-armed states, a fact that bedevils nuclear planning in general and always has (Kaplan 87). By the admission of many of those who create and play them, they are “social science fiction” with no tangible effect other than that they are entertaining (Ghamari-Tabrizi 160-1). Some contemporary social science work supports this claim especially in the context of extinction-level events. Human beings simply aren’t wired to think at such a scale, and they perform very poorly assessing probability and calculating magnitude (Yudkowsky). Others have suggested that warfare is a stochastic system that we could never identify laws for, no matter how diligent we might be, because its initial conditions are simply too complex to model and they do not conform to linear causality (Beyerchen; Buchanan 62). Indeed, military planners tended to be far less willing to predict the conduct and outcome of a conventional war—despite an enormous data set spanning thousands of years—than a nuclear war fought between two superpowers, an event that has never occurred in recorded history. Fred Iklé, former RAND strategists who was at times head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, criticized these semi-mathematical abstractions in harsh terms that deserve to be quoted at length: The prominence of the calculations continues because we know how to make them…we have tailored the problem to our capability to calculate. The seemingly rigorous models of nuclear deterrence are built on the rule: "What cannot be calculated, leave out’”…Such thoughts, especially those focusing on deterrence, lack real empirical referents or bases. No other field of human endeavor demands—absolutely compels—one to work out successful solutions without obtaining directly relevant experience, without experimenting. There can be no trial and error here, no real learning. Curiously, we are far more skeptical in accepting the calculations of traditional conventional military campaigns than the calculations of nuclear warfare. In fact, the more battle experience and information military analysts have, the more modest they become in predicting the course of conventional war. Such modesty is missing for nuclear war, where pretentious analyses and simplistic abstractions dominate and blot out the discrepancies existing between abstractions and possible reality—a reality that for so many reasons is hard even to imagine. (Iklé 246) Iklé is drawing attention to two unique aspects of nuclear war planning: first, that no empirical date (or at least very little) can be gathered for the species of war that planners concerned themselves with, and second, that unlike other military problems where little data exists, defense intellectuals were willing to display great confidence in untested (and untestable) theories. Despite this lack of empirical grounding, nuclear war simulations have been repeated again and again over the decades while nuclear doctrine has remained fundamentally the same (McKinzie et al. ix-xi).

### Link – Nuclear Jargon

#### Even if they win that talking about nuclear war is good, the expert jargon the 1AC uses to describe nuclear threats is counterproductive – rather than mobilizing anti-nuclear activist, they mystify and enchant nuclear war, concealing its horror – specifically, this is true of debate.

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson, PhD is Associate Professor of Public Deliberation and Civic Life and the incoming Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh.; “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”; 2015; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/210598703.pdf]//eleanor

This project should instill skepticism about the efficacy of current strategies meant to confront nuclear violence by challenging it discursively. A great deal of work about the Bomb, following Carol Cohn’s excellent article and the germinal work of Stephen Hilgartner, Richard C. Bell and Rory O'Connor in Nukespeak, has focused on the sanitizing effects of nuclear language. Barry Brummett, Daniel Zins, and Edward Schiappa have all published work in this vein. Schiappa criticizes terms like “Strategic Defense Initiative” and CORRTEX for “bureaucratizing” and “domesticating” nuclear issues. Through these verbal strategies, nuclear realities are “insulated from public inspection by acronyms or sanitized jargon” (253). Both Barry Brummett and Charles Kauffman use the work of Kenneth Burke to argue that naming practices constrain public knowledge and influence attitudes about nuclear weapons, either through perfecting “God terms” for Brummett or through reference appealing historical myths such as the American frontier for Kauffman (Brummett, 1989; Kauffman, 1990). Even David Cratis Williams, who combines a Derridean perspective to the more familiar Burke, emphasizes that a chief goal of nuclear criticism is a “publicly accessible” language (Williams 202). These are all advocates for what we might call the concealment thesis. The basic assumption for proponents of this idea is that nuclear terminology conceals the reality of nuclear warfare and thus makes it palatable. The nuclear thinking developed by RAND game theorists and others produced an arcane vocabulary for all aspects of nuclear conflict, much as academia has for its own concerns: “counterforce targeting,” “throw-weight,” “circular error probable,” “post-attack state,” and, of course, “countervalue” and “first strike.” These terms mystify and enchant the public, just as they did public intellectuals during the Cold War, the fictional narrator of End Zone, and legions of high school and college undergraduate debaters to this very day (myself included). The theories of language used in the concealment thesis draw from different sources (Burke, Derrida, and Aristotle, Orwell, just to name a few), but their least common denominator is a belief that nuclear metaphors and euphemism sustain the complex of nuclear destruction by concealing the horror of nuclear war. The implication of this idea is that providing a new vocabulary for public debate, such as the “devil terms” Brummett suggests, would enable democratic deliberation and therefore constrain the nuclear state. As Schiappa puts it, a “negative nukespeak would consist of linguistic strategies to portray nuclear weapons and war as dangerous and immoral” (268). Such a strategy might “salvage” debate over nuclear weapons in the public sphere (Schiappa 254). Even outside communication studies, there is a broad consensus amongst critics of nuclear weapons that democratic debate is the key method for resistance to nuclear weapons and that concealing language stands as a barrier to it. Nuclear critique of all kinds has dropped off considerably since the end of the Cold War such that the concealment thesis, although advanced most comprehensively in the 1980s, remains the chief contribution of communication studies to the politics of nuclear warfare. The central argument of this book suggests that this legacy needs revision. The economy of nuclear discourse since the day of Trinity has been driven by the attempt to get closer to the Real, to have the Bomb as it “really is.” Chapter 2 will suggest that nuclear simulations were presented as more real and more rational than the Doomsday imaginations of Curtis LeMay and the early Strategic Air Command. Jonathan Schell’s Fate of the Earth was another effort to bring Americans face-to-face with the reality of nuclear war, as were the more explicitly fictional novels churned out especially in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1980s. Underlying these efforts is the fact that nuclear war remains “fabulously textual” in Derrida’s terms (24-27). There have been atrocities related to nuclear weapons and their production—indigenous peoples subjected to uranium mining and nuclear testing, inner city populations confined and targeted in the name of the Bomb, “downwinders” exposed to radioactivity, U.S. soldiers made to witness tests with inadequate protection, and non-human animals subjected to cruelty in the name of understanding just what a nuclear war might be like. But there has never been a nuclear war in the sense that strategists, novelists, and survivalists imagined it. To imagine the graphic details of a possible nuclear war does not reveal the truth but instead relies on the same dynamic that makes the Bomb so fascinating in the first place: a sense of access to the Real. My overall aim is to establish the death drive as a problematic for communication studies. I argue that it is a desire for unmediated experience spurred on by the Real, but because communication is always mediated, this desire is frustrated as soon as it is expressed. The quest for the Real ends up mired in the Symbolic. Unable to enjoy the Real because its loss is the necessary condition for subjectivity in the first place, we invest in subjectivity instead, enjoying the perceived control over presence and absence demonstrated in the fort-da dynamic. In developing this argument, I hope to make a contribution to communication studies by showing that silence, omission, and lack do not just frustrate our effort to communicate, but partly determine the ways in which we do so. These unspeakable failures are not therefore purely negative—they are an excess beyond language, not a vacuum. Specific media artefacts, whether war games or literary texts, exist instead of others because they are animated by desire and the uncanny sense of the Real. Therefore, efforts to understand what we do communicate require attention to the larger economy of desire and that which we cannot mediate. For rhetoric, this means a new understanding of the sublime as an uncanny attribute of signifiers and media itself in relation to the Real, rather than simply a grand style of speech. For media and technology studies, it means acknowledging how the enjoyment of our power over presence and absence leads us to form attachments that sustain some particular technologies instead of others, making an account of desire necessary even for a truly materialist understanding of mediation. This also means rethinking the relationship between public discourse and political change since, as the example of nuclear weapons shows, horror and fascination are woven together such that exposing the potential for catastrophe does not translate into an effective response.

### Link – Nuclear War

#### Reject their framing of “extinction first” – any fraction of infinity is infinity – their attempt to calculate the incalculable results in violence.

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson, PhD is Associate Professor of Public Deliberation and Civic Life and the incoming Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh.; “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”; 2015; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/210598703.pdf]//eleanor

Two anecdotes about John von Neumann, famous mathematician who worked on the hydrogen bomb, serve to introduce the problems of risk associated with attemtps to calculate the incalculable. First, there is a story that von Neumann formulated the early precursors to game theory playing poker (Allen 142). RAND analysts played the game regularly, many with some passion. These players apparently thought of the game mathematically rather than an exercise in psychology, since RAND was “stumped” by human behavior. As RAND president Frank Collbohm said about an Air Force-ordered pilot reaction study, the one “machine” that remained a mystery “is called a ‘pilot’” (Arbella 25). The basic assumption in reducing war games to mathematical simulations was that the universe could be rendered in such a language, that “numbers could save the world” because life was ultimately a game of risk, calculable and controllable (Arbella 134). Later, diagnosed with terminal cancer, von Neumann supposedly converted to Catholicism on his deathbed, convinced by another, long dead, mathematician: Blaise Pascal (Jordan 1). Pascal’s wager, that one should believe in God even if He is very unlikely to exist because the consequences of eternal damnation are infinite (Pascal 67- 9), is the basic structure of the sign of survival that was inverted in the twentieth century to be an argument mandating care for the material world instead. Incubated in the warmth of the Bomb, this sign has metastasized to other areas of apocalyptic fantasy predictions. As its transmogrification from Jonathan Schell’s pacifist anti-nuclear stance to Dick Cheney’s defense of preemption will show, arguments based on the attempt to calculate the incalculable are indeterminate. The excess of tuché frustrates automaton, and this secular version of Pascal’s wager is the broken machinery it leaves behind. Jonathan Schell wrote perhaps the most famous book about nuclear war to be marketed as non-fiction. Fate of the Earth is an attempt to make nuclear war seem real through the unabashed use of sublime language. The first of its three parts is full of beautiful passages about the destruction that a nuclear war might produce before ending in a “republic of insects and grass.” Relying heavily on the assumption that a nuclear winter would follow a war between the USA and USSR and that such an event would cause humanity to go extinct,14 Schell contemplates what the end of the human species might mean and what its possibility suggests for defense policy. Schell, like Kristiakoswky at the Trinity test, thought of nuclear war as the end of humanity. Seeing the world apparently as one for us, he wrote that all value was human value, so a nuclear war would destroy everything meaningful in the known universe (95). Nuclear war must, therefore, be avoided at all costs. Schell wrote: [T]he mere risk of extinction has a significance that is categorically different from, and immeasurably greater than, that of any other risk, and as we make our decisions we have to take that significance into account…It represents not the defeat of some purpose, but an abyss in which all human purposes would be drowned for all time. We have no right to place the possibility of this limitless, eternal defeat on the same footing as risks that we run in the ordinary conduct of our affairs in our particular transient moment of human history…although the risk of extinction may be fractional, the stake is…infinite, and a fraction of infinity is still infinity…morally they are the same, and we have no choice but to address the issue of nuclear weapons as though we knew for a certainty that their use would put an end to our species. (Schell 95) This passage serves as the end of the first part of Fate of the Earth and a transition to the middle section of the book, “The Second Death,” which is about future generations. Schell’s argument is a version of Pascal’s wager where “infinity” takes the place of a Christian God. “Infinity” as a concept is always an attempt to mediate the Real because it replaces something that by definition cannot be resolved in language or understood by human beings in its entirety into a single word, a placeholder to represent with finite bounds something that can never be represented. It is the ultimate license in metonymy since all associations are included within it; no proliferation of meaning is prohibited. Its symbolic function can be compared to the various names of God in negative theology, all of which stand in for something that is acknowledged to be inexpressible (Pseudo-Dionysius 52-53). Some version of Schell’s infinite risk argument was used by anti-nuclear activists in public rallies (Sorensen 141), and also used by others to think about a range of other “existential threats” (e.g., Matheny). A report by the Global Challenges Foundation explicitly focuses on “infinite risks” including nuclear war, describing itself as “the first science-based list of global risks with a potentially infinite impact” (Pamlin and Armstrong 31). Representatives of the Vatican recently used the argument too, signing on to a statement including this line: “as long as nuclear weapons exist, there remains the possibility of a nuclear explosion. Even if the probability is small, given the catastrophic consequences of a nuclear weapon detonating, the risk is unacceptable” (Gagliarducci). Even when the hazard is expressed as “catastrophic,” or quantified with some suitably huge number, it is effectively infinite: as Yudkowsky argues, human beings calculate scale poorly, and a sufficiently large number is not rationally understood. “Human emotions take place within an analog brain,” writes Yudkowsky. “The human brain cannot release enough neurotransmitters to feel emotion a thousand times as strong as the grief of one funeral. A prospective risk going from 10,000,000 deaths to 100,000,000 deaths does not multiply by ten the strength of our determination to stop it. It adds one more zero on paper for our eyes to glaze over, an effect so small that one must usually jump several orders of magnitude to detect the difference experimentally” (16). In the more elegant formulation attributed to Josef Stalin, one death is a tragedy. One million deaths is just a statistic. Our failure to grasp these magnitudes could be called the problem of hrair after the Lapine language of Watership Down. Rabbits in the novel can only count to four. Any larger number, be it five or one thousand, is simply hrair. The word means “a great many; an uncountable number; any number over four” (Adams 475). The language we employ attempts to master and reduce the incomprehensible vastness of time and space to mark difference where comprehension is impossible. Infinity is perhaps the best example, but any very large number serves the same structural function of expressing loss beyond practical measure. Thus, although the Global Challenges Foundation argues that “infinite risk” is not meant in a mathematical sense and that calculations are possible, they are in effect meaningless: the investments of “infinity” exceed our ability to calculate, as indeed the report acknowledges when it argues for a categorically different treatment of these risks (Pamlin and Armstrong 33). This quandary frustrates the attempt to make calculable values that seem to exceed calculation itself. A shadow always remains in the quantification of infinity and the attempt to master it technologically, a remainder that haunts the edges of supposedly perfect reason. This is Martin Heidegger’s concept of the gigantic, something much like the sense of the Real that shines through in the sublime: The gigantic is rather that through which the quantitative becomes a special quality and thus a remarkable kind of greatness... as soon as the gigantic in planning and calculating and adjusting and making secure shifts over out of the quantitative and becomes a special quality, then what is gigantic, and what can seemingly always be calculated completely, becomes, precisely through this, incalculable. This incalculable remains the invisible shadow that is cast around all things everywhere when man [sic] has been transformed into subiectum and the world into picture. (Heidegger 135) Through this shadow the modern world extends itself into “a space withdrawn from representation” and gestures towards something which we are denied to know (Heidegger 136). For Schell, the losses possible in a nuclear war are infinite because they threaten future generations beyond count. Preventing the birth of future individuals is immoral, by this logic, which has some bizarre (and apparently unintended) echoes in the Catholic view on abortion (Schell 116). As no future individuals are cotemporal with those assigning them worth, the value of future generations is symbolic, not unique to the individuals actually “prevented” (Kleinig 196-197). The reason we must not immolate ourselves in nuclear fire, then, is that we must continue to reproduce—the value of each individual lies in that person’s ability to create more individuals. There is no discussion of anything else that we are obligated to do for the future. For Schell, responsibility seems to be a finite obligation to an infinite number of people. This infinite future is frequently represented by the metaphor of the child. In Lyndon Johnson’s infamous “Daisy Girl” campaign ad, a child pulls petals off a daisy, accompanied by a mechanical countdown and interrupted by the familiar mushroom cloud of the Bomb. “These are the stakes,” a man’s voice intones. “To make a world in which all of God’s children can live, or go into the dark. We must either love each other, or we must die” (“Campaign Spot”). Lee Edelman’s words, bitterly describing the Child as a figure for “compulsory investment in the misrecognition of figure,” could have been about the Johnson ad. “And lo and behold,” he writes, “as viewed through the prism of the tears that it always calls forth, the figure of this Child seems to shimmer with the iridescent promise of Noah’s rainbow, serving like the rainbow as the pledge of a covenant that shields us against the persistent threat of apocalypse now—or later” (Edelman 18). Unfortunately for disarmament activists, nuclear strategists have children too, and some, like Jim Lipp, express the value of their own work in the same terms—as a matter of caring for “grandchildren’s grandchildren” through nuclear deterrence (Kaplan 78). The “fraction of infinity” argument has been used by those defending an aggressive defense posture. The George W. Bush administration invaded Iraq citing that country’s possible future development of weapons of mass destruction as a primary casus belli. It is only logical that no time ought to be wasted—every second that the decision for war is delayed increases the chance that a rogue regime could develop nuclear weapons. Any non-zero risk is equivalent to an infinite one. Vice President Dick Cheney went one further, however, establishing the “Cheney Doctrine” in response to nuclear terrorism. Told at a briefing with CIA director George Tenet that Pakistani scientists could potentially be assisting Al Qaeda in the development of nuclear weapons, Cheney responded that if “there’s a one percent chance…we have to treat it as a certainty in terms of our response.” The response must be immediate, regardless of proof: “It’s not about our analysis,” he said, “or finding a preponderance of evidence. It’s about our response” (Suskind 62). Members of the security community often assert that nuclear terrorism is an “existential risk,” a threat to American “civilization” or even the entire species despite the complete lack of evidence to this effect (Mueller 19-20). There is no mathematical way to distinguish between infinite risks. If any fraction of infinity is infinity, then every fractional risk is infinite—Heidegger’s unquantifiable “gigantic” casts its shadow over attempts to calculate. While the last part of Schell’s book is a passionate case for disarmament, the opposite is equally plausible: if there is any chance greater than zero that disarmament opponents are right and American nuclear weapons are deterring a nuclear war (and uncertainty in calculation alone ensures that there must be), then the risk is infinite. The future is compressed entirely into the present, since any action we take now could determine whether that future exists at all and what character it might have. We are enjoined to do everything, right now, as fast as we can, because any delay might cost trillions of deaths—an argument Nick Bostrom has made about space colonization using the same structure of Pascal’s wager used by Schell (Bostrom 3). At the same time, we must be in (literally) perfect stasis and do nothing at all, for any change might be the one that cascades into nuclear war. If we extend this infinite value to human extinction more generally, it might even be imperative that we deliberately cause a nuclear war as soon as possible to destroy industrial civilization and thus prevent the collapse of global ecosystems on which all life depends (Caldwell).15 The logic of infinite loss results in aporia. It is simultaneously true that no risk is worth taking and that every risk must be taken. At the same time, each individual is afforded some symbolic connection to the Real, because each action we take has effects on the unbounded infinity of future human beings. Each decision we make now is of limitless import, and thus we can enjoy the imagination of destroying future generations because it invests us with the power over existence and nonexistence on a cosmic scale. This quasi-secular iteration of Pascal’s wager shares its defect with nuclear war games. Both attempt to make rational calculations about nuclear war by quantifying variables that cannot be quantified. The Symbolic order can be analogized to a set of operations, like an equation, that provides the conditions of possibility for meaning, while the Imaginary describes the value of specific variables in that equation. If the Bomb is valued as infinity, then the rest of an operation is overshadowed: no probability assigned to that variable fundamentally changes the result. Like the sun outshining dimmer lights in Longinus’s treatment of metaphor, the threat of human extinction as an unquantifiable evil outshines the issues attached to it (preemption or pacifism, reproduction or culling, counterforce or countervalue, and so forth) such that many paths lead audiences to the same result: the poorly-healed scar in the Symbolic that results from automaton’s sutures over the wound of tuché. In fact, because nuclear war is a problem in which two or more agents are pitted against each other and the optimal solution for one party requires responding to the optimal solution of the others, rationality must necessarily collapse—the only way to frustrate enemy calculations of American plans is to ensure that they are irrational. Rationality thereby demands irrationality (Rose, ch. 5) Nuclear war games might incorporate data from nuclear testing or conventional bombing, but they still rely largely on guesswork. The “infinite risk” of Schell’s argument does the same, warping calculations by including a cipher for the incalculable. Both operations are sustained by enjoyment. As Cheney said, it’s not about our analysis—it’s about our response. In the case of war games, simulations allow players to enjoy their ability to enjoy—to attach to subjectivity itself. The appeal to infinite destruction is remarkably similar, only those who use it can enjoy the capacity to make the world present and absent in speech. Imagining the apocalypse is fun; doubly so if apparently sophisticated simulations allow us to alter the models of its occurrence. While this kind of scenario planning and simulation had its most important early developments in Cold War nuclear games, the cultural technology has become deeply ingrained and proliferated in a number of different discourses and practices. A cottage industry in extinction prediction has blossomed in the last few decades, concerned with everything from asteroid collisions and ice ages to magnetic pole shifts and whether the universe is a simulation that might be switched off (see for example Bostrom; Leslie; Posner; Matheny; Yudkowsky). The 2014 outbreaks of the Ebola virus in Africa are a recent example. Modelers quickly produced simulations of the spread of this disease. An article on the Infowars website discusses the most extreme of these disease models, asking if “you really want to wait until after infections have been identified in the United States to make your preparations?” (Slavo). An embedded Youtube link leads to a video entitled “Mathematical Model Shows How Ebola Will Spread: ‘Worse Case Scenario... An Extinction Event’” posted by TheDailySheeple. The graphical presentation of this video closely resembles the gameplay of Pandemic 2, a game with millions of online plays popular long before the outbreak. In Pandemic 2, the player controls the disease and the object is to kill everyone in the world (Crazy Monkey Games). The notorious difficulty of infecting Madagascar in the game has spawned its own Internet meme where players express frustration in sympathy with their fictional pandemic (interestingly, the aforementioned Ebola video leaves Madagascar untouched). The website for Northeastern University’s MoBS lab (Laboratory for the Modeling of Biological and Socio-Technical Systems) shows efforts to model the spread of Ebola using graphical icons that also closely resemble Pandemic 2, right down to aircraft flight paths and a similar color-coding system for the incidence of infection (MoBS). It is no wonder that many people might share the feelings of journalist Abraham Riesman who recently wrote a self-reflective piece on his “amoral twinge of excitement” on reading Ebola news and imagining the end of the world (Riesman).

#### While the Civil Defense “Fallout shelter” sign is gone, policy debate continues to be haunted by the ghosts of the Cold War, living on the precipice of annihilation through the rust stain of the sign.

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson, PhD is Associate Professor of Public Deliberation and Civic Life and the incoming Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh.; “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”; 2015; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/210598703.pdf]//eleanor

In my last year of college debate the national topic involved nuclear arms control. I would sometimes stay amongst the “U” call numbers in the basement of the Michigan State University Library all night reading books that hadn’t been checked out since the 1980s and walking home in the early morning. Every day I would pass the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in the half light of dawn, which, long after the Cold War ended, had a prominent yellow “Fallout Shelter” sign bolted to its masonry, the old-fashioned triangular Civil Defense kind made of metal. Today that sign is gone. In its place is the deep-set rust stain that the sign left, indelibly marking its old place in that triangular shape, an enthymeme of death and hope for anyone who remembers its old message. The sign is literally absent, but its distortion remains. The Bomb is still with us. It’s the shelters that have disappeared. This dissertation has explored the distorting influence of the Bomb as a means to understand the desire to experience the Real beyond mediation and the paradoxical refraction of that desire into fixation on various forms of mediation that come to stand in for the unspeakable. This is an issue raised by symbols in any form, as they must necessarily stand in for something that is absent. The connection between any particular signifier and what it represents may be arbitrary, but it is held together by our investment in the tie, a kind of implicit collective agreement necessary for language to convey meaning, to provide the resources for one speaking subject to address another. These agreements accrete into broader myths, sustained and shaped to create cultural formations by specific ideologies that are themselves products of durable investments. I have argued that desire finds its point of attachment in the sense of the Real that a symbol conveys. Essentially, language works through a habitual confusion in which artifice is concealed by its own action and we mistake the Symbolic for the Real, attaching ourselves in those uncanny moments when it seems that the Real “shines through.” Even if the revelation of the Real cannot be transmitted in its full force from one subject to another, language can be the spark that refers one to one’s own memory of other witnessed eruptions. Nuclear weapons are an extreme case chosen to make these connections clearer, but they are by no means unique in this regard. The uncanny is never a complete substitute for the Real, so the effort to reach it is frustrated and then repeated. Any object of desire understood as distinct from the subject must necessarily elude total incorporation. Were it to be attained, the motion of the drive would not stop because each object stands in for the return to continuity itself, a goal that the subject cannot attain and remain extant. Perhaps such a thing is possible, but if so, language cannot convey it. It is a currency that only serves up to a point. This basic dynamic is the first part of the death drive. The next phase is the enjoyment of our efforts to control presence and absence, not because we enjoy either state (although we likely enjoy them both), but because the subject can attach to the one thing truly available to it: itself, and specifically its capacity to enjoy. This is still a mediated path, as the subject is a product of identification with the Symbolic order. We are again grasping at shadows. This formulation situates the death drive as a problematic for communication studies. I have argued here that the death drive is not reducible to the desire, biological or otherwise, for death. Rather, it is the union of Eros and Thanatos: both are a desire for unmediated experience, for connection to all that the subject surrenders as the cost of its own coming into being. This current of desire is a product of the necessary conditions for the Symbolic, not the Real, even though it is a desire animated by the latter. The death drive is not a hidden structure that organizes the Real, but a dynamic observable in the Symbolic as it attempts to repair the rips and threadbare patches worn into it by the unimaginably vast world that exists outside our ken. The death drive itself might be silent and invisible, as Derrida argued in Archive Fever, but its passage leaves a wake of distortions in language. The attempts to mediate what is beyond mediation comprise the only evidence available for the motion of the drive, and thus the proper tools to analyze it are found in communication studies. Things that seem inexpressible, and the desire to encounter them, have a powerful effect on the human world. To neglect this is to miss one important factor that shapes our communication, and, in the uncanny sense of the Real, an attribute of signs that helps to explain why some might have traction and some might not. The tradition most applicable to this understanding of the drive is the rhetorical tradition of the sublime.30 Edmund Burke, writing a century and a half before Freud, identified the sublime as the interplay of two drives, one for pleasure and one for pain, but both present in the sublime in some measure, the latter more powerful because it is an “emissary” for that “king of terrors,” death (36). Burke borrowed from the tradition of Longinus which understood the sublime as an aspect of language, generally metaphor. It is to this understanding we should return with a difference: communication is more than language, and the sublime is an aspect of communication. The advent of the atomic bomb and its yet more terrible progeny, the hydrogen bomb, elevated human expression to a qualitatively new degree. It became possible to communicate through fission and fusion, through nations destroyed in minutes, through genetic and environmental legacies marked on a millennial scale. Cold War nuclear deterrence is a dialogue expressed primarily in enthymeme, and game theory is little but a guide for making and decoding its messages, now a conversation involving several more participants. The latent threat of total destruction is now promised by synthetic biology, artificial intelligence, asteroid collisions, and host of modern technological anxieties along with nuclear warfare. These still create deep metonymic channels through which association might flow between obscure signifiers covering the ultimate void of metaphysical groundlessness, expressed not in the question “why is there something instead of nothing,” but “why does it matter?” In the case of world-ending weapons themselves, the medium is the message. The rhetorical tradition of the sublime exposes the intoxicating power of horror mixed with desire and the counterattack of language after the breakthrough of silence, as witnessed by the Trinity observers. The analysis of ensuing myths, such as the myth of survival and rebirth after Doomsday, is also facilitated by rhetorical tradition. These are excellent tools, but insufficient without an understanding of media that stretches beyond the spoken or written word. Nuclear war games in their various iterations draw us in and change us through form and function that exceeds text and persuasion. Cities are built with the Bomb in mind, or justified by appeals to necessity and the lurking possibility of destruction. In the case of the sublime, the need is to revisit a venerable and powerful tradition by bringing to bear more contemporary understandings of communication. The examples I have chosen are efforts to do this by showing how practices like survivalism and games attempt to mediate the tears of the Real along with texts like post-apocalyptic novels and oral histories. This approach was deliberately taken to illustrate the ubiquity of the sublime by identifying many far-flung iterations and uncanny resemblances.

#### Prefer evidence specific to policy debate.

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson, PhD is Associate Professor of Public Deliberation and Civic Life and the incoming Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh.; “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”; 2015; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/210598703.pdf]//eleanor

I attended my first debate tournament as a sophomore in high school. For two days, I argued with other kids, uncomfortable like me in ill-fitting formal clothes, our resolution pertaining to juvenile crime in the United States. When not discussing it, we performed it in clumsily conspicuous smoke breaks outside the suburban Grand Rapids public school where our competition was hosted. I had been trained to negate this resolution by highlighting its negative consequences for states’ rights and the economy. These things mattered, I was told, because the instability attending to a breakdown in federalism or dip in the economy might cause a nuclear war. A nuclear war would be so awful that it should never be risked, however improbable. I was given Jonathan Schell’s Fate of the Earth as a resource. I did as I was told and invoked the threat of atomic attack in every debate. After one round, a young debater from Detroit approached me in the cafeteria. “Are you the nuclear war guy?” he asked. I supposed that I might be. “I heard about you. You’re crazy, man. That’s awesome.”

### Link – Nuclear War Planning

#### Nuclear games playing create an illusion of mastery over nuclear weapons – they perversely come to enjoy the signifier of the nuclear bomb which makes their use inevitable.

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson, PhD is Associate Professor of Public Deliberation and Civic Life and the incoming Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh.; “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”; 2015; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/210598703.pdf]//eleanor

Just as metaphors are made meaningful by the repeated investments that tie signifier to signified, war games are made meaningful by the investments that tie them to nuclear war. The simulations are enjoyable because of their link to the power of the Bomb. Lacan explains the enjoyment of subjectivity in the Symbolic by analogizing it to a game. In Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Freud recounts a game played by a young boy of his acquaintance (13-17). The boy had a wooden reel attached to a string which he would throw over his curtained cot, making it “gone” (fort). Then he would pull the spool back into view, rejoicing that it was “there” (da). He would repeat these actions again and again. The game can be read as the child inuring himself against the potential absence of his mother, but a more productive reading would locate enjoyment not in the conditions of “gone” or “here” but in the exercise of control over the conditions of presence and absence, essentially a simulation that permits agency over a situation in which the child must be passive (Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle 16-17). Games are particularly powerful media for this control if they differ from representation based on the player’s ability to affect the outcome of each repetition within the procedures created by the game. This sense of control, that the outcome is dependent on the player’s actions, is a key feature that distinguishes games (and, in principle, other simulations) from traditional linear texts in which the reader’s choice is more limited, as is exposure to “risk” (Aarseth 4). This is a challenge for work that understands gaming simply as a metaphor where one term replaces and conceals another, as Barry Brummett argues, without acknowledging that gaming is both a linguistic choice and a material practice of substitution and connection (Brummett 91-92). Norbert Weiner speculated that games would be used to “determine the policies for pressing the Great Push Button and burning the earth clean for a new and less humanly undependable order of things” (24-25). Noting that there is not enough experience to establish criteria for nuclear war games, Weiner emphasized the importance of accuracy: The chief criterion as to whether a line of human effort can be embodied in a game is whether there is some objectively recognizable criterion of the merit of the performance of this effort. Otherwise the game assumes the formlessness of the croquet game in Alice in Wonderland, where…the Queen of Hearts, who kept changing the rules and sending the players to the Headsman to be beheaded. Under these circumstances, to win has no meaning, and a successful policy cannot be learned, because there is no criterion of success.” (26-27 This argument may well be correct, but it misses the most important trait that sustains nuclear war games: they are enjoyable even when they aren’t accurate, hence people ponder the nuclear war even though its consequences are imponderable (Rose, ch. 5). They serve as a site for cathectic attachment and solidify the subject’s sense of itself. Nuclear deterrence resembles gambling, just like the poker games favored by Vice Admiral Giardina. In the exchange for one set of risks for another, nothing is produced— counters are merely moved around, made meaningful by their assigned values, but ultimately traded and expended by the players with no real increase in value during the process, a useless exchange that serves the subject’s enjoyment by creating a space for play separate from work and art (Caillois 5). Fudging the numbers in a nuclear simulation, just like forging fake chips in a casino, is a kind of cheating, but not a threat to the game itself—breaking the rules maintains a certain fidelity to them, recognizing them as existing constraints to be manipulated, and reinforcing the logic of the game even if the cheater is dishonorable. The cheat only sustains the game. The only threat comes from one willing to say that the game is arbitrary and therefore completely worthless, to “break the spell” (Caillois 8-9). It is significant, therefore, that critics of wargames largely continued to play them. More important than the games themselves therefore is their role in organizing the subject vis-à-vis the Symbolic, understood as reality for the subject. Lundberg describes this relationship as one of “useless subjectivity:” Enjoyment is useless in a very specific sense: although the effect of the habitual capture of affect in the form of enjoyment purchases a sense of unity for the subject, enjoyment is useless in regard to the specific site of its exercise. When a subject enjoys a relationship to an object, or a specific habituated practice, it is tempting to read the subject’s investment in the object or practice as a validation of the fact that the subject values the thing in and of itself. But, if Lacan’s account of enjoyment is correct, enjoyment in an object or practice is less about the dignity of the thing invested in than the ways that the object or practice serves the subject in negotiating a relationship to the general economy of exchange. Thus, the exercise of enjoyment is often somewhat counterfactual: the subject invests in objects or practices for the sake of something that is beyond the object or practice and for the sake of accommodating to failed unicity. (Lacan in Public 114) The subject, permanently frustrated in the desire for continuity by the state of discontinuity that is the condition for its own existence, enjoys instead its capacity to enjoy because there is nothing else that it can do. Thus the death drive works in two stages in response to the eruption of the Real: first, the desire to touch the Real, mistakenly manifested as the desire for a mediated sense of the Real as it inheres in some symbols, and second, the enjoyment of the very conditions of the subject’s alienation from the Real: its subjectivity and attendant capacity to enjoy. In the context of nuclear war games, players could enjoy not just the sense of control, but also what Lundberg calls “habituated practices” and we might just as easily name rituals. Thus computerized nuclear models “take on quasi-religious overtones. Offerings are put into the black box by acolytes who are never sure what is going to come out; those who come to worship are often not sure what has happened either…With large simulations, unfortunately, unlike large cathedrals…the whole structure may collapse or become meaningless without anyone’s realizing it” (Brewer and Shubik 25). In some sense, the outcome hardly matters. Only the game does. Excitement is also generated by risk. There is always some uncertainty in how the story will end, what results the player’s actions might have. Nuclear war simulations create a hypertrophied sense of control over presence and absence: the simulated stakes are usually the presence and absence of human civilization and perhaps all life on Earth. Lacan wrote about the significance of our ability to be the agents of our own downfall and the contradiction between agency and responsibility: [Scientists] have begun to get the idea that they could create bacteria that would be resistant to everything, that would be unstoppable. That would clear the surface of the globe of all the shitty things, human in particular, that inhabit it. And then they suddenly felt overcome with pangs of responsibility…What a sublime relief it would be nonetheless if we suddenly had to deal with a true blight…That would be a true triumph. It would mean that humanity would truly have achieved something—its own destruction. It would be a true sign of the superiority of one being over all the others. Not only its own destruction, but the destruction of the entire living world. That would truly be the sign that man is capable of something. (Triumph of Religion 60) For these reasons, the use of nuclear war games as anti-nuclear tools presents a paradox. Anti-nuclear games do not reveal the horrors of nuclear war any more than Pentagon simulations provide scientifically accurate strategic plans. A number of ostensibly anti-war games have been developed to expose nuclear strategy. Balance of Power was described by its creator Chris Crawford in the early 1980s as “a grand, idealistic, make-my-contribution-for-peace crusade,” intended to show the irrationality and danger of nuclear war (Aaron 2). Players who started a nuclear war were shown only a black screen admonishing them, refusing to display images of nuclear war, and stating “we don’t reward failure.” After the Cold War ended, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) created its own simulation of nuclear targeting. Despite the demise of the Soviet Union, SIOP remains a closely-guarded secret. NRDC hoped to create a rough picture of current US nuclear war plans based on the theory that exposing the “grotesque results” of nuclear war would turn the public against it (McKinzie et al. xi). Lack of access to the tools of simulation undermines democratic debate, which the NRDC simulation set out to change (McKinzie et al. 1). The assumption shared by both Crawford and the NRDC is that nuclear war plans survive only due to secrecy and therefore that exposing the way things “really are” is an effective project for anti-nuclear politics. To examine this argument and further illustrate the common processes of enjoyment these games share with official war planning, the next section will analyze the popular 2014 nuclear war simulator First Strike, an ostensibly anti-nuclear videogame developed by the Swiss Blindflug studios.

### Link – Political Demands

#### Policy debates over demands on the government re-invest into the symbolic order by demanding to be recognized as a subject among subjects by the Symbolic Father, which breeds agentic incapacity – they perversely attach themselves to the re-production of the status quo because they rely on it to sustain their enjoyment.

Lundberg 12 [Christian Lundberg is an Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Cultural Studies in the Department of Communication Studies at The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. His work has appeared in the Quarterly Journal of Speech, Rhetoric Society Quarterly, Philosophy and Rhetoric, Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies, and a number of edited volumes.; “ON BEING BOUND TO EQUIVALENTIAL CHAINS”; Cultural Studies; February 16, 2012; https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09502386.2011.647641]//eleanor

How is it possible to ground a literal reading of the rhetorical functionality of the demand to be recognized as dangerous in this case? This reading strategy involves identifying a supplemental split to the one between the universal and particular political content of a demand, between subjects who enjoy the mere fact of affinity with a group as a mode of (mis)identification and the set of identitarian equivalences inaugurated by entry into the particular. This strategy involves reading such utterances both as specific political demands, as containing a universal commitment that authorizes equivalential linkages, and simultaneously as practices of enjoyment, creating ritually repeated relationships to a hegemonic order. On this reading it is not the change that the demand anticipates that is significant, nor is in the political potential of forging equivalential links, but rather the role demand plays for the one who utters it, and the modes of interpassive political affinity entailed. Working through the complexity of demands requires reading the demand for recognition as a practice of enjoyment as an affectively invested call for sanction and love by the governing order. Framing demands as a practice of enjoyment opens a conversation with and point of political critique for Laclau’s conception of the demand by marking the affective complexity of the politics of demands demands also entail a perverse dialectic of political agency as resistance and simultaneous interpassive political constraint. Demands empower forms of political agency by generating an oppositional relationship to hegemonic structures, and by providing the equivalential preconditions for identity. As Slavoj Zˇizˇek might have it, there is always the risk that the demands of protestors are the supplement that authorizes the functioning of capital (Zˇizˇek 2000). Laclau and the politics of the demand Laclau’s On Populist Reason provides an elegant account of demand as the fundamental unit of the political, and by extension of politics as a field of antagonism. Laclau’s basic goal is to define the specificity of populist reason, or, to give an account of populism as ‘special emphasis on a political logic which, is a necessary ingredient of politics tout court’, of ‘Populism, quite simply, as a way of constructing the political’ (Laclau 2005, p. 18). Here, a focus on demands replaces a now prevalent approach focused on various taxonomies of populism (which Laclau diagnoses as hopelessly unsystematic) with a more formal account of the political based on the logic of demands, which in turn provides a way of thinking about the political as the space of demand and politics as a practice of working through specific demands. Demands serve a number of functions that derive from the split between the universal and the particular that Laclau relies upon. Demands articulate a specific political claim at the level of the particular, and also imply a more generalized relationship to hegemony in the register of the universal. On this logic, demands represent the hegemonic order, creating an implicit picture of how it functions and might change. Simultaneously, demands create possible lines of equivalential affinity between others also making demands on the hegemonic order. Thus, the demand is more fundamental than the group, in that the operation of the split demand inaugurates all ‘the various forms of articulation between a logic of difference and a logic of equivalence’ that animate the social affinities that give groups their coherence (Laclau 2005, p. 20). The logic of the demand is in turn the logic of equivalence, and equivalence is as important for how it animates a group identity, as it is in positing claims on a hegemonic order. Although Laclau owes a significant debt to Freud and Lacan, it is not clear that his theory of demand is explicitly crafted from psychoanalytic categories. For example, how central is enjoyment to Laclau’s relatively formal account of the demand? As Glynos and Stavrakakis have argued, there is a ‘complete and conspicuous absence in Laclau’s work of Lacanian categories such as fantasy, and, perhaps more importantly, jouissance’ (Glynos and Stavrakakis 2006, p. 202). Glynos and Stavrakakis claim that there is ‘to [their] knowledge no reference in Laclau’s work to the concept of jouissance’ (Glynos and Stavrakakis 2006, p. 209). On Populist Reason contains a brief discussion of the concept of jouissance as worked out by Copjec, which Laclau summarizes by saying: there is no achievable jouissance except through radical investment in an objet petit a. But the same discovery (not merely an analogous one) is made if we start from the angle of political theory. No social fullness except through hegemony; and hegemony is nothing more than the investment in a partial object, of a fullness which will always evade us. The logic of the objet petit a and the hegemonic logic are not just similar, they are simply identical. (Laclau 2005, p. 109) There is an elegance to Laclau’s point about enjoyment, provided that enjoyment is reducible to a set of logical forms. This presupposition makes the lack of talk about jouissance in Laclau’s work understandable. If jouissance and hegemony are identical, one does not need Lacan to say something that might be said more elegantly with Gramsci. Jouissance is simply hegemonic investment, an elevation of an object or identity to the level of a thing or a universal. Despite occasional caveats to the contrary, the greatest virtues of Laclau’s version of the political stem from his relentlessly persistent application of a formal, almost structural account of the political. And, as is the case with many well executed structuralist accounts, Laclau’s system can elegantly incorporate caveats, objections to and oversights in the original system by incorporating them into the functioning of the structure jouissance can easily be read as nothing more than hegemony in this account without changing the original coordinates of the system too drastically. Yet, enjoyment provides one particularly difficult stumbling block for a dedicated formal account. To start with, enjoyment is never quite as ‘achievable’ as the preceding quotation might suggest. Far from being the consummation of a logic of structure and investment, enjoyment is a supplement to a failing in a structure: for example, Lacan frames jouissance as a useless enjoyment of one’s own subjectivity that supplements the fundamental failings of a subject in either finding a grounding or consummating an authoritative account of its coherence. This ‘uselessness’ defines the operation of jouissance. Thus, for example, when Lacan suggests that ‘language is not the speaking subject’ in the Seminar on Feminine Sexuality, lodging a critique of structural linguistics as a law governing speech, jouissance is understood as something excessive that is born of the failure of structures of signification (Lacan 1977). Language is not the speaking subject precisely because what is passed through the grist mill of the speech is the result of a misfiring of structure as much as it is prefigured by logics of structure, meaning and utility. Therefore the interpretive difficulty for a structuralist account of enjoyment: the moment that the fact of enjoyment is recoded in the language of structure, the moment that it is made useful in a logic of subjectivization is precisely the moment where it stops being jouissance. Following Glynos and Stavrakakis’s suggestion, one might press the question of the relationship between the demand and jouissance as a way of highlighting the differences that a purely Lacanian reading of demand might make for Laclau’s understanding of politics. Framing enjoyment as equivalent with hegemony, Laclau identifies the fundamental ‘split’ in psychoanalytic theory between the universal and the particular demands of a group. Framing the split in this way, and as the privileged site of the political, Laclau occludes attention to another split: namely, the split within a subject, between the one who enters an equivalential relationship and the identitarian claim that sutures this subject into a set of linkages. This too is a site of enjoyment, where a subject identifies with an external image of itself for the sake of providing its practices of subjectivity with a kind of enjoyable retroactive coherence. The demand is relevant here, but not simply because it represents and anticipates a change in the social order or because it identifies a point of commonality. Here the demand is also a demand to be recognized as a subject among other subjects, and given the sanction and love of the symbolic order. The implication of this argument about the nature of enjoyment is that the perverse dialectic of misfirings, failure and surpluses in identity reveals something politically dangerous in not moving beyond demand. Put another way: not all equivalences are equally equivalent. Some equivalences become fetishes, becoming points of identification that eclipse the ostensible political goal of the demand. To extend the line of questioning to its logical conclusion, can we be bound to our equivalential chains? Freud, Lacan and the demand Demand plays a central role in Freud’s tripartite scheme for the human psyche specifically in the formation of the ego. Although this scheme does not exercise the same hold over psychoanalytic thinking that it once did, the question of the ego still functions as an important point of departure for psychoanalytic thinking as a representative case of the production of the subject and identity. Even for critics of ‘ego psychology’, the idea of the ego as a representation of the ‘I’ of the human subject is still significant the main question is what kind of analytical dispositions one takes towards the ego, the contingencies of its emergence and its continuing function. Despite the tendency of some commentators to naturalize Freud’s tripartite schema of the human psyche, Freud’s account of the ego does not characterize the ego as pre-existent or automatically given. Although present in virtually every human subject, the ego is not inevitably present: the ego is a compensatory formation that arises in the usual course of human development as a subject negotiates the articulation and refusal of its needs as filtered through demand. Hypothetically a ‘subject’ whose every need is fulfilled by another is never quite a subject: this entity would never find occasion to differentiate itself from the other who fulfils its every need. As a mode of individuation and subjectification, egos are economies of frustration and compensation. This economy relies on a split in the Freudian demand, which is both a demand to satiate a specific need and a demand for addressee to provide automatic fulfilment of need generally. The generative power of the demand relies on this split and on fact that some demands will be refused. This economy of need and frustration works because refusal of a specific need articulated as a demand on another is also a refusal of the idea that the addressee of the demand can fulfil all the subject’s needs, requiring a set of individuation compensatory economic functions to negotiate the refusal of specific demands. ‘Ego’ is nothing more than the name for the contingent economy of compensatory subjectification driven by the repetition and refusal of demands the nascent subject presents wants and needs in the form of the demand, but the role of the demand is not the simple fulfilment of these wants and needs. The demand and its refusal are the fulcrum on which the identity and insularity of the subject are produced: an unformed amalgam of needs and articulated demands is transformed into a subject that negotiates the vicissitudes of life with others. Put in the metaphor of developmental psychology, an infant lodges the instinctual demands of the id on others but these demands cannot be, and for the sake of development, must not be fulfilled. Thus the logic of the pop-psychology observation that the incessant demands of children for impermissible objects (‘may I have a fourth helping of dessert’) or meanings that culminate in ungroundable authoritative pronouncements (the game of asking a never-ending ‘whys’) are less about satisfaction of a request than the identity producing effects of the distanciating parental ‘no’. In ‘The Question of Lay Analysis’, Freud argues: If ... demands meet with no satisfaction, intolerable conditions arise ... At that point ... the ego begins to function. If all the driving force that sets the vehicle in motion is derived from the id, the ego ... undertakes the steering, without which no goal can be reached. The instincts in the id press for immediate satisfaction at all costs, and in that way they achieve nothing or even bring about appreciable damage. It is the task of the ego to guard against such mishaps, to mediate between the claims of the id and the objections of the external world. (Freud 1986, p. 22) Later works move this theory from the narrow bounds of the parent/child relationship to a broader social relationship which was continually constituting and shaping the function of the ego this is a theme of works such as Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego, as well as Civilization and its Discontents. The latter repeats the same general dynamics of ego formation as ‘The Question of Lay Analysis’, but moves the question beyond individual development towards the entirety of social relations. For Freud, the inevitability of conflicts between an individual and the social whole is simply one of the facts of life among other people. Life with others inevitably produces blockages in the individual’s attempts to fulfil certain desires some demands for the fulfilment of desires must be frustrated. This blockage produces feelings of guilt, which in turn are sublimated as a general social morality. Here frustration of demand is both productive in that it authorizes social moral codes, and civilization as mode of functioning, though it does so at the cost of imposing a constitutively contested relationship with social mores (Freud 1989). Though there are many places to begin thinking the Freudian demand in Lacan, one of the best places to start is an almost accidental Lacanian rumination on demands. Confronted by student calls to join the movement of 1968 Lacan famously quipped: ‘as hysterics you demand a new master: you will get it!’ Framing the meaning of his response requires a treatment of Lacan’s theory of the demand and its relationship to hysteria as an enabling and constraining political subject position. Lacan’s theory of the demand picks up at Freud’s movement outward from the paradigmatic relationships between the parent/child and individual/ civilization towards a more general account of the subjects, sociality and signification. The infrastructure supporting this theoretical movement transposes Freud’s comparatively natural and genetic account of development to a set of metaphors for dealing with the subject’s entry into signification. Lacan’s goal is to rearticulate Freudian development processes as metaphors for a theory of the subject’s production within signification. In Lacanian terms, what is at stake in this transposition is a less naturalized account of the subject by privileging supplementary practices of enjoyment that give a subject coherence as an agent, not in the sense of an ultimate ontological grounding, but rather as a mode of enjoying the repetition of retroactive totalities that name and produce subjects. This process is most famously worked out in Lacan’s famous ‘Mirror Stage’ which details the trauma of the subject’s insertion into the symbolic order, and the way that this constitutive dislocation generates the jouissance that sustains the production of subjectivity (Lacan 1982a). Looking in the mirror, Lacan’s hypothetical infant does not yet have a concept of a unified self, puzzled by the fact that when it moves the image of the child in the mirror also moves. From the child in the mirror, Lacan infers the existence of two ‘I’s underwriting processes of subjectivization: an ‘ideal I’, a statuesque projection of what it means to be an ‘I’ (in this case the image of the child) and a phenomenological experience of ‘I-ness’. Lacan treats the dialectic of misidentification in the mirror as a constant and constitutive performance of subjectivity as opposed to a specific developmental stage (Wilden 1982). In this interpretation, the child in the mirror stage is a metaphor for the constant production of the subject as a performance of the self in relation to a constitutive gap between the Symbolic and the subject, and the articulation of subjectivity as a category serves to repress the trauma produced in the margin between a nascent subject, its alienation from a projected external identity, and within the structure of signification. The paradoxical effect of this mode of subject formation is that not only does the child ‘discover’ that she is the child in the mirror, it also experiences a disorienting distance between itself and its image. Despite this fact, the child requires the an external image such as the one in the mirror to impose a kind of unity on its experience the image of the other child provides an imaginary framing, a retroactive totality or a kind of narrative about what it means to be a self. The paradox of subjectivity lies in the simultaneity of identifying with an image of one’s self that is given by a specific location within the symbolic order and the simultaneous alienation produced by the image’s externality. Thus, the assumption of a frame for identity cannot ever completely effective, or, a subject is never completely comfortable inhabiting subjectivity there is always an impossible gap between an experience of alienated subjectivity, a prefigured given image of one’s subjectivity and the experience of being produced by the Symbolic. There is a famous Lacanian aphorism that holds that ‘the signifier represents a subject for another signifier’ (Lacan 1977, p. 142). This formulation of the subject’s relation to language inverts the conventional wisdom that ontologically pre-given subjects use language as an instrument to communicate their subjective intentions. Signifiers are constituted by their difference, and subjects come into being in negotiating their entry into this realm of difference. Instead of articulating subjective states through language, subjects are articulated through language, within the differential space of signification. The paradoxical implication of this reversal is that the subject is simultaneously produced and disfigured by its unavoidable insertion into the space of the Symbolic. The mirror stage marks the excess of the demand as a mode of subject formation. Subjects assume the identity as subjects as a way of accommodating to the demand placed on them by the symbolic, and as a node for producing demands on the symbolic, or, of being recognized as a subject (Lacan 1982a, p. 4). Here jouissance is nothing more than the useless enjoyment of one’s own subjectivity, surplus produced in negotiating a difficult gap between the phenomenological and ideal ‘I’s, produced by a failure in relation between Lacan’s phenomenological I and the Symbolic. Both the site of subject production and the site where this subject fills out an identity by investing in equivalential linkages and common demands are sites of enjoyment. In this sense, perhaps there is an excess of jouissance that remains even after the reduction of jouissance to hegemony. This remainder may even be logically prior to hegemony, in that it is a useless but ritually repeated retroactive act of naming the self that produces the conditions of possibility for investment, the defining point for Laclau’s reduction of jouissance to hegemony. This specific site of excess, where the subject negotiates the terms on a non-relationship with the symbolic is the primary site splitting need, demand and desire. Need approximates the position of the Freudian id, in that it is a precursor to demand. Demand is the filtering of the need through signification, but as Sheridan notes ‘there is no adequation between need and demand’ (Sheridan 1982). The same type of split that inheres in the Freudian demand inheres in the Lacanian demand, though in this case the split does not derive from the empirical impossibility of fulfilling demands as much as it stems from the impossibility of ever fully articulating needs to or receiving a satisfactory response from the Other. Since there is no adequation, the specificity of the demand becomes less relevant than the structural fact that demand presupposes the ability of the addressee to fulfil the demand. This impossibility points to the paradoxical nature of demand: namely that the demand is less a way of addressing need than a call for love and recognition by this other. ‘In this way’, writes Lacan, ‘demand annuls (aufheht) the particularity of everything that can be granted by transmuting it into a proof of love, and the very satisfactions that it obtains for need are reduced (sich erniedrigt) to the level of being no more than the crushing of the demand for love’ (Lacan 1982b, p. 286). The difficulty is that the Other cannot, by definition, ever give this gift: the starting presupposition of the mirror stage is the constitutive impossibility of comfortably inhabiting the symbolic the mirror stage marks the constitutive split between the subject and the Symbolic. This paradoxical split, namely the structural impossibility of fulfilling demands, resonates with the logic of the Freudian demand in that the frustration of demand produces the articulation of desire. Thus, Lacan argues that ‘desire is neither the appetite for satisfaction, nor the demand for love, but the difference that results from the subtraction of the first from the second’ (Lacan 1982b, p. 287). How might this subtraction occur? The answer to this question requires an account of the Other as seemingly omnipotent, and as simultaneously unable to fulfil demands. This sentiment animates the crucial Lacanian claim for the impossibility of the other giving a gift which it does not have, namely the gift of love: It will seem odd, no doubt, that in opening up the immeasurable space that all demand implies, namely, that of being a request for love .... Desire begins to take shape in the margin in which demand becomes separated from need: this margin being that which is opened up by demand, the appeal of which can be unconditional only in regards to the Other ... having no universal satisfaction ... It is this whim that introduces the phantom of omnipotence, not of the subject, but of the other in which his demand is installed. (Lacan 1982c, p. 311) Transposed to the realm of political demands, this framing of demand reverses the classically liberal presupposition regarding demand and agency. In the classical iteration and contemporary critical theories that inherit its spirit, there is a presupposition that a demand is a way of exerting agency, and that the more firmly that the demand is lodged, the greater the production of an agential effect. The Lacanian framing of the demand sees the relationship as exactly the opposite: the more firmly one lodges a demand the more desperately one clings to the legitimate ability of an institution to fulfil it. Thus, demands ought to reach a kind of breaking point where the inability of an institution or order to proffer a response should produce a re-evaluation of the economy of demand and desire. In analytic terms, this is the moment of subtraction, where the manifest content of the demand is stripped away and the desire that underwrites it is laid bare. The result of this ‘subtraction’ is that the subject is in a position to relate to its desire, not as a set of deferrals, avoidances or transposition, but rather as an owned political disposition. As Lacan frames it, this is a dialectical process, where at each moment the subject is either learning to reassert the centrality of its demands, or where it is coming to terms with the impotence of the other as a satisfier of demands: But it is in the dialectic of the demand for love and the test of desire that development is ordered .... Clinical experience has shown us that this test of the desire of the Other is decisive not in the sense that the subject learns by it whether or not he has a real phallus, but in the sense that he learns that the mother does not have it. (Lacan 1982b, p. 311) Thus, desire both has general status and a specific status for each subject. In other words, it is not just the mirror that produces the subject and its investments, but the desire and sets of proxy objects that cover over this original gap. As Easthope puts it: Lacan is sure that everyone’s desire is somehow different and their own lack is nevertheless my lack. How can this be if each of us is just lost in language ... passing through demand into desire, something from the real, from the individual’s being before language, is retained as a trace enough to determine that I desire here and there, not anywhere and everywhere. Lacan terms this objet petit a ... petit a is different for everyone; and it can never be in substitutes for it in which I try to refind it. (Easthope 2000, pp. 9495) The point of this disposition is to bring the subject to a point where they might ‘recognize and name’ their own desire, and as a result to become a political subject in the sense of being able to truly argue for something without being dependent on the other as a support for or organizing principle for political identity. This naming is not about discovering a latently held but hidden interiority, rather it is about naming a practice of political subjectivization that is not solely oriented towards or determined by the locus of the demand, determined by the contingent sets of coping strategies that orient a subject towards others and a political order. As Lacan argues, this is the point where a subject becomes a kind of new presence, or in the register of this essay, a new political possibility: ‘That the subject should come to recognize and to name his desire; that is the efficacious action of analysis. But it isn’t a question of recognizing something which would be entirely given .... In naming it, the subject creates, brings forth, a new presence in the world’ (Lacan 1988, pp. 228229). Alternatively, subjects can stay fixated on the demand, but in doing so they forfeit the possibility of desire, or as Fink argues: ‘later, however, Lacan comes to see that an analysis ... that ... does not go far enough in constituting the subject as desire leaves him or her stranded at the level of demand ... unable to truly desire’ (Fink 1996, p. 90). What does this have to do with hysteria? A politics defined by and exhausted in demands is definitionally a hysterical politics. The hysteric is defined by incessant demands on the other at the expense of ever articulating a desire which is theirs. In the Seminar on the Ethics of Psychoanalysis, for example, Lacan argues that the hysteric’s demand that the Other produce an object is the support of an aversion towards one’s desire: ‘the behavior of the hysteric, for example, has as its aim to recreate a state centred on the object, in so far as this object, das Ding, is, as Freud wrote somewhere, the support of an aversion’ (Lacan 1997, p. 53). This economy of aversion explains the ambivalent relationship between hysterics and their demands. On one hand, the hysteric asserts their agency, even authority over the Other. Yet, what appears as unfettered agency from the perspective of a discourse of authority is also simultaneously a surrender of desire by enjoying the act of figuring the other as the one with the exclusive capability to satisfy the demand. Thus the logic of ‘as hysterics you demand a new master: you will get it!’ At the register of manifest content, demands are claims for action and seemingly powerful, but at the level of the rhetorical form of the demand or in the register of enjoyment, demand is a kind of surrender. As a relation of address hysterical demand is more a demand for recognition and love from an ostensibly repressive order than a claim for change. The limitation of the students’ call on Lacan does not lie in the end they sought, but in the fact that the hysterical address never quite breaks free from its framing of the master. Here the fundamental problem of democracy is not in articulating resistance over and against hegemony, but rather the practices of enjoyment that sustain an addiction to mastery and a deferral of desire. The difficulty in thinking hysteria is that it is both a politically effective subject position in some ways, but that it is politically constraining from the perspective of organized political dissent. If not a unidirectional practice of resistance, hysteria is at least a politics of interruption: imagine a world where the state was the perfect and complete embodiment of a hegemonic order, without interruption or remainder, and the discursive system was hermetically closed. Politics would be an impossibility, with no site for contest or reappropriation and everything simply the working out of a structure. Hysteria is a site of interruption, in that hysteria represents a challenge to our hypothetical system, refusing straightforward incorporation by its symbolic logic. But, stepping outside this hypothetical non-polity, hysteria is net politically constraining because the form of the demand, as a way of organizing the field of political enjoyment requires that the system continue to act in certain ways to sustain its logic. Thus, though on the surface it is an act of symbolic dissent, hysteria represents an affective affirmation of a hegemonic order, and therefore a particularly fraught form of political subjectivization.

### Link – Productivity

#### **Attempts to render their politics productive buy into the intrinsic value of labor which cements infinite capitalist dissatisfaction**

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 180-183, 20 September 2016, MG)

The victory of capitalism over traditional societies is a victory over the ideals of historical continuity and community. In order for capitalism to rule the world, markets and private property are not enough. It requires a **new ideal** to gain ascendency over the sedimented ideals of traditional societies. This new ideal is **productivity** and its maximization. As Joyce Appleby points out, capitalism became the **ruling economic system** at the moment when “**the ideal of productivity finally became dominant**.”1 Once this ideal takes hold, even capitalism’s detractors accept it as their starting point. A capitalist world is a world where productivity is implicitly— and often explicitly—the highest value.

Productivity orients capitalist subjects around an end to be accomplished, and this end promises to **exhaust the means used to achieve** it. That is, the means are important only for the end that they accomplish. This is a defining capitalist idea, and the devaluing or erasing of means is essential to capitalism. Labor is important not for its own sake but for what it produces—for the capitalist and the consumer. The end may be the realization of profit or the enjoyment of a commodity. But in both cases the actions done to make this end possible lose all importance.

Capitalism’s focus on ends spares the subject from the encounter with the trauma of means. The means involve work and the effort that it demands. But the **real trauma of means** as opposed to ends is that they are never over and done with. When we think in terms of the end product and the accumulation of capital, we don’t have to consider the perpetual process required to create the product and the capital. The goal of the end replaces the **repetition of the means** and enables us to believe in the possibility of concrete and lasting accomplishments that will ultimately deliver us from incessant repetition. Capitalism directs subjects toward ends that they can achieve and obscures means that no amount of productivity will allow them to escape.

At the same time, however, the capitalist system relies on means to accomplish its ends. The capitalist and the worker must devote themselves to the actions that will bring about productivity. The system even **requires moments** in which the means **disrupt productivity** in order to reenergize it. Capitalism uses means for the sake of expanding its productive ends, but it never permits subjects to **invest themselves in means** while remaining in the capitalist universe. Capitalist subjects can think about the goals they want to fulfill without recognizing that they can never really leave the terrain of means, which inheres in subjectivity itself. The degradation of means is central to capitalism’s **psychic appeal.**

In this sense, there seems to be a natural affinity between capitalism and utilitarian philosophy. Though there are prominent utilitarian philosophers (like Peter Singer) who struggle for a more ethical version of capitalism or even for socialism, the philosophy itself, with its focus on ends rather than means, fits the capitalist a priori structure. In other words, the fact that John Stuart Mill is a prominent theorist of both capitalism and utilitarianism should not surprise us. At the beginning of his treatise on utilitarianism, Mill foregrounds the overriding importance of ends. He claims, “All action is for the sake of some end, and rules of action, it seems natural to suppose, must take their whole character and colour from the end to which they are subservient.”2 This idea that the end drives our actions emerges out of capitalism’s privileging of productivity. 3

Of course, the idea that we act to realize ends does not originate with capitalist modernity or with utilitarian philosophy. One finds this emphasis on ends throughout Aristotle’s thought, especially when he begins the Nicomachean Ethics with the claim that all our actions aim at the realization of some good. But there is a key difference between Aristotle and capitalism. The former views ends as an engine for our actions, but ends don’t exhaust our actions or extirpate the means used to attain them. This is what occurs with capitalism. Its emphasis on productivity precludes every attempt to value means on a par with ends. The result is that all affirmations about the **intrinsic value of labor** have an inherently anticapitalist hue to them.

To put it in the terms of psychoanalysis, capitalism focuses the attention of the subject not on the lost object that causes its desire but on the object that it desires. The capitalist subject is always looking forward to new objects that might attract its desire. In the capitalist universe, objects of desire proliferate and are highly visible. Just walking down the street forces multiple encounters with these objects in the form of advertisements, the cars that people drive, even the clothes that others wear. But the visibility of objects of desire in the capitalist system corresponds to the invisibility of the object that causes our desire.

The object of desire obscures the object-cause of desire or lost object. As we saw in chapter 1, the object of desire is an empirical object, existing in the everyday world, that one can obtain in the form of a new car, a new dress, or a new boyfriend. The lost object that causes desire, however, has no substantial existence and causes the subject’s desire only insofar as it is lost. The lost object is loss as such and functions to **animate the subject** as a being capable of acting in the world. We act—we take an interest in the world— because we begin with loss, with the loss of what we never had. This initial loss defines us as subjects. Thinking about desire in terms of the object of desire makes desire much easier to contemplate. Instead of being doomed to failure, it becomes a **worthwhile investment**. This realignment of our experience of desire constitutes an essential part of capitalism’s charm.

Though capitalism succeeds in deflecting attention from the lost object to the object of desire, it **cannot make the object of desire satisfying** when the subject obtains it. In fact, capitalism relies on the dissatisfaction that follows from obtaining the object of desire to stimulate consumption. If the commodity proves disappointing, the subject will have to buy another, more improved version. The eightyinch television will surely provide the satisfaction that the fifty-five- inch one didn’t. The older wine will prove more enjoyable than the newer (and cheaper) vintage. But eventually subjects grow wary of this perpetual game of dissatisfaction. Though the commodity always promises a complete satisfaction, **it never delivers on this promise**. No television can ever be large enough.4

### Link – Russia Cyberwar

#### Their fear of Russian cyberattacks links paranoid anxiety from cyberattacks to a familiar paradigm of securitization against the threat of Russia – cybersecurity discourse is not neutral but rather creates anxious subjects in a constant state of expectant dread and makes their impacts inevitable through misattribution and orientalist lash-out.

Eberle and Daniel 22 [Jakub Eberle earned his Ph.D. in International Relations at University of Warwick. He is the research director at the Institute of International Relations Prague and a lecturer at the Prague University of Economics and Business. He is the author of Discourse and Affect in Foreign Policy: Germany and the Iraq War and co-editor of the forthcoming book International Theory and German Foreign Policy. Jan Daniel, obtained his PhD in International Relations from Charles University. He is a research at the Institute of International Relations Prague and a Research Fellow at the Institute of Political Studies, Charles University.; “Anxiety geopolitics: Hybrid warfare, civilisational geopolitics, and the Janus-faced politics of anxiety “; Political Geography; January 2022; https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0962629821001621?casa\_token=DD4IAglYpG8AAAAA:bHYXdLo10Dzh--y1SeCs9XDBiaLlarPViZQHwMg3HUi4opCziysgpXhZHhSJSJqXPPk4KTZ7M7jB]//eleanor

3. Hybrid warfare as anxiety geopolitics: learning from the Czech case We will now further develop our conceptual argument by discussing hybrid warfare as a case of anxiety geopolitics. Some have already shown that HW plays an ontological security role at the level of NATO and EU, as it ‘links the uncertainty emanating from the hybrid nature of the new threats to the known and routine relationship with its traditional antagonist’, that is Russia (Malksoo, ¨ 2018, p. 380). Following this argument, Russia’s aggression suddenly gave meaning to a range of hitherto unconnected, yet omnipresent, and, therefore, anxiety-inducing problems that NATO, EU and their member states were facing. Polarisation and the rise of populism, widespread distrust in institutions, erosion of international norms, cyberattacks, propaganda and disinformation campaigns suddenly all ‘made sense’, if they could be discursively linked to Moscow as instances of ‘Russian hybrid warfare’. HW thus provided NATO and EU, with the elusive ‘security’ of knowing one’s enemy (also Browning, 2018). Similarly, in Czechia, the HW discourse arrived at a time of intense social anxieties emerging from a range of different cultural, economic or geopolitical factors. For many in Czechia (and Central Europe more broadly), post-Cold War sense of ontological security had been provided through a civilisational geopolitical imagination of ‘the West’, which Central Europe supposedly (re)joined after 1989 (Cadier, 2019; Kuus, 2007; Todorova, 2009). Best captured by the slogan of a ‘return to Europe’, the vision of embracing liberal democracy, capitalism and Euro-Atlantic political structures was seen as a panacea that would resolve all big (geo)political questions once and for all. However, these very principles and structures arguably started crumbling precisely at the time that the Central Europeans were finally admitted in EU and NATO. The Iraq War laid bare the rifts within the West, calling in question its further relevance as a coherent geopolitical entity (Browning & Lehti, 2010; Jackson, 2006). Resurgent Russia challenged Western hegemony in Europe and led ‘an influential part of the Czech political and intellectual elite [to] succumb[…] to anxiety’ (Drulak, ´ 2012, p. 79). Central European countries were hit particularly hard by the economic crisis and further hurt themselves by the (foreign- or self-imposed) ‘Western’ medicine of austerity (Tooze, 2018, pp. 220–238). In the Czech case, this led to one of the longest periods of economic recovery in Europe, accompanied by a free-fall in public trust in institutions, with only one in ten Czechs expressing trust in the government (11%) and the Chamber of Deputies (10%) at the lowest point in 2012/2013 (CVVM, 2013). Add to this the rise of illiberalism at home and increasing divides between the ‘old’ and ‘new’ EU member states, laid bare especially during the so called ‘refugee crisis’ of 2015–2016. As a consequence, you end up with a region that is not so sure about its feeling about and towards ‘the West’ any longer (Kazharski, 2018; Krastev & Holmes, 2019). Put differently, by mid-2010s, the Czech society was already in a state of anxiety and uncertainty about its own geopolitical identity and in search for ontological fixes.3 This is where the HW discourse clicks in following Russia’s aggression against Ukraine in 2014. To the liberal voices that dominate security debates, hybrid warfare could be used to put a name on this anxiety and thereby attempt to suppress it by the construction of familiar geopolitical narratives. By invoking the prism of a conflict between a liberal-democratic West and an authoritarian Russia, all sorts of problems – spread of misinformation, return of nationalism, technological transformations or global power shifts – could be reduced to the logic of civilisational confrontation. This is the conventional ontological security part of the story, to which we add another step by showing how this promise of security is never actually fulfilled. Due to the supposed invisibility and omnipresence of hybrid threats and the insecure position the Czechs occupy in their own East/ West geopolitical imagination, there is a surplus of anxiety that cannot be successfully managed. The case study is structured according to the two ‘faces’ of the Janusfaced politics of anxiety. First, we show how hybrid warfare was used as a sense-making device promising to manage anxiety by providing a conceptual link between a broad range of social issues and anchoring them within the familiar East/West geopolitical imagination. This linking could simultaneously make hybrid warfare meaningful by geopoliticising it, and reinforce the crumbling East/West geopolitical imagination by showing its renewed relevance in facing hybrid warfare. Second, we show how the fleeting sense of ontological security achieved via this articulation gets undone by the recurring re-emergence of surplus anxiety and how HW ends up reproducing and perpetuating the sense of insecurity and anxiety it was supposed to resolve. The analysis is grounded in a range of empirical materials from 2014 to 2020, including official documents, media articles, popular books and parliamentary debates. Two caveats are in order. First, both Czech government and civil society have responded to the perceived threat of HW in many ways, including creating new official institutions and informal initiatives tailored to deal with it (Daniel & Eberle, 2018). In this article, we focus on the discourse that made these responses possible. Second, as shown elsewhere (Daniel & Eberle, 2021), the Czech HW discourse is not monolithic and includes different understandings of what exactly constitutes a threat to whom, ranging from military operations targeting public infrastructures all the way to individual citizen’s struggles with media literacy. In this article, though, we downplay these differences and instead focus on the commonalities that tie these different notions together as parts of ostensibly the same problem of Russia’s ‘hybrid warfare’. 3.1. Repressing anxiety: making sense of hybrid warfare through East/ West geopolitics Starting with the repression side of anxiety geopolitics, this can be observed inthe successive steps through which ontological security is sought by associating a range of issues with hybrid warfare and then pinning HW onto the familiar map of East/West geopolitical imagination. This consists of four interrelated discursive moves: identifying the supposed ‘origin’ of societal unease, putting a name of the problem, localising it in space, and endowing it with broader geopolitical meanings. In this particular case, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2014 serves as the supposed original moment and ‘cause’ of anxiety, hybrid warfare is the name presented to make sense of what is going on, Russia is constructed as the threat, and civilisational East/West geopolitics is used to give the situation broader meaning. Let us now discuss each of these steps in turn. First, a certain event needs to be constructed as a supposed point of origin of the perceived unease, a ‘crisis’ that dislocates the symbolic order (Nabers, 2015). This is the first move in the repression of anxiety, one in which an ‘actually existing’ empirical event is discursively presented as the apparent cause of the deeper ontological crisis that is affectively experienced as anxiety. In the HW discourse in Czechia, Russia’s aggression against Ukraine of 2014 is presented as such profoundly shocking and dislocating event. As the otherwise rather down-to-earth and matter-of-fact military intellectual, Karel Rehka, ˇ puts it: ‘the Russian Federation shocked the whole world. The unimaginable was broken into.’ (Rehka, ˇ 2017, p. 199) ‘Shock’ and ‘helplessness’ are words used also by a high-ranking Czech diplomat (personal interview, Prague, August 4, 2020). A leading Czech think-tanker then recalls how ‘surprised’ he was by Russia’s invasion and how ‘disorganised and fragmented’ the security debates were in the months that followed (Janda, 2017). The affective experience is captured well also in a widely cited and circulated popular book, which vividly describes how ‘we are walking on the edge of a cliff’ and ‘[u]ncertainty is the only thing that you can count on these days’ (Alvarov´ a, 2017, p. 20). Therefore, 2014 was constructed as a radical breakthrough into a much more insecure world. Yet, this move of identifying the supposed origin of these dizzying feelings of anxiety in one particular event was at the same time already the first step of seeking ontological security by making sense of it. A second step is putting the name on the problem. It is only the performative and affect-laden performance of naming that connects disparate phenomena together and creates a discursive ‘object’ that can be then dealt with politically (Laclau, 2005). In our case, this leads to the creative appropriation of the concepts of ‘hybrid warfare’ and ‘hybrid threats’, which were virtually non-existent in the Czech public discourse prior to 2014 (Daniel & Eberle, 2018), and using them as a linchpin that connects all sorts of societal problems. For an authoritative Czech security document, ‘hybrid threat’ is a ‘way to wage a confrontation or a conflict’, one that is characterised by an extraordinarily broad spectrum of measures: ‘a wide, complex, adaptable, and integrated combination of conventional and unconventional means, overt and covert activities, characterised primarily by coercion and subversion’ (Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, 2016, p. 127). The range of actors that can execute such methods is similarly broad, including ‘military, paramilitary, and various civilian actors’ (ibid.). Similarly, an overview of a ‘Russian hybrid strategy’ provided by the counterintelligence service includes ‘interpretation of modern history’, different ways of ‘information warfare’, ‘networking/infiltration’ across the fields of politics, economy, crime, espionage, culture and education, and military/guerrilla operations alike (Security Information Service, 2018, p. 7). In statements like these, hybrid warfare is stretched so as to incorporate almost anything that can be understood as a hostile activity. A such, it becomes an universal object of fear, broad enough to be used as a placeholder for all sorts of anxieties. In the third move, hybrid warfare is territorialised by pointing to Russia as its ultimate source. The ‘postmodern’ geopolitical imagination of hybrid warfare in terms of flows, clouds and infrastructures, is backgrounded in favour of the ‘modern’ territorial East/West geopolitics of a Russian threat. In certain cases, this means little more than merely pointing out that it is indeed Russia that ‘has executed hybrid operations [ …], including targeted disinformation activities and cyber-attacks’, as the Defence Strategy (Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, 2017, p. 7) puts it explicitly and other documents hint at implicitly (e.g. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, 2015). More interesting are the instances which present Russia not only as one source of threats, but as an orchestrator coordinating all possible means and actors. In such cases, the ‘postmodern’ geopolitical imagination of networks is used and reproduced, yet with a key twist: such networks are seen as hierarchical, with centre in Moscow. In this logic, different domestic actors – ‘alternative news’ websites spreading anti-Western narratives, right-wing populists, even contrarian intellectuals – can ultimately be tied to an overall Russia’s masterplan (for an example see Janda & Kundra, 2016). The counterintelligence agency reports are an example of this ‘puppet-master’ approach. One of them lists ‘covert infiltration of Czech media and the Internet’ and ‘foundation of puppet organizations, covert and open support of populist or extremist subjects’ among the key activities of Russia’s ‘information operations’ (Security Information Service, 2016, p. 9). Another outlines this logic in colourful detail, claiming that ‘Russia is creating a structure in Europe drawing on the concept of the Comintern (the Communist International; the Third International) founded by the Soviet Union’ (Security Information Service, 2015, p. 11), an organised network of all sorts of actors ‘with pro-Russian stances or fighting against the system’ (ibid., 12). However, different actors can be labelled as agents or instrument of HW and then geopoliticised and linked to Russia not only by direct association, but also because they are merely voicing opinions that can be somehow qualified as ‘pro-Russian’. As a more recent counterintelligence report puts it, actually an ‘overwhelming majority of disinformation websites in Czech are the work of Czech […] citizens, who are not supported by Russian entities.’ (Security Information Service, 2018, p. 8) Nevertheless, this still makes them a part of a broader geopolitical threat, as ‘these people and their internet projects are misused by Russia to spread propaganda or support other components of the hybrid strategy.’ (ibid., 8) It is this imagination of a Russian-orchestrated networked threat that enables a leading Czech journalist to blankly dismiss the prominent disinformation website, Aeronet. cz, as ‘writing for Putin’ (Kundra, 2016b), without any evidence of links to the Russian state known at that point and with his own subsequent investigations showing that this is most likely not the case. It also makes it possible to deal with anxieties by externalising the problem, such as when a popular book argues that ‘Furious hate […] is not Czech, it is something new, foreign. It came from the outside and ‘somehow’ entered into us.’ (Alvarov´ a, 2017, p. 88). In the fourth and final move, this ‘hybrid’ struggle with Russia is endowed with meaning by being inserted into the whole symbolic structure of East/West civilisational geopolitics, in which ‘[i]ssues of security and geopolitics are […] reframed in cultural terms. They become simultaneously geographical, cultural and strategic concepts, and they diffuse into ever more spheres of political life.’ (Kuus, 2007, p. x) The societal anxieties that are managed via the narrative of hybrid warfare emanating from Russia, are now also made part of an eternal struggle between the East and the West. This reactivates the ‘mental maps’, in which ‘the West’ functions as a desired point of identification and a promise of security and prosperity, whereas ‘the East’ is seen as ‘an abyss’, a notion ‘which in the Czech political discourse refers less to a geographical space than to ontological categories defining the alienated past of the Czech Republic.’ (Cadier, 2019, p. 84) As one member of parliament, Jan Bartoˇsek, put it, the Czechs are left with an unequivocal choice: ‘either we will be part of NATO as a firm ally of our pro-Western orientation, or we will be just one of Russia’s many colonies. There is no third way.’ (in Chamber of Deputies, 2018a). In statements like these, Russia is presented as a fundamentally different entity, a quintessentially Oriental actor, belonging to a different ‘universe’ that ‘until nowadays has not met’ with the European one (Alvarova, ´ 2017, p. 70). Echoing classical Orientalist tropes, Russians supposedly rely on ‘[m]ysticism, irrationality, associational instead of logical thinking – thus, a model of thinking that is of different civilisation, the one we know rather from the Orient’ (Alvarova, ´ 2017, p. 193). The potentially catastrophic consequences of allying with Russia are then often presented through references to the past, reinforcing the notion that what is at stake in HW is in fact yet another instance of a historical struggle between civilisations. ‘Many of us probably know our modern history, from 1945 through 1948, Russian advisers, death of [foreign minister] Jan Masaryk, occupation in 1968. The Russian influence, which simply broke us away from the West, ripped us from [our] democratic development, and has incalculable economic consequences stretching to this day.’ (Helena Langˇsadlov ´ a ´ in Chamber of Deputies, 2018b). This idea that issues like propaganda, misinformation or rise of populism are instances of a dramatic geopolitical confrontation, is finally driven home also by the notion that it is the West as a whole that is under attack, not just any individual country. According to a counterintelligence report, ‘the goal of the Russian hybrid campaign’ is ‘primarily to weaken NATO and the EU internally, e.g. by weakening individual member states’ (Security Information Service, 2018, p. 7). Therefore, should the Czechs fail to defend themselves, they are supposedly endangering something much bigger. According to a member of parliament, Jan Lipavský, what the Russians want is ‘to break European unity’ (Chamber of Deputies, 2018b). Such ideas connect hybrid warfare squarely to the Messianistic undertones of the East/West geopolitical imagination, in which the Central Europeans serve as guardians defending the West at its limit. To paraphrase Milan Kundera’s (1984) foundational essay on Central European civilisational geopolitics, by fighting hybrid warfare, the Czechs are risking ‘dying for Czechia and the West’, which indeed gives a sense of deep purpose and meaning to their cause and produces a strong anxiety-repressing narrative. To sum up this part, one important aspect of the anxiety geopolitics of hybrid warfare lies in the way how it allows channelling deeper anxieties by using the East/West geopolitical imagination to produce familiar storylines, identities and objects of fear. Despite being constructed as multifaceted, broad and difficult to detect, hybrid warfare is made legible by being projected on a familiar ‘mental map’, where it becomes merely the most recent instance of long-lasting struggle between the West and a fundamentally different, antagonist Russia. However, the relationship between the discourses of hybrid warfare and East/West geopolitics goes both ways: HW is not only territorialised by, but also gives broader meaning to and, in a way, promises to reinforce the East/West civilisational geopolitics. It is in and through HW that Russia is constructed as fundamentally different and the West presented as a coherent entity under attack, as well as something worth defending against the potentially tragic alternatives. Through the discourse of hybrid warfare, doubts about the relevance or resilience of a Westcentric geopolitical order are seemingly brushed away and old geopolitical identities are hardened. This is precisely the logic of ontological security that makes the ideas of a ‘return of geopolitics’ and the ‘new Cold War’ so appealing, as shown by Guzzini (2012, 2016) and Browning (2018). 3.2. Reproducing anxiety: danger is everywhere and the East is already within The HW discourse arguably succeeds on the level of meaning, that is in ‘making sense’ of the new threats by geopoliticising them in East/ West terms. In contrast, its success is only fleeting at best as an anxiety-repressing ontological fix. In this section, we focus on the other face of anxiety geopolitics, showing how the HW discourse also contributes to the reproduction of anxiety. The argument that security discourses end up perpetuating the very insecurity they promise to deal with is not new (e. g. Campbell, 1998). More recently, Heath-Kelly (2018) and Jacobsen (2020) have advanced it from an explicitly Lacanian perspective and shown how the discourses of terrorism and cybersecurity are inherently bound to disappoint the underlying desire for security. The endurance of these discourses is made possible by the way how they pre-emptively incorporate an explanation for their own failure. Terrorism and cyberthreats are constructed in such a broad, complex and omnipresent manner that no individual achievement can lead to the resolution of the problems presented by these discourses. There are always new risks and vulnerabilities, as the destruction or neutralisation of no actually existing objects of fear (e.g. Osama bin Laden) can ultimately satisfy the underlying ontological anxieties. There is always something else to worry about. Building on Heath-Kelly and Jacobsen, our final argument is that hybrid warfare works exactly like their examples, as HW, too, is a discourse that is simultaneously anxiety-repressing and anxiety-reproducing. In fact, we argue that the linking of HW and East/West geopolitics produces a particularly strongly anxiety-ridden discourse. While hybrid warfare presents threats as invisible and omnipresent due to their covert and networked nature, the East/West imagination further raises the stakes and salience of such threats by painting them as parts of a titanic civilisational struggle. The subjects produced by such discourse can never rest, as what may be going on right behind their noses is not just one particular cyber-attack, a single conspiracy theory that has gained traction on Facebook, or merely one instance of information stolen by a spy. Instead, it is a battle for the future of ‘the West’ and the Czech belonging to it, one where the alternative option is the most tragic one: a descent deep into the ‘abyss’ of ‘the East’ (Cadier, 2019). We will now illustrate these arguments by focusing on the unfathomability of HW, the shifting nature of the threats it produces, and the anxieties inherent in the East/West geopolitics that underpin it. First, the ‘failure to secure’ (Heath-Kelly, 2015) is pre-emptively incorporated in the HW discourse by its portrayal of the looming dangers as insidious, invisible and even impossible to detect. As a key security document states, ‘[t]he principal risk to which a subject attacked by a hybrid campaign is exposed lies in the fact that they will not be able to identify the hybrid campaign – in time, in its full scale, or at all’ (Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, 2016, p. 129). According to the deputy Helena Langˇsadlov ´ ´ a, what we are supposedly facing are highly dangerous, yet ‘creeping threats’, which we ‘cannot see on a day by day basis’ (in Chamber of Deputies, 2019). This leads some to claim that ‘at no point in history was it so extremely difficult to decide, if we are at war, or not’ (Taborský, ´ 2019, p. 164). While there may be little drama on the surface, no one can ever rest in this logic. An attack may be already underway, one that can even be approximated to war, literally at any minute. As the Special Forces general, Karel Rehka, ˇ put it at a conference organised in the Czech parliament: ‘In a way, we are already at war, we just do not realise it or are not able to admit it.’ (Lang, 2015) This is a mode of thinking that produces highly anxious subjects, in a constant sense of the ‘expectant dread’ that is anxiety (Hook, 2015, p. 117), one not yet having a clear referent and directed towards all possible yet still unknown dangers that may materialise at any time. It is in these notions that an unspecified existential threat may be hidden behind mundane events that the otherwise backgrounded ‘postmodern’ geopolitical imagination of HW suddenly kicks back in. If the ‘modern’ East/West geopolitical imagination ‘made sense’ and provided at least some fleeting ontological security by pointing to Russia, this is frustrated by the surplus anxiety produced via this ‘postmodern’ imagination of insidious, hidden networks operating in physical and cyberspace alike. In fact, as the discourse postulates, we may not even know that it really is Russia in the first place that is behind a particular incident, as hybrid attackers seek to create ‘an environment where responsibility for these activities cannot (at least formally) be attributed to them, or at least only speculatively and with great difficulty’ (Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, 2016, p. 127). We may ultimately never know if this or that mundane event is actually not a part of something much bigger, as it is the very aim of the attacker to ‘prevent a clear interpretation of events and the discovery of their interconnectedness’ (Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, 2016, p. 127). Therefore, while the prevalent ‘modern’ geopolitical reading of HW enables channelling anxiety by constructing Russia an object of fear, it still remains far from the manageable fear of ‘fight or flight’ (Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2020, p. 241). This is because these supposedly known aspects of the danger are constantly being accompanied and disrupted by the surplus anxiety of the ‘unknown unknowns’ stemming from the partial inclusion of the ‘postmodern’ geopolitical reading. This effectively pre-empts the HW discourse from ever solving the problems it is supposedly designed to tackle, as it is wholly unclear how to act upon threats that we are not yet aware of or do not know how to make sense of. Second, this oscillation between the known and the unknown and between fear and anxiety manifests itself in the constantly shifting construction of what is supposed to be the exact nature of the threat coming from Russia. This is best illustrated in the wording of the annual reports of the Czech counterintelligence agency (SIS), which reinforce the notion that Russia is indeed a severe threat, yet the precise character and shape of this threat appears to be changing year after year. As already mentioned, in first annual public report reflecting on the situation after Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, the SIS warned that their assessment showed the formation of what was spectacularly labelled as the ‘New Reincarnation of the Comintern’ – a loose network of allied actors, similar to the Cold War Soviet-controlled network of ideologically affiliated political parties, agitators and agents. The danger was portrayed as a new version of this tried and tested strategy, which Russia supposedly employs to connect different groups dissatisfied with the Western liberal democracy (Security Information Service, 2015, pp. 11–12). However, the spectre of the Comintern was a one-off, never to appear again. Instead, SIS later concluded that the threat resided in a much looser combination of often uncoordinated actions of Russian intelligence, authentic Czech individuals not in any way linked to Moscow but ‘only’ spreading their own ‘pro-Russian’ worldviews, and finally, even in the lack of education about modern history in schools (Security Information Service, 2018, pp. 6–8). This trend of diffusing the danger from a Kremlin-coordinated network to seeing the threats in mere ideological resonances further continued. The most recent report notes that there is a ‘transition from state-controlled or directed activities to spontaneous actions’ of like-minded actors. ‘When Russian state officials express what they desire to happen (for instance by spreading manipulative information), proxy actors without any links to the Russian state proceed to action on their own initiative and based on what they think the officials might want’ (Security Information Service, 2020, p. 9). Through this move, the spectre of ‘Russian hybrid warfare’ can now encompass virtually anything that can be somehow interpreted as matching with the desires or interests of the Kremlin, without any need for proving direct links, as these are no longer considered necessary. The construction of ‘a threat’ now includes even situations when ‘a foreign power does not engage in any direct action and keeps its distance, while using various ways (PR, instigating statements, propaganda etc.) to inspire individual persons to take action’ (Security Information Service, 2020, p. 9). Put differently, Russian threat can be present even where there is no direct Russian hand whatsoever. Literally any individual with views somehow similar to those of the Russian state can be seen as part of it, which makes the idea that security can ever be achieved virtually impossible. Instead, this logic contributes to the reproduction of an anxious society, defined by ‘the constant presence of the possibility of that threat, and with it, the sense that government cannot fully protect the people and that danger resides in the everyday’ (Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2020, p. 247). Third, this notion that the possibility that something ‘Russian’ may be insidiously present deep within the Czech society then revives also the old anxieties inherent in the ‘modern’ East/West geopolitical imagination itself. Central Europeans’ self-positioning in East/West geopolitics is highly ambivalent (Kuus, 2007; Todorova, 2009). On the one hand, being or becoming part of ‘the Western civilisation’ is a source of ontological security. On the other hand, this security is never quite complete or permanent. This is because Central Europeans locate themselves at the very limit of the West, as ‘European edge-men’ (Ma¨lksoo, 2010, p. 5), whose membership in the civilisation must constantly be proved as it can always be taken away – especially by the forces of the ‘East’. The ‘old shadow of Yalta’, the feeling that the region’s ‘freedom could yet again be expendable in times of crisis’ is constantly present (Ma¨lksoo, 2010, p. 75). Put differently, East/West geopolitics equips the Czech ‘pro-Western’ security intellectuals with a ‘mental map, where the country is depicted as being on the “edge” of Europe and constantly risking to “fall” into an abyss […] traditionally characterised as the “East”’ (Cadier, 2019, p. 84). While the East/West geopolitical imagination can succeed in spatialising the threat in the Russian ‘other’, the position it grants to the self is always potentially insecure. Therefore, it is also East/West geopolitics itself that produces subjects that are constantly on alert, facing the constant ‘possibility of loss of one’s soul’ (Balaska, 2019, p. 8) that defines the experience of anxiety. Such fragile geopolitical self-positioning further fuels the search for new and new sources of hybrid threats, as failing to uncover and face them may have existential consequences, especially given that ‘Easternness’ may have already infiltrated and compromised the Czech social body. This notion of ‘East within’ links to the above discussed unfathomability and invisibility of HW and manifests itself in multiple ways. For one counterintelligence report, it takes the form of smuggled ideas and narratives, presented ‘in a way leading Czech citizens to believe they are recipients of opinions held by fellow citizens not of Russian propaganda’ (Security Information Service, 2015, p. 11). Similarly, a popular book on ‘fake news’ geopoliticises social attitudes en bloc by identifying them along East/West axis, presenting the ‘disappointed’ part of society as ‘seeing a model in Russia, or perhaps China’ (Gregor, Mlejnkova´, & Zvolsi.info, 2018, p. 62). For others, the ‘East within’ takes the form in the physical presence of ‘Putin’s agents’ who supposedly ‘quite likely teach your children at universities, you meet them for a coffee in your favourite caf´e or work in normal jobs.’ (Kundra, 2016a, p. 88). The anxiety geopolitics of hybrid warfare is thus also about creating the normatively highly disturbing ‘“red under every bed” mentality’ (Fridman, 2018, p. 3) and applying ‘the ethics of total war […] even to the smallest skirmish’ (Galeotti, 2019, p. 8). Therefore, viewing security threats through the prism of hybrid warfare reproduces a highly anxious society and perpetuates the justification for those ‘intellectuals of statecraft’ (O ´ Tuathail & Agnew, 1992) that would not hesitate to provide the sort of geopolitical fixes that were discussed in the previous sections. Thereby, the discourse ends up reproducing itself, as the two faces of anxiety geopolitics not only disrupt, but also dialectically reinforce one another: geopolitical discourse emerges to repress anxiety and provide ontological security, yet the anxiety inherent in the discourse disrupts ontological security and, to come full circle, creates the need for geopolitical discourses. The result is a society oscillating between its desire to avoid anxiety and the repeated frustration thereof; an affective pulsation that has arguably been elevated to a dominant mode of politics of (in)security in our present time (Eklundh et al., 2017), of which hybrid warfare is a prime example. As similar patterns of anxious over-reaction and securitisation of broad areas of social life have been recognised by authors writing about HW in different empirical contexts (Fridman, 2018; Galeotti, 2019; M¨ alksoo, 2018; Ord ¨ ´en, 2019), we believe that the problem with ‘hybrid warfare’ is of a more general nature and the relevance of our analysis reaches beyond the Czech case. 4. Conclusion Introducing anxiety geopolitics as a conceptual linchpin between disparate arguments from debates on critical geopolitics, ontological security, and politics of anxiety, this article made two central contributions. First, we have theorised the relationship between geopolitics and anxiety, moving beyond the existing accounts above all by pointing out the Janus-faced character of anxiety geopolitics, in which anxiety is both repressed and reproduced. Second, using the case of Czechia, we have argued that hybrid warfare is a discourse that constantly oscillates between repressing anxiety by geopoliticising the source of danger in East/West terms, and subverting its own constructions by presenting the threats as insidious, invisible, and constantly shifting. Therefore, we contend that the HW discourse is structured in a way that cannot achieve its purported ambition to secure populations against ‘hybrid threats’ and instead ends up producing more insecurity and anxiety. Our argument has clear normative implications that expand the existing criticisms of HW by putting the underlying civilisational geopolitics in spotlight. This should help us challenge the technology-centred presentism of the HW discourse, showing that many of the ostensibly unprecedented concerns are in fact reheated versions of narratives that date back decades if not centuries. More importantly, it enables us to point to the presence of some of the highly problematic aspects of East/West thinking, especially those that have been rightly criticised as Orientalist, chauvinist or even racist (see e.g. Said, 1978; Todorova, 2009). Realising the presence of civilisational geopolitics makes it possible to ask whether certain portrayals of Russia in HW debates – e.g. as barbaric, irrational, irredeemable – may not represent narcissistic projections of the ‘Western’ self, rather than credible threat assessments (Chernobrov, 2019). Importantly, these are not scholastic matters of concern just for ivory-tower peaceniks, as the proponents of HW sometimes like to put it. Instead, these criticisms have clear implications for security policy. As recognised even among NATO’s own analysts and officials (Caliskan & Li´egeois, 2020; Rühle, 2019), adopting the prism of HW and labelling Russia as an inherently irrational enemy is detrimental to leading a productive debate on the exact nature of the challenges that Putin’s regime poses and formulating appropriate and efficient strategies to respond to it. We add to it by highlighting that the HW discourse not only ‘undermines strategic thinking’ (Caliskan & Li´egeois, 2020), but also never actually manages to provide security and creates highly concerning societal side-effects (perpetuation of anxiety, proliferation of Orientalist images).

#### Policy debate’s paranoia towards Russian cyberattacks is informed by anxiety geopolitics – in order for the West to create a sense of ontological security and stabilize it’s self-image, despite new domains of threats, we map the modern world over a familiar symbolic structure of an East/West divide – rather than providing security, the discourses of hybrid warfare oscillate between a move to repress anxiety and repeated failure in doing so.

Eberle and Daniel 22 [Jakub Eberle earned his Ph.D. in International Relations at University of Warwick. He is the research director at the Institute of International Relations Prague and a lecturer at the Prague University of Economics and Business. He is the author of Discourse and Affect in Foreign Policy: Germany and the Iraq War and co-editor of the forthcoming book International Theory and German Foreign Policy. Jan Daniel, obtained his PhD in International Relations from Charles University. He is a research at the Institute of International Relations Prague and a Research Fellow at the Institute of Political Studies, Charles University.; “Anxiety geopolitics: Hybrid warfare, civilisational geopolitics, and the Janus-faced politics of anxiety “; Political Geography; January 2022; https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0962629821001621?casa\_token=DD4IAglYpG8AAAAA:bHYXdLo10Dzh--y1SeCs9XDBiaLlarPViZQHwMg3HUi4opCziysgpXhZHhSJSJqXPPk4KTZ7M7jB]//eleanor

Apart from being a highly relevant problem, HW also presents a particularly fitting case to be analysed as an instance of anxiety geopolitics. First, the close link between HW and anxiety has been explicitly recognised by Maria Malksoo, ¨ who shows how HW triggers ‘anxiety about the difficulties of concretising unknown and indeterminate threats’ (Malksoo, ¨ 2018, p. 378). Second, the relation between HW and geopolitics is at the same time strongly pronounced and marked by a profound tension. On the one hand, HW ostensibly departs from a ‘modern’ geopolitical imagination based on territorial states and borders (O ´ Tuathail, 1998). After all, it is about information operations in deterritorialised spaces of the globalised public sphere, unattributable cyberattacks carried out by non-state groups, or the incitement of horizontal protest movements discontent with the present political order. On the other hand, this ‘postmodern’ geopolitical imagination (ibid.) has been very often subdued to the much more traditional and ‘modern’ vision of a ‘new Cold War’ between Russia and ‘the West’ (for critical analyses of this discourse see Browning, 2018; Ciuta ˘ & Klinke, 2010; Toal, 2017). Thereby, HW has been incorporated into the civilisational mode of geopolitical thinking that divides the world along an East/West axis. Approaching HW as a case of anxiety geopolitics allows us to analyse this tension and unpack the underlying puzzle: Why is it that the ostensibly novel, networked and deterritorialised phenomena associated with hybrid warfare get so easily submerged under such an old, static and territorial geopolitical imagination? We argue that the allure of East/West geopolitics lies in its familiarity, as it provides a well-worn map that promises to ‘make sense’ of the anxiety-inducing manifestations of ‘hybrid warfare’. Yet, we also show that these attempts eventually fail and the HW discourse ends up perpetuating the insecurities and anxieties, which it was supposed to resolve. As such, it serves well to ‘a ‘hybrid-industrial complex’ of government agencies, think-tanks, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and pundits’ that emerged around it (Galeotti, 2019, p. 11). By pointing out to the role of anxiety geopolitics in this economy of power/knowledge that emerged around HW, this article provides both an analysis and a political intervention. The article proceeds as follows. First, we start by a theoretical discussion, crafting the notion of anxiety geopolitics by developing and connecting insights of the literatures on critical geopolitics, ontological security, and politics of anxiety. Second, we argue that the amalgamation of the hybrid warfare discourse and East/West geopolitics presents a particular case of anxiety geopolitics, which oscillates between the promise to repress anxiety and the repeated failures in doing so. This is illustrated by examples from Czechia, a country considered as playing a pioneering and outsized role in the European HW debate (Daniel & Eberle, 2021; Jankowicz, 2020), which offers plenty of empirical material for developing our theoretical argument and drawing some more general implications. By way of conclusion, we discuss the broader take-aways for critical geopolitics and IR, as well as for policy debates on how (not) to address the threat posed by Russia. 2. Anxiety geopolitics: space, affect, and ontological insecurity Our research is located in critical geopolitics, from which we borrow the understanding of geopolitics as discourses and practices through which people ‘‘spatialize’ international politics and represent it as a ‘world’ characterized by particular types of places, peoples and dramas’ (O ´ Tuathail & Agnew, 1992, p. 192). Critical geopolitics focuses on how political events are articulated as somehow related to or driven by geographic phenomena, or how issues are ‘geopoliticised’, that is constructed as geopolitical problems (Cadier, 2019, p. 71). These ideas are best captured by the concept of geopolitical imagination: ‘Geopolitical imaginations are the result of subjects’ attempt to make sense of the world by associating political values with various parts of that map. They can also be spoken of in the collective sense, in which a group can be said to have similar (if ultimately unique) visions of the world.’ (Dittmer & Dodds, 2008, p. 447) More recently, critical geopolitics has paid increased attention to affects and emotions (Go¨karıksel & Secor, 2020; Laketa, 2019; Müller, 2013; Pain, 2009).1 Such affective geopolitics explores how affects are an indivisible part of social construction of space, as they are intimately entangled with languages and images through which our ‘mental maps’ are produced and disseminated. Summarising this broader argument, Laketa argues that geopolitics should be understood ‘both as socially produced and intimately experienced’ and, consequently, ‘the emotional and the affective become the site of the geopolitical’ and vice versa (Laketa, 2019, pp. 156, 160). Therefore, international politics is spatialised also by engaging subjects at the affective level, which is an essential part of the production of geopolitical imaginations through which subjects view the world and their place within it. This links critical geopolitics to a range of literatures that deal with the relationship between identity, emotions and affects, including the scholarship on ontological security and anxiety in IR. The rapidly growing literature on ontological security is concerned with how subjects – individuals, groups, or states – deal with the uncertainty of modern life without losing the ‘security of the self, the subjective sense of who one is’ (Mitzen, 2006, p. 344) that defines ontological security and makes life bearable. Building mainly upon the work of Anthony Giddens (1991), classical contributions agree that ontological security is sought through an active process of constructing the self and anchoring it in the social world, which happens through the establishment of routines (Mitzen, 2006), creation of biographical narratives (Kinnvall, 2004; Steele, 2008; Suboti´c, 2016), or maintenance of relationships (Berenskoetter & Giegerich, 2010). The key underlying purpose of ontological security-seeking is to avoid anxiety, which Giddens, following Freud, understands as an elusive and paralysing ‘generalised state of […] emotions’ that is different from fear (Giddens, 1991, p. 44). Fear is ‘a basic emotion directed at a specific object that prompts an adaptive response: fight or flight.’ (Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2020, p. 241). In contrast, ‘anxiety is diffuse, it is free-floating: lacking a specific object’, which makes it possible to ‘pin’ it to different things and concepts (Giddens, 1991, p. 44). Repressing the elusive anxiety by this ‘pinning’, which transforms it into the manageable fear of something, is then one of the key motives of human behaviour. As anxiety is considered overwhelming and paralysing; the ‘chaos’ that ‘threatens on the other side of the ordinariness of the everyday conventions’ (1991, p. 37), subjects often prefer to deal with it through the production of fear via the discursive construction of ‘specific objects and threats’ (Chernobrov, 2019, p. 39). This involves reaching to well-worn identity discourses, which serve as vehicles for ‘[t]ransforming the anxiety of the unknown into the security of the known (recognizable, even if illusory) [that] affirms the identity of the perceiving subject and enables it to confidently interact with the international other.’ (ibid.) These arguments have a direct purchase for critical geopolitics, as geopolitical imaginations are good examples of how such sense-making and anxiety-managing discourses can look like. Some have already recognised and developed this link. For Guzzini, the ‘revival of geopolitical thought’ in Europe is directly linked to ontological insecurity stemming from ‘the sense of disorientation and foreign policy identity crises which followed 1989.’ (Guzzini, 2016, pp. 14–15) Making a more explicit link between anxiety and fear, Browning develops a very similar argument: ‘The attraction of tropes of a new Cold War and a return of geopolitics is precisely that they solve anxiety about current events by fitting them into clearly established systems of meaning, though doing so entails reducing anxiety by emphasising a world of threats and fears’ (Browning, 2018, p. 113). Both Guzzini and Browning are critical of using geopolitics as a tool of anxiety management, citing its adverse effects both in normative terms (creation of enemy-images, building an exclusionary ‘Fortress Europe’), and in the consequential decrease in physical security (e.g. as a result of escalating tensions between antagonists locked-in in their hardened identities). However, both also appear to ground their argument in the assumption that anxiety ultimately can be managed (more or less) successfully, one that is shared by the Giddensian mainstream of ontological security studies. While scholars making such arguments would consider the price of anxiety-management via geopolitics as too steep, they still accept that such a trade-off can be made in the first place and that one’s ontological security can in fact be gained at the expense of physical security or the well-being of others. As some of the most recent debates in ontological security scholarship recognise (Browning, 2019; Cash, 2020; Gustafsson & Krickel-Choi, 2020; Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2020; Rumelili, 2020), these issues stem from Giddens’ problematic conceptualisation of anxiety that is adopted by most ontological security work in critical geopolitics and IR. To sharpen the analysis of the role of anxiety in geopolitics and deepen the critique made by Guzzini and Browning, an additional theoretical step is needed. For this purpose, we reach to the literature on the politics of anxiety drawing mainly on the work of Jacques Lacan, a psychoanalyst whose ideas have been increasingly prolific in IR (for an authoritative overview see Zevnik & Mandelbaum, 2021), and, to a lesser extent, critical geopolitics (Klinke, 2016; Laketa, 2019; Müller, 2013). Our approach shares the Giddensian notion that anxiety is an inarticulable, traumatic and potentially paralysing affect that subjects attempt to avoid and repress. However, instead of seeing it as merely something that ‘lurks’ behind as the dark other of normal life, anxiety is understood as a durable affective condition interwoven in everyday experiences as well as social processes and political institutions. It doesn’t just lurk, it is always already there, as it is present in the key mechanisms that hold society together: in the production of social subjects and the creation of rules through which these are regulated and bound together. In this reading, anxiety is correlative to the very emergence and existence of the subject as such. It is ‘a type of expectant dread’ or ‘a crushing experience of ‘out of placeness’’ that arises ‘when the subject, unable to ground themselves in either a functional horizon of values or a reliable social or subjective identification, fears that they might be somehow swallowed up, devoured’ (Hook, 2015, pp. 117, 119). It is less about the disorientation and uncertainty caused by one particular crisis (e.g. Russia invading Ukraine, Covid-19 arriving) and more about being reminded of the ultimately irreducible fragility of all things, including human lives and social orders. In this sense, anxiety is an affect linked to experiencing the limit of one’s own existence as a subject, something that signifies the encounter with ‘the real’, to use the Lacanian term for the internal limit of social order and/or the biological limit of human existence. Anxiety can never be fully managed or repressed, as it is a reaction to being confronted with what is for Lacan the ultimate reality of human existence: the fundamental ‘groundlessness of meaning’ (Balaska, 2019, p. 25) and, therefore, the impossibility of ever achieving a coherent and stable identity. In this sense, anxiety is the affect that ‘does not deceive’ (Lacan, 2014, p. 160), as it does not cover over the void at the heart of every social identity, but rather confronts us with it at the level of bodily sensation. To put it differently, subjects are always ultimately ontologically insecure, as no narratives, routines or relationships – personal or geopolitical – can ever fully deal with the omnipresent possibility that things may not make sense and everything can break down any minute. Anxiety emerges as the affect that signifies ‘the need for the stabilisation of the subject’ (Burgess, 2017, p. 29), yet this stabilisation is doomed to fail in the longer term. Therefore, in contrast to readings that see it as an aberration, anxiety is omnipresent, even though it clearly varies in its intensity across time and space. Sometimes it is experienced more often and more strongly, while there may be other, less anxious times (Solomon, 2012 makes this argument with respect to affects in general). The current social condition is arguably one when anxiety is on the high; leading some authors to argue that we are now living in an ‘anxious society’, ‘a society on constant alert, despite having no identifiable existential threat. Instead, there is the constant presence of the possibility of that threat, and with it, the sense that government cannot fully protect the people and that danger resides in the everyday’ (Kinnvall & Mitzen, 2020, p. 247, emph. added; Eklundh et al., 2017). Such (highly) anxious society was created by the congruence of a range of factors. Some point to the effects of neoliberalism and austerity that produce the widespread feelings of powerlessness and loss of control (Hirvonen, 2017). Others focus on the social media economy that requires users who are constantly obsessively checking for news updates, notifications and the affective gratification coming from ‘retweets’ and ‘likes’ (Davies, 2019). For yet others, the proliferation of anxiety is connected to the societal changes linked to gender, race and immigration (Ali & Whitham, 2018; Klinke, 2016; Zevnik, 2017b), or the ‘security creep’ perpetuated by discourses and practices of counterterrorism and cybersecurity (Heath-Kelly, 2018; Jacobsen, 2020). This extended understanding of anxiety as ontologically conditioned and socially circulated ‘nervous states’ (Davies, 2019) without a clear and concrete referent object opens the possibility to think (geo)politics of anxiety in broader and arguably more critical terms than in conventional ontological security literature. On the one hand, the Lacanian approach broadly agrees with the Giddensian ontological security framework with respect to how subjects try to deal with anxiety: by ‘pinning’ it onto an object and transforming it into a more tangible fear of something. In this manner, ‘fear becomes a way of easing anxiety; of attaching a signifier (an object of fear) to what is otherwise an unfounded experience of unease’ (Zevnik, 2017a, p. 237). Such ‘politics of fear’ then transforms the crushing and paralysing experience of anxiety into the management of ‘concrete objects that we have invented’ (Hirvonen, 2017, p. 261), such as the geopolitically coded ‘Muslim terrorists’ or ‘Russians hackers’. In this step, anxiety is ostensibly eased or repressed by the production of (geopolitical) narratives that ‘make sense’ of the unpleasant experience by giving it a name and placing it on a map.2 On the other hand, however, the Lacanian take allows us to account also for the politics that is imminent in the failure of these anxiety-managing attempts. As we have argued, all narratives built around particular objects of fear, including geopolitical ones, are eventually failing, as these objects are ultimately ‘false targets’. They are merely temporary discursive vessels functioning as placeholders for expressing deeper ontological anxiety, which is bound to strike back. Consequently, attempts to make societies (feel) more secure, habitually end up making them (feel) equally, or even more, insecure and anxious, regardless of how much effort is invested into fighting this or that particular threat. As Heath-Kelly (2015, 2018) and Jacobsen (2020) have shown, successful security discourses like counter-terrorism or cybersecurity have actually managed to internalise this ‘failure to secure’ (Heath-Kelly, 2015) by incorporating it into their very structure. According to them, counter-terrorism and cybersecurity are constructed as dangers so slippery and multifaceted that once we resolve one problem (by killing Osama bin Laden, resolving a particular cyberthreat), a whole new range of terrorist groups or cyber issues emerges to occupy their place. Consequently, and in contrast to conventional ontological security literature, politics of anxiety is not only about managing and repressing it through narratives, routines and relationships. It is also about other ways of manipulating anxiety for political purposes, including reproducing, nurturing and spreading it via the construction of threats so opaque and widespread that they cannot be possibly resolved, like terrorism, cybersecurity – or hybrid warfare. By its repeated failure to secure, such discourses hold societies in the anxious ‘state of constant and heightened alertness’ (Davies, 2019, p. xii), making them ready to accept a range of pre-emptive security measures across all possible areas of social life. Bringing the argument together, by the notion of anxiety geopolitics we conceptualise the politics of dealing with anxiety by linking it to objects and issues spatialised through the means of geopolitical imaginations. By references to geographical categories, such as states, regions, continents or civilisations, this type of affective geopolitics promises to transform the amorphous and ambiguous anxiety stemming from range of different issues into tangible and manageable objects of fear taking the form of geopolitical threats. Yet, as all such narratives and images are ultimately bound to fail to resolve the underlying anxiety, the analytical focus must be extended also to how these failures are accounted for and how anxiety is being further reproduced with the help of geopolitical imaginations. Therefore, anxiety geopolitics is ultimately about the oscillation between repressing anxiety through the geopoliticisation of both the ‘threat’ and the self, as much as it is about dealing with the recurring failures to secure the subjects produced by such geopoliticisation, which result in reproduction of social anxiety.

### Link – Society

#### The toll for societal acceptance is sacrifice of the object of your desire – that installs the death drive into the subject and endlessly repeats the process until the subject’s death drive has been domesticated

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 146-148, 1 July 2013, MG)

Just as the sacrifice of what the subject doesn’t have constitutes the subject as such, the shared sacrifice of an impossible pleasure gives birth to social living. The sacrifice that subjects make in order to enter society repeats the earlier sacrifice, but what occurs is **repetition with a difference**. While the initial sacrifice of the privileged object **installs the death drive** in the subject and thereby constitutes the individual as a subject, the repetition of this sacrifice marks an attempt to **domesticate the death drive** at the same time as it follows the death drive’s logic. That is, the death drive leads us to this repetition, but the repetition attempts to solve the impossible bind that the death drive creates for us. Society is an attempt to solve the problem of subjectivity itself.6

Of course, the idea that subjectivity in the psychoanalytic sense exists prior to society is absurd, since subjectivity only becomes possible through the imposition of a societal demand on an animal being. But within society, the process of subjectivization occurs in two steps: an initial loss occurs that constitutes the subject, and subsequently the subject makes an additional sacrifice in order to commemorate the first loss and to join the social order. It is only through the repetition of loss that the social order really gets a hold on the subject because the second loss involves an investment through sacrifice in the good of the social order as a whole. In this sense, subjects do exist prior to their entrance into the social order, and properly socialized subjects are only those who have **sacrificed** for the sake of the social good. The subject who would refuse to make this sacrifice for the sake of society would not participate in the social bond and would exist as an outsider within the social order. This is the position that the ~~psychotic~~ occupies.

Because the originary sacrifice of the privileged object creates this object, we can never have what we’ve lost, which means that **we desire an impossibility**. The turn to society, however, allows us to envision possibility at the site of this impossibility. When we repeat the sacrifice in order to enter the social order, we do so in response to a demand made by social authority. Social authority prohibits the ultimate enjoyment, and this prohibition functions to disguise its impossibility. The transition from the initial sacrifice that constitutes subjectivity to its repetition that constitutes the social bond is the transition from impossibility to prohibition. We are willing to accept societal prohibition readily because it has the effect of making our **impossible object seem possible**. In this sense, joining society offers the subject the recompense of eliminating impossibility — replacing impossibility with a never- to-be-realized possibility.

But for the demand that society makes on me, the thinking goes, I would have the enjoyment that constantly eludes me. While the originary sacrifice involves the subject depriving itself of nothing, the repetition of the sacrifice when the subject enters society retroactively transforms this earlier sacrifice and allows the subject to believe that it has lost a substantial object rather than the embodiment of nothing. The socialized subject can no longer see the nothingness of what it has sacrificed. Thus, **the turn to society is a deceptive turn**. At its foundation, socialization imparts a lie to the subject. The social bond results from a shared lie and appeals to us because it permits a retreat from an unbearable impossibility to a frustrating prohibition.

We exist as members of a society and enjoy ourselves in this capacity through the shared sacrifice that gives us something held in common. What we hold in common is not a positive object; it is nothing but the act of sacrifice. For the subject itself, sacrifice provides a way of returning to **its original genesis**, and for society, sacrifice offers an opportunity for returning to the point at which the social order constituted itself. Organized rituals of sacrifice have an enduring place in society because they accomplish this type of return. To an extent that has not been adequately emphasized, psychoanalytic thought allows for a unique reappraisal of the origin and persistence of sacrifice within societies.

The prevalence of sacrifice presents a problem for political and social theorists because it is an act that seems to work against individual and social self-interest. The great thinkers of sacrifice have thus tried to reconcile it with an end that its appearance belies. For instance, Marcel Mauss sees sacrifice as the foundational form of the social bond. As he points out in his discussion of potlatch among the Indians of the American Northwest, “The purpose of destruction by sacrifice is precisely that it is an **act of giving that is necessarily reciprocated**.”7 Sacrifice engenders reciprocity (with another individual, another tribe, a god, or whatever), and it thus has the result of producing a bond where none had hitherto existed. Rather than constituting a loss for one sacrificing, the act redounds upon the one who performs it and bestows the profit of a desired relationship. By interpreting sacrifice (and gift giving) in this way, Mauss sidesteps its counterintuitive appearance and reveals how it remains within the realm of interested behavior. But by doing so, he also raises the question of why bonds or relationships require the act of sacrifice rather than mere verbal or contractual agreement. Sacrifice seems like **too much trouble for societies to endure** if they simply want to establish relations. In short, the excess implicit in the phenomenon of sacrifice remains despite the explanation that Mauss provides.

### Link – Surveillance

#### Their desire and attitudes towards surveillance premise their subjectivities only in terms of privacy which is a capitalist trick to privatize the conscious

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 83-85, 20 September 2016, MG)

In this sense, totalitarianism is not the reverse side of liberalism’s insistence on sustaining the private world at all costs, but instead the **ultimate end point** of this insistence. The more one seeks to safeguard privacy and clear the path for capitalist relations of production, the more one also leaves space for the rise of totalitarianism. The totalitarian leader might eliminate privacy but is able to do so because a commitment to privacy predominates. One cannot imagine the rise of totalitarianism without capitalism’s destruction of the public world.

Still, concern about capitalism’s destruction of the public world seems misplaced in the context of contemporary events. The greatest threat today seems to be the **elimination of privacy**, not the destruction of the public world. There may be whistle-blowers who come forward to expose secret assaults on the public, but they are in prison or exile for bringing the evisceration of privacy to light. Our privacy appears imperiled in the face of assaults from both the state and from the corporate world. It has become increasingly difficult to exist off the capitalist grid, to find a private place in which one might challenge the dominance of the capitalist system.

We live today in a surveillance society in which there is increasingly less space where subjects can act without being observed. If capitalism ushers subjects into a private world, it is also developing a **system of surveillance** that appears to eliminate the possibility of privacy. Though we can be reasonably sure that no one surreptitiously opens our letters and reseals them, we can be also be reasonably certain that some system is actually monitoring our email and cell phone communications as well as observing us for much of the day. Surveillance has become the norm in contemporary capitalism.

But widespread surveillance doesn’t have the effect of eliminating our investment in privacy and our private worlds. Instead, surveillance—and **knowledge about that surveillance**—has the effect of heightening our **commitment to privacy**. When surveillance threatens the private world, we respond by identifying **entirely as private beings**, which is precisely the response the surveillance aims to trigger. The ideological function of surveillance is not the elimination of privacy but the **creation of subjects who see themselves only in terms of privacy**. Surveillance leads one to think of oneself as an essentially private being whose private life threatens to become visible.27

Whether one responds to surveillance with outrage or acquiescence, the fact of thinking about oneself as a being subjected to surveillance already indicates a **turn away from the public and toward the private**. In this sense, surveillance ipso facto privatizes us. This is clearest in those who see increasing surveillance as an existential threat that they must defend themselves against. They retreat into enclaves of privacy and erect more and more barriers to any public contact in order to preserve their private worlds. But by doing so, they play right into the hands of the structure they believe they are opposing. They accept that they have a private world and a private being to treasure. But one cannot defeat the privatization of the world by retreating into privacy.

Those who simply accept surveillance often do not escape its ideological hold either, though their investment in privacy is not as easy to see. Surveillance ensconces subjects in a self-relation built around privacy, and going about one’s daily existence under surveillance tends to focus one’s attention on one’s private interests. This is evident in many consumer interactions with companies on the Internet. On the Internet, surveillance is even more thoroughgoing than it is in London, the city with the most surveillance cameras in the world.

As everyone who has ever made an online purchase knows, companies track the electronic behavior of individuals in order to know how best to market to them. They keep records on the websites individuals visit, the products they purchase, and contacts they make on social networks. Most individuals tacitly appreciate this tracking because it facilitates the act of consumption. Amazon.com knows which coupon to send to one customer, and Nike knows which shoe to advertise to another. Everyone comes out ahead. Surveillance facilitates the consumption process by eliminating barriers to the object of desire. It is easier to find what one wants on Amazon.com because the company has tracked previous purchases and browsing activity. When one accepts this easy access to the object, one has adopted the attitude toward desire that capitalist society constantly encourages in its subjects.

Other acts of surveillance, however, have no direct bearing on subjects accessing their objects of desire. Surveillance of private phone calls in the United States by the National Security Agency or the millions of surveillance cameras placed throughout Great Britain observing the minutiae of individual activity do not make it easier for me to accumulate. But these apparatuses do function as **evidence** for the essentially **private nature of existence**. They constantly remind us that we have something to hide, something that belongs to us alone.

The premise that animates the surveillance society is that the subject is an essentially private being. In public interactions the subject dissimulates and obfuscates its true desire, but in private that desire becomes evident. When I’m in public, I alter my actions according to the expectations of the Other, but when I’m in private, no such barrier exists. I’m free to be myself, which is why the system of surveillance focuses on the private sphere and increasing our investment in it.

In the face of an almost ubiquitous surveillance perpetuated by both state and corporate forces, it seems ludicrous to lament the decline of the public world. And yet, our **satisfaction depends on this public world** and the obstacle to desire it erects. Threats to privacy are not threats to the subject’s mode of satisfaction. Privacy itself is the threat. Surveillance is only a danger insofar as it convinces us that we have an essentially private being that might be subjected to surveillance. The subject’s essence is always outside of itself and **readily visible to the public**. For the subject that recognizes the necessity of the obstacle, there is nothing for the surveillance camera to see. The subject necessarily **exposes itself in the form of its subjectivity**.

### Link – Terrorism

#### The specter of terrorism the affirmative attempts to destroy is rooted in the belief of ceasing anxiety – that solely begets more violence and disappointment

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 108-111, 1 July 2013, MG)

While most contemporary subjects don’t smash rocks over the heads of those who provoke anxiety in them, the conclusion of Short Cuts is nonetheless revelatory. Much (physical and psychic) violence today occurs in response to the **anxiety of the encounter with the enjoying other**. Both the violence of the fundamentalist suicide bomber and the violence of the **War on Terror** have their origins in the experience of anxiety. Suicide bombers target sites of decadent Western enjoyment — bars, clubs, discos, the World Trade Center, and so on — in order to create a world where this enjoyment would return to the shadows and thereby **cease to provoke anxiety**. The true fundamentalist dreams about being able to desire once again with some respite from the proximate object and the anxiety it creates. But the actions of the suicide bomber, for their part, produce anxiety in the Western subject that leads directly to the phenomenon of the War on Terror.19

The anxiety that suicide bombers create does not stem from the purely existential threat that they pose. Unlike the Western subjects that they threaten, suicide bombers appear to enjoy through their belief. They believe so fervently that they are willing to sacrifice themselves: they have full confidence that they will receive an eternal reward of seventy-two virgins for their sacrifice. Confronted with this seemingly authentic belief, the cynical Western subject for whom belief is always belief at one remove almost inevitably experiences anxiety. After the September 11 attacks, the focus on the eternal reward that the suicide bombers believed they would receive indicates the relationship between anxiety about terrorism and anxiety generated by the encounter with the enjoying other. The suicide bomber enjoys — both through unquestioning belief and through the anticipation of the eternal reward — and it is this enjoyment that struck the towers on September 11, 2001. The War on Terror, which aims to **wipe out all suicide bombers**, has as its ultimate goal the **elimination of this enjoyment and the anxiety** that follows from it.

Both the suicide bomber and the perpetuators of the War on Terror make the same mistake that Jerry does in Short Cuts when he watches his spouse work as a phone sex operator. They see an enjoying other where there is nothing but the image of enjoyment. The suicide bomber sees Western women in revealing clothes and believes that the bare skin promises an opening to enjoyment, but this represents a failure to understand that enjoyment operates through limitations and barriers rather than through revelations and transgressions. One can never go far enough in the direction of transgression to reach real enjoyment. It is the veil, not the miniskirt, that is the true garment of enjoyment.20 The enjoying Western other is the enjoying other of the suicide bombers themselves, not the enjoying other in itself. No number of successful attacks will dissipate this enjoyment because they can never hit its real source within the attacking subject itself.

The perpetuators and supporters of the War on Terror view suicide bombers as true believers in pursuit of the ultimate enjoyment. This is why the idea of the seventy-two virgins receives so much attention as the reason for the fundamentalists’ willingness to die for their cause. Though the reward of the seventy-two virgins for the martyr has almost no basis in the Koran or in Islamic theology, people in the West **repeat this justification** for the suicide bombing because it fits within the fantasy of the enjoying other, a fantasy also furthered by the common perception that the Islamic fundamentalists, unlike most of us in the West, are true believers.

Belief constitutes the source of their danger and their enjoyment. But the act of blowing oneself up for a cause in no way testifies to the completeness of one’s belief. As Pascal sees, acting as if one believes functions as a way of securing the belief of one who is not certain. The dramatic act is almost inevitably an attempt to prove to oneself that one believes rather than evidence for that belief. The subjects who have to sacrifice themselves for the cause most often have to do so in order to avoid losing faith in the cause. In short, the danger lies not in the true believer — the authentically enjoying other — but in the one who wants to believe but cannot. The violence of the War on Terror strikes out at the **wrong target** insofar as it aims at the true believer. The suicide bomber is not so different from the typical Western subject: both experience enjoyment assaulting them from the outside in the form of the enjoying other, and both seek ways of eradicating this enjoyment with violence before it becomes overwhelming.

The problem with violence as a solution to anxiety is not just that it would **beget more violence** and lead to a war of all against all but that it doesn’t work. Violence can kill the other, but it can’t destroy the other’s enjoyment. In fact, often the death of the other has the effect of appearing to increase the level of enjoyment rather than destroying it, which is why violence never provides a definitive solution for the one who perpetuates it. Not only does the idea of the enjoying other persist for the subject aft er the other’s death, but this same enjoyment often proliferates and manifests itself elsewhere. This occurs in David Lynch films such as Lost Highway (1997) and Mulholland Drive (2001), though it appears most pointedly in the Twin Peaks (1990–91) television series.

### Link – War

#### The desire to restrict the worst instances of war is part and parcel of the unconscious’ enjoyment of sacrifice – they introduced it into this space because they secretly enjoy its trauma

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 150-151, 1 July 2013, MG)

Like religion, **war continues in modernity**, even though we understand and declaim its wastefulness. The typical modern subject can watch an antiwar film like Stanley Kubrick’s Paths of Glory (1961) and feel convinced that **war is hell** and completely unnecessary. After leaving the theater, however, this same subject can come to believe that there is **no alternative** but to send troops to Vietnam to stop the potential spread of Communist aggression.

**War appeals to even modern subjects because it mobilizes our enjoyment**. Wars are not fought only for the sake of expanding or defending reigns of power but also in order to enact a social sacrifice. By fighting a war, a social order sacrifices its soldiers, and this sacrifice constitutes a great part of war’s appeal. Supporting the troops necessarily implies supporting and celebrating their sacrifice, which is why antiwar movements that proclaim “Support the troops, bring them home” fail to arouse the masses to action. By bringing the troops home, one eliminates the possibility of their sacrifice, which is the source of the society’s libidinal investment in them. Bringing the troops home renders it **impossible to continue to enjoy them**.

The problem with an antiwar film like Paths of Glory that depicts senseless sacrifice is that this sacrifice adds to rather than subtracts from war’s appeal. This is why, as Sheila Kunkle has pointed out, every war film is a prowar film.13 No matter how negatively a film depicts a war, the carnage inevitably links to **war’s hidden appeal**. Of course, by showing war’s utter meaninglessness, Kubrick’s film impairs to some extent our ability to enjoy the sacrifice, but he doesn’t eliminate it altogether.

A film like Saving Private Ryan (Steven Spielberg, 1998), on the other hand, shows the suffering of war leading to a meaningful end, which is why it is even more directly a prowar film. Saving Private Ryan allows us to enjoy the sacrifice of the soldiers in World War II and to **dissociate enjoyment from sacrifice.** We watch the film believing that we accept the sacrifice for the sake of the pleasure we experience in the end (with the rescue of Private Ryan or with the victory of the Allies) rather than for its own sake. We need a reason to sacrifice not because we otherwise aren’t willing to sacrifice but because a reason allows us to **disavow the traumatic nature of our own enjoyment**. We can tell ourselves that we are sacrificing not for the sake of our enjoyment but for the sake of what we gain from that sacrifice. In this way, reasons for our sacrifices have the effect of accommodating sacrifice to the modern demand for utility.

### Impact - Death Drive

#### The impact is extinction – the death drive undergirds their notions of progress and causes inevitable masochistic repetition of the 1AC’s impacts

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 13-15, 1 July 2013, MG)

Death at the Bottom of Everything

The death drive is neither (contra Marcuse) aggressiveness nor an impulse to return to an inorganic state (as Freud’s metaphor in Beyond the Pleasure Principle might imply) but an impetus to return to an **originary traumatic and constitutive loss**. The death drive emerges with subjectivity itself as the subject enters into the social order and becomes a social and speaking being by sacrificing a part of itself. This sacrifice is an act of creation that produces an object that exists only insofar as it is lost. This loss of what the subject doesn’t have institutes the death drive, which produces **enjoyment through the repetition of the initial loss**.

Subjects engage in acts of self-sacrifice and self-sabotage because the loss enacted reproduces the subject’s lost object and enables the subject to **enjoy this object**. Once it is obtained, the object ceases to be the object. As a result, the subject must continually repeat the sacrificial acts that produce the object, despite the damage that such acts do to the subject’s self-interest. From the perspective of the death drive, we turn to violence not in order to gain power but **in order to produce loss**, which is our only source of enjoyment. Without the lost object, life becomes bereft of any satisfaction. The repetition of sacrifice, however, creates a life worth living, a life in which one can enjoy oneself through the lost object.

The repetition involved with the death drive is not simply repetition of any particular experience. The repetition compulsion leads the subject to repeat specifically the experiences that have traumatized it and disturbed its stable functioning. The better things are going for the subject, the more likely that the death drive will derail the subject’s activity. According to the theory implied by the death drive, any movement toward the good — **any progress** — will tend to produce a reaction that will undermine it. This occurs both on the level of the individual and on the level of society. In psychoanalytic treatment, it takes the form of a negative therapeutic reaction, an effort to sustain one’s disorder in the face of the imminence of the cure. We can also think of individuals who continue to choose romantic relationships that fail according to a precise pattern. Politically, it means that progress triggers the **very forms of oppression** that it hopes to combat and thereby incessantly **undermines** **itself**. There is a backlash written into every progressive program from the outset.

The death drive creates an essentially **masochistic structure within the psyche**. It provides the organizing principle for the subject and orients the subject relative to its enjoyment, and this enjoyment remains always linked to trauma. This structure renders difficult all attempts to prompt subjects to act in their own self-interest or for their own good. The death drive leads subjects to act contrary to their own interests, to sabotage the projects that would lead to their good.

Common sense tells us that sadism is easier to understand than masochism, that the sadist’s lust for power over the object makes sense in a way that the masochist’s self-destruction does not. But for psychoanalysis, masochism functions as the paradigmatic form of subjectivity. Considering the structure of the death drive, masochism becomes easily explained, and sadism becomes a mystery. Masochism provides the subject the enjoyment of loss, while sadism seems to give this enjoyment to the other.

This is exactly the claim of Jacques Lacan’s revolutionary interpretation of sadism in his famous article “Kant with Sade.” Though most readers focus on the essay’s philosophical coupling of Kantian morality with Sadean perversion, the more significant step that Lacan takes here occurs in his explanation of sadism’s appeal. Traditionally, most people vilify sadists for transforming their victims into objects for their own satisfaction, but Lacan contends that they actually turn themselves into objects for the other’s enjoyment. He notes: “The sadist discharges the pain of existence into the Other, but without seeing that he himself thereby turns into an ‘**eternal object**.’”21 Though the other suffers pain, the other also becomes the sole figure of enjoyment. What the sadist enjoys in the sadistic act is the enjoyment attributed to the other, and the sadistic act attempts to bring about this enjoyment. In this sense, sadism is nothing but an inverted form of masochism, which remains the fundamental structure of subjectivity.22 Self-destruction plays such a prominent role in human activities because the death drive is the drive that animates us as **subjects**.

Unlike Herbert Marcuse, Norman O. Brown, another celebrated proponent of psychoanalytically informed political thought, attempts to construct a psychoanalytic political project that focuses on the death drive. He does not simply see it as the unfortunate result of the repression of eros but as a powerful category on its own. In Life against Death Brown conceives of the death drive as a self-annihilating impulse that emerges out of the human incapacity to accept death and loss. As he puts it, “The death instinct is the **core of the human neurosis**. It begins with the human infant’s incapacity to accept separation from the mother, that separation which confers individual life on all living organisms and which in all living organisms at the same time leads to death.”23 For Brown, we pursue death and destruction, paradoxically, because we cannot accept death. If we possessed the ability to accept our own death, according to Brown’s view, we would avoid falling into the death drive and would thereby rid ourselves of human violence and destructiveness.

Like Marcuse, Brown’s societal ideal involves the unleashing of the sexual drives and the minimizing or elimination of the death drive. He even raises the stakes, contending that unless we manage to realize this ideal, **the human species**, under the sway of the death drive, **will** **die out like the dinosaurs**. Despite making more allowances for the death drive (and for death itself) than Marcuse, Brown nonetheless cannot avoid a similar error: the belief that the death drive is a force that subjects can overcome. For Freud, in contrast, it is the force that revenges itself on every overcoming, the repetition that no utopia can fully leave behind. An authentic recognition of the death drive and its primacy would demand that we rethink the idea of progress altogether.

### Impact – Fascism

#### Their mode of isolating enjoyment through fantasy scenarios is a tool out of the Fascist pocket – it’s an explicit attempt to eliminate the Other which destroys our relation to it

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 117-119, 1 July 2013, MG)

How we comport ourselves in relation to the other’s enjoyment indicates our relationship to our **own**. What bothers us about the other — the disturbance that the other’s enjoyment creates in our existence — is our **own mode of enjoying**. If we did not derive enjoyment from the other’s enjoyment, witnessing it would not bother us psychically. We would simply be indifferent to it and focused on our own concerns. Of course, we might ask an offending car radio listener to turn the radio down so that we wouldn’t have to hear the unwanted music, but we would not experience the mere exhibition of alien enjoyment through the playing of that music as an affront. The very fact that the other’s enjoyment captures our attention demonstrates our intimate — or extimate — **relation to it.**30

This relation becomes even clearer when we consider the epistemological status of the enjoying other. Because the real or enjoying other is irreducible to any observable identity, we have no way of knowing whether or not the other **really is enjoying**. A stream of profanity may be the result of someone hurting a toe. The person playing the car radio too loud while sitting at the traffic light may have simply forgotten to turn down the radio aft er driving on the highway. Or the person may have difficulty hearing. The couple’s amorous behavior in public may reflect an absence of enjoyment in their relationship that they are trying to hide from both themselves and the public.

Considering the enjoyment of the other, we **never know whether it is there or not**. If we experience it, we do so through the **lens of our own fantasy**. We fantasize that the person blasting the radio is caught up in the enjoyment of the music to the exclusion of everything else; we fantasize that the public kisses of the couple suggest an enjoyment that has no concern for the outside world. Without the fantasy frame, the enjoying other would never appear within our experience.

The role of the fantasy frame for accessing the enjoying other becomes apparent **within Fascist ideology**. Fascism posits an internal enemy — the figure of the Jew or some analogue — that enjoys **illicitly at the expense of the social body as a whole**. By attempting to **eliminate the enjoying other**, Fascism hopes to create a pure social body bereft of any stain of enjoyment. This purity would allow for the ultimate enjoyment, but it would be completely licit. This hope for a future society free of any stain is not where Fascism’s true enjoyment lies, however. Fascists experience their own enjoyment through the enjoying other that they persecute. The enjoyment that the figure of the Jew embodies is the Fascists’ own enjoyment, though they cannot avow it as their own. More than any other social form, Fascism is founded on the **disavowal of enjoyment** — the attempt to enjoy while keeping enjoyment at arm’s length.31 But this effort is not confined to Fascism; it predominates everywhere, because no subjects anywhere can simply feel comfortable with their own mode of enjoying.

The very structure of enjoyment is such that we **cannot experience it directly**: when we experience enjoyment, we don’t have it; it has us. We experience our own enjoyment as an **assault coming from the outside** that dominates our conscious intentions. This is why we must fantasize our own enjoyment through the enjoying other. Compelled by our enjoyment, we can’t do otherwise; we act against our self-interest and against our own good. Enjoyment overwhelms the subject, even though the subject’s mode of enjoying marks what is most singular about the subject.

Even though the encounter with the enjoying other apprehends the real other through the **apparatus of fantasy**, this encounter is nonetheless genuine and has an ethical status. Unlike the experience of the nonexistent symbolic identity, which closes down the space in which the real other might appear, the fantasized encounter with the enjoying other leaves this space open. By allowing itself to be disturbed by the other on the level of fantasy, the subject **acknowledges the singularity of the real other** — its mode of enjoying — without confining this singularity to a prescribed identity

The implications of privileging the encounter with the disturbing enjoyment of the real other over the assimilable symbolic identity are themselves **disturbing**. The tolerant attitude that never allows itself to be jarred by the enjoying other becomes, according to this way of **seeing things**, further from really encountering the real other than the attitude of hate and mistrust. The liberal subject who welcomes illegal immigrants as fellow citizens completely **shuts down the space for the other in the real**. The immigrant as fellow citizen is not the real other. The xenophobic conservative, on the other hand, **constructs a fantasy** that envisions the illegal immigrant awash in a linguistic and cultural enjoyment that excludes natives. This fantasy, paradoxically, permits an encounter with the real other that liberal tolerance forecloses. Of course, xenophobes retreat from this encounter and from their own enjoyment, but they do have an experience of it that liberals do not. The tolerant liberal is open to the other but **eliminates the otherness**, while the xenophobic conservative is closed to the other but allows for the otherness. The ethical position thus involves sustaining the liberal’s tolerance within the conservative’s encounter with the real other.

## Alt/FW Core

### Framework---2NC

#### Rigid plan focus skirts analyzing the constitutive failure of modern politics---any other standard causes serial policy failure.

Fotaki 10 (Marianna, Organization Studies Group @ Manchester Business School, *Why do public policies fail so often? Exploring health policy-making as an imaginary and symbolic construction*, Organization 2010 17: 703, Sage, 713-716)

Therein also lies the paradox of public policy-making: the significance of choice’s imaginary foundations. The origins of the ‘choice for all’ fantasy, and every other fantasy, are to be found in the need of the subject to be ‘recognized’ in the symbolic Other in order to exist. Let us not forget that the motivation and impetus for the Lacanian subject is always the desire to retrieve the illusory unity that has been sacrificed upon entry into the symbolic order via language. Language operates by signifying the object in its absence and this is why desire always contains loss within it. Without this loss of the sense of a unified identity and the fantasy it gives rise to, there would be no signification and no symbolic life. In other words, social reality is structured by our imaginary misperceptions, as well as our unsymbolizable unconscious longings, which have been given up (repressed) into the unconscious in the socialization process. Such is, for example, the fantasy of effective policy, of purposeful organization and of harmonious society—all stemming from an impossible desire for unity. The Lacanian perspective unveils the imaginary nature of such strivings which underpins various social and political projects, including idealistic and idealized public policies and dismisses them as vain attempts to counteract our ontological and temporal finitude as human beings. It also reveals why these unacknowledged imaginary and symbolic functions are indispensable for bringing policies to life, even if they cannot be achieved. Such is the example of pursuing *‘Choice for All’* (see Milburn, 2003; Reid, 2003) in a public health system with finite resources and tangible opportunity costs. It offers a stark testimony of the impossibility of realizing the policy objectives it proclaims, despite or perhaps because of its universalistic (and omnipotent) aspirations. Satisfac- tion of all individual wants will not be possible without limiting someone else’s access to resources and therefore options. This contravenes the founding collectivist principles of the NHS of offering equal access to all according to need. The attempt to attain the fantasy of the impossible can also explain policy recycling and repetition of the same ideas, despite many documented failures.However, the desire to attain the lost part of the self, which is the Lacanian *objet petit á,* and which in the case of (freedom of) patient choice stands in for freedom from the bounds of the human predicament, instigates the articulation of such and other improbable policies, only if and when the opportune moment arrives. Political expediency, a shift in dominant societal discourses and other massive social changes can all prompt such a move. Once policy makers are implicitly entrusted with formulating aspirational rather than realizable policies, their unworkable aspects are then further reinforced by psychological processes such as organizational defences in health set- tings. These involve separating off and denying unwanted reality (Heginbotham, 1999; Obholzer and Zagier-Roberts, 1994; Vince and Broussine, 1996).The illusory nature of many public health policies is evidenced whenever they are being for- mulated in denial of their contextual reality. An idealistic policy such as *Choice for All* must not be tested against reality and must therefore remain exterior to the organizations that will imple- ment it. Socially sanctioned defensive reactions such as splitting between the idealized policy and its imperfect implementation, and the projection of blame onto various organizational members, are hence employed to protect against discarding this illusion. Object relations theorists came up with various elaborate theories on how social institutions enact psychodynamic mechanisms to defend individuals and groups from existential anxieties (see De Board, 1978; Obholzer, 1994).6 I have also suggested, that health policy must be idealistic to fulfil the impossible goal of the health care system, namely to defend us against the anxiety about disease and dying, a defence it can never fully accomplish (Fotaki, 2006). Although such defences might be necessary to keep destructive fears of annihilation at bay, at the same time they act as a dysfunctional barrier against attaining awareness of our own constructs and ultimately against our attempts to acknowledge fantasy and to survive its failure. To sum up, Kleinian analysis suggests how splits between policy design and organizational real- ity operate to ‘protect’ us from coming to terms with unrealistic policies, but the Lacanian concep- tion of subjectivity explains why policies are designed in such way and why the splits are there in the first place. In a Lacanian perspective, while the policy tool can be seen to act as a defence against societal anxieties, these anxieties are not simply generated by the health risks themselves, but are sites in which the already existing (subjective) anxiety is expressed collectively. Put differ- ently, we are all anxious anyway as, for Lacan, anxiety is the fear ‘of the lack of lack’ and this is why these symbolic manifestations of extant general anxiety float from one public issue to another, as was helpfully put by one reviewer.7This leads me now to the central claim I make in this article, namely, that the imaginary construction of policy-making, if unacknowledged, leads to multiple splits and ultimately underscores its failure**.** The example of patient choice is so evidently suffused with unrealizable promises, as is chosen to highlight the undesirable effects of unrecognized fantasies in the policy-making process and the difficulty of translating value driven statements into organizational realities. The use of abstract economic models simplifying human decisions and devoiding them of real life messiness, and the Labour government’s belated enchantment with the market and competition (Le Grand, 2006; Le Grand and Dixon, 2006) to solve the insoluble efficiency/equity dilemma, ensures that policy formulation is distanced from organizational reality. When such realization of an intrinsic conflict between fantasy and reality and the potential for failure is absent from policy making, defensive mechanisms (projection and splitting) cascade down into health care organizations. These are necessary in order to maintain the splits between a good policy and the flawed imple- mentation should the policy fail, as it must, and for apportioning the blame towards those who must be held responsible for policy failure. Politicians blame health professionals for not meeting their impossible ideals, insisting that more managers are required in order to police their choices. Vari- ous groups of health professionals are pitted against each other (doctors versus managers or doc- tors versus nurses for example) as they are simultaneously idealized and denigrated, offering protection against the inevitability of failure of the unworkable policies while better policies are awaited in the future. Clearly, the process of articulating impossible policies and the difficulties involved in implementing them are all underscored by the idealization and defences around work- ing in health care, as the seminal work of Menzies (1960) has illustrated.The alleged beneficiaries of policies are subject to idealization too: patient choice is after all introduced in the name of empowering the deserving users of services against the dominance of all-powerful professionals who do not always have their patents’ best interest in mind.8 Yet those who do not accept responsibilities for their health related choices are exempted from the category of deserving users as they are stigmatized and refused treatment (see the example of obese patients and smokers turned down by some health authorities in England—BBC, 2005). Inherent in New Labour’s project of modernization is the assumption that the modern citizen should be both mana- gerial and entrepreneurial (Scourfield, 2007). The price of greater autonomy and involvement is that users must assume active responsibility for these activities, both for carrying them out and for their outcomes. This new form of ‘responsibilization’ corresponds to the new ways in which the governed are encouraged to act freely and rationally while conducting themselves in accor- dance with the appropriate (or approved) model of action (Burchell, 1993: 276, cited in Scourfield, 2007). Their subordinated citizenship then becomes doubly underlined by their ‘choice’ to have services arranged for them, while they are required to acquire the flexibility of ‘the person’ (Scourf- ield, 2007). Choice and independence are powerful concepts but dependency and interdependency are part of all our lives, for some of us more than others. It is clear that such policies invariably ignore the reality of non-uniform patients, who are themselves fragmented and divided subjects; more so in times of dislocation and stress Scourfield (2007) reminds us.But the Lacanian analysis of policy making does not simply suggest that the glorification of choice would not have been possible in the absence of an underlying fantasy. It gives us conceptual tools to explore how the inherent idealization involved in articulating aspirational policy objectives such as *Choice for All,* for example, might enable policy capture by powerful political groups and/ or organized interests for their own ideological and political ends. This is because various (conscious and less conscious) forms of political exploitation are more likely to occur when policy content coheres with the imaginary longings of the psyche.

#### The role of the judge is to be an analyst --- we have the only coherent justification for why our argument requires a public space

**McGowan 13** [Todd, Associate Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Vermont, “Driven into the Public: The Psychic Constitution of Space,” *Architecture Post Mortem: Ashgate Studies in Architecture Series*, ed. Donald Kunze, David Bertolin, and Simone Brott, Ashgate: Burlington, VT (2013), p. 19-20]

If psychoanalysis emerges out of the suffering that integration into the social order causes, it also reveals how the subject's satisfaction depends on the public world that appears to thwart this satisfaction. This idea, as much as any other, forms the basis for psychoanalytic practice. Unlike philosophers like Descartes or Kant, Freud doesn't believe that one can arrive at the truth of one's being through private introspection. It is only when one is in public and talking to others that one reveals this truth. This is why others know us better than we know ourselves. As Freud points out in The Psychopathology of Everyday Life, "It can in fact be said quite generally that everyone is continually practising psychical analysis on his neighbours and consequently learns to know them better than they know themselves."16 No amount of introspection can replace public interaction for the revelation of truth.

Psychoanalysis eschews the possibility of self-analysis for precisely this reason. Even though Freud claims to have performed a self-analysis and even published the results, he doesn't develop this as a general practice or possibility. In fact, Jacques Lacan often calls Freud's self-analysis the "original sin" of psychoanalysis. Self-analysis is impossible because it remains within the domain of privacy, a domain predominated by narcissistic illusion and imaginary ideals. In our private worlds, we count the value of our conscious intentions far too highly, and we simultaneously fail to grasp our unconscious motivations. We pay attention to our conscious intentions rather than to the signifiers that we employ unconsciously. To psychoanalyze oneself is to fall further into one's private self-deception. Psychoanalysis requires the analyst to act as the point of connection to the public world. This association of psychoanalysis with the public world places it at odds with the demands of capitalism.

The psychoanalytic session—and this distinguishes it, more than anything else, from other forms of therapy—occurs in a public space. Even though psychoanalysts don't typically go on television and give public accounts of their analysands private lives, the act of analysis itself is public in the sense that it publicizes what the analysand would prefer to have remain private. In the act of analysis, the analysand confronts a public and articulates its desire through this confrontation. The analyst stands in for the desire of the public, and the subject discovers its desire through the encounter with this desire of the Other.17 By assisting the subject in discovering and naming its own desire, psychoanalysis hopes to lead the subject from desire to drive. As theorist Alenka Zupancic sees it, analysis leads the subject from desire to drive by leading the subject further down the path of its desire. She notes, "In order to arrive at the drive, one must pass through desire and insist on it until the very end."18 Subjects come to psychoanalysis without knowing the truth of their desire, and they leave—hopefully—with a commitment of fidelity to their desire that places them in the drive, which involves a different sort of relation to the object.

#### The aff’s attempt to disavow suffering through presenting it backfires --- the modern demand for utility falls prey to the subject’s constitutive lack and compulsive repetition in pursuit of enjoyment

McGowan 13 [Todd, Associate Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Vermont, *Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis*, Symploke, University of Nebraska Press (Lincoln, NE): 2013, p. 146-51]

Such rituals appear explicitly in premodern societies, which consistently make public sacrifices of animals (or people) to please their gods. While sacrifices have the expressed intent of gaining good favor or warding off bad, their unconscious function consists solely in enacting the sacrifice itself. Any pleasure that follows from the sacrifice — such as abundant rainfall that produces good crops — is strictly secondary to the enjoyment of the sacrifice itself. Societies sacrifice for the sake of sacrifice, not for the end that it produces. This sacrifice for the sake of sacrifice doesn't end with the onset of modernity but instead continues primarily in a disguised form. What defines modernity isn't so much a degree of enlightenment and rationality as a fundamental refusal to avow the primacy of sacrifice.

Modernity replaces a regime centered around sacrifice and squander with one centered around utility and accumulation. Modern consciousness directs itself toward the useful: one justifies technological advances, medical breakthroughs, and economic progress through their utility. 1 1 Modern societies act with the conscious intention of making the world run smoother and with the utmost efficiency. And yet, at the same time, wasteful behavior endures — most conspicuously in the form of religion, which modernity's philosophy of utility has not succeeded in extirpating.

Even though modern religious observations tend for the most part to avoid animal or human sacrifices, they do nonetheless represent one of the predominant arenas in which social sacrifice occurs. Thought of in terms of the self-interest of participants or the larger social good, religion constitutes a massive sacrifice of time and resources. This is what renders it problematic for evolutionary biology. According to the tenets of this science, natural selection tends to eliminate waste rather than foster it. The wastefulness of religion, combined with its continued wide appeal, forces evolutionary biologists to explain its existence and persistence as the by-product of another process that has evolutionary benefits (which is, according to most prominent evolutionary biologists, the tendency to trust authority figures). But what the evolutionary biologist cannot see, because this science does not take enjoyment into account, is the appeal of the sacrifice of resources for its own sake. Religious rituals persist in modernity —even if in a completely modified form, like the worship of a sports team — because they provide an opportunity for the repetition of the original shared social sacrifice.

Not only do religious observations allow subjects to repeat the original social sacrifice, but they also mask this sacrifice as the source of enjoyment. Religions tell their adherents that they must sacrifice freedom in their lifestyle choices, money that might be spent for pleasure, and time otherwise left for leisure. The reward for these sacrifices — most typically, an eternal life of pure enjoyment, or at least membership in a privileged community — serves to justify them. As a result, the sacrificing adherents of the religion can believe that they are sacrificing for the sake of the future reward rather than for the sake of the sacrifice itself. When we practice religious sacrifice, we don't see where our true enjoyment lies - we don't recognize the link between loss and enjoyment -and this deception is crucial for religion's attractiveness. We cling to our enjoyment, but we also cling to the illusion that it is something that we might have rather than a loss that we must endure.

Like religion, war continues in modernity, even though we understand and declaim its wastefulness. The typical modern subject can watch an antiwar film like Stanley Kubrick's Paths of Glory ( 1961) and feel convinced that war is hell and completely unnecessary. After leaving the theater, however, this same subject can come to believe that there is no alternative but to send troops to Vietnam to stop the potential spread of Communist aggression.

War appeals to even modern subjects because it mobilizes our enjoyment. Wars are not fought only for the sake of expanding or defending reigns of power but also in order to enact a social sacrifice. By fighting a war, a social order sacrifices its soldiers, and this sacrifice constitutes a great part of war's appeal. Supporting the troops necessarily implies supporting and celebrating their sacrifice, which is why antiwar movements that proclaim "Support the troops, bring them home" fail to arouse the masses to action. By bringing the troops home, one eliminates the possibility of their sacrifice, which is the source of the society's libidinal investment in them. Bringing the troops home renders it impossible to continue to enjoy them.

The problem with an antiwar film like Paths of Glory that depicts senseless sacrifice is that this sacrifice adds to rather than subtracts from war's appeal. This is why, as Sheila Kunkle has pointed out, every war film is a prowar film.13 No matter how negatively a film depicts a war, the carnage inevitably links to war's hidden appeal. Of course, by showing war's utter meaninglessness, Kubrick's film impairs to some extent our ability to enjoy the sacrifice, but he doesn't eliminate it altogether.

A film like Saving Private Ryan (Steven Spielberg, 1998), on the other hand, shows the suffering of war leading to a meaningful end, which is why it is even more directly a prowar film. Saving Private Ryan allows us to enjoy the sacrifice of the soldiers in World War II and to dissociate enjoyment from sacrifice. We watch the film believing that we accept the sacrifice for the sake of the pleasure we experience in the end (with the rescue of private Ryan or with the victory of the Allies) rather than for its own sake. We need a reason to sacrifice not because we otherwise aren't willing to sacrifice but because a reason allows us to disavow the traumatic nature of our own enjoyment. We can tell ourselves that we are sacrificing not for the sake of our enjoyment but for the sake of what we gain from that sacrifice. In this way, reasons for our sacrifices have the effect of accommodating sacrifice to the modern demand for utility.

### FW – Analyst

#### The role of the judge is to be an analyst – their intep locks them into self-analysis which is narcissistic and fails, but having the judge act as the public evaluating the desires of the plan solves

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 77-80, 20 September 2016, MG)

If psychoanalysis emerges out of the suffering that integration into the social order causes, it also reveals how the subject’s satisfaction depends on the **public world** that appears to thwart this satisfaction. This idea, as much as any other, forms the basis for psychoanalytic practice. Unlike philosophers like Descartes or Kant, Freud doesn’t believe that one can arrive at the truth of one’s being through private introspection. It is only when one is in public and talking to others that one reveals this truth. This is why others know us better than we know ourselves, even when we try to maintain a hidden inwardness that we reveal to no one. In order to interact with others, we must constantly pay attention not to what they say **explicitly** but to the **desire that their words express in the act of concealing**.20 We constantly read the unconscious truth of those with whom we interact. No amount of introspection can replace public interaction for the revelation of truth.

Psychoanalysis eschews the possibility of self-analysis for precisely this reason. Although Freud claims to have performed a self-analysis, and even published the results, he doesn’t develop this as a general practice or possibility. In fact, Jacques Lacan calls Freud’s self-analysis the “original sin” of psychoanalysis. Selfanalysis is impossible because it remains within the domain of privacy, a domain predominated by narcissistic illusion and imaginary ideals. Private analysis or self-reflection always obeys the **restrictions of consciousness** and never allows the disturbance of the unconscious to manifest itself. We might go so far as to seek our unconscious introspectively, but it will always remain one step ahead of our conscious self-reflection. A disturbance that we seek is never a disturbance. In public interactions, however, one often does encounter the unconscious. It erupts all the time and forces us to engage in a constant quasi psychoanalysis of each other just to navigate our daily life.

When we practice self-reflection, we pay attention to our conscious intentions rather than to the signifiers that we employ unconsciously. To psychoanalyze oneself is to fall further into one’s private self-deception. Psychoanalysis requires the analyst to act as the point of connection to the public world. The lack of a face-to-face encounter in the psychoanalytic session is simultaneously an abandonment of private intimacy. The patient speaks to a public and not a private desire. This association of psychoanalysis with the public world places it at odds with the demands of capitalism.

The psychoanalytic session—and this distinguishes it, more than anything else, from other forms of therapy—occurs in a public space. Even though psychoanalysts don’t typically go on television and give public accounts of their patients’ private lives, the act of analysis itself is public in the sense that it **publicizes what the patient would prefer to have remain private**. In the act of analysis, the patient confronts a public and **articulates its desire through this confrontation.** The analyst stands in for the desire of the public, and the subject discovers its desire through the encounter with this desire of the Other. 21 By assisting the subject in discovering and naming its own desire, psychoanalysis hopes to lead the subject to a changed relation with its object. Subjects come to psychoanalysis without knowing the truth of their desire, and they leave, hopefully, recognizing that the satisfaction of desiring **derives from the obstacle** **rather than from overcoming it.**

This is the recognition that the logic of capitalism spares the subject. The capitalist subject views the trauma of the public encounter as a temporary barrier on the path to an immersion in the complete satisfaction of privacy. The capitalist subject enters the public world—by, say, driving on public roads—in order to arrive at a shopping mall where it can purchase a potentially satisfying object of desire and then return to enjoy that object in private. Satisfaction, for the capitalist subject, resides in the private realm because this is a realm where one can have the object without the barrier that exists in public.

Psychoanalysis provides a different relationship to the object. The capitalist subject imagines itself dissatisfied because it imagines itself constantly overcoming obstacles to arrive at the object, but in fact the obstacles are the object. If the subject can recognize its satisfaction in its obstacle, then the public world undergoes a **dramatic transformation**. Rather than seeking an object in this world and retreating with the object into one’s private oasis, one must embrace the public world as the site of the obstacle. Without the public qua obstacle, the subject would lose its ability to satisfy itself, which is why capitalism’s hostility to the public world itself is not sincere. But the subject has the ability to recognize the public obstacle to the realization of its desire as the source of its satisfaction.22

The changed attitude toward the obstacle permits the subject to find **satisfaction** where it formerly saw only **dissatisfaction**. The barrier to the satisfaction that capitalism posits transforms into the source of the satisfaction for the subject. Satisfaction in the obstacle replaces an unending and dissatisfying pursuit. The subject overcomes the constitutive dissatisfaction that capitalism requires by transforming the relation to the obstacle. The subject that finds satisfaction in the obstacle doesn’t fit well into the role of the capitalist producer or consumer.

### FW – Fiat Bad

#### The affirmative’s investment in fantasy scenarios is a ruse for the system to gain a psychic foothold and create trauma

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 58-60, 20 September 2016, MG)

Since the desire of the Other can provide no concrete guidance for the subject in its search for what to desire, it must have **recourse to fantasy**. Here capitalism again comes to the subject’s aid by providing innumerable fantasies that direct the subject’s desire both toward the proper work and toward the proper commodity. Fantasy provides the subject guidance about what the Other desires and thus constitutes this desire as knowable. Without this guidance, there would be no way of approaching this desire or beginning to make sense of it. In some sense, the subject fantasizes this desire into existence: the fantasy gives coherence to the Other’s desire by creating an **imaginary scenario surrounding the Other**. Lacan offers an enigmatic definition of fantasy in his seminar on The Logic of Fantasy. He says, “**in the final accounting the fantasy is a** **sentence with a grammatical structure.”26** That is to say, fantasy gives the desire of the Other a concrete form that it otherwise lacks. Even if fantasy imagines a traumatic desire—the Other wants to destroy us —it nonetheless **provides the security** of an existing Other that can guide our desire.

We can see this dynamic in the way that the fantasy of the terrorist functions for American society. Of course, there are actual terrorists who want to kill Americans, but the power of the terrorist fantasy far outstrips the danger that these actual terrorists represent. Very few people fear driving in a car, and yet one is exponentially more likely to die in this mode of transportation than from a terrorist blowing up an airplane. The latter event occasions dread because it touches on our fantasy space, whereas death in a car—except as envisioned in David Cronenberg’s Crash (1996), an exploration of auto-eroticism—remains largely fantasy-free. The fantasy of horrible death from terrorism is hardly a comforting one, but it does give American society a concrete image of the Islamic believer. The fantasy brings this believer into existence and renders his—almost always his in the fantasy—desire knowable. The threat to American society constitutes American identity as besieged and, at the same time, envied, which is why, after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, George W. Bush proclaimed that American freedom itself was an overriding motive for the attacks. **Even the most traumatic fantasy offers assurance.**

The subject’s subjection to the social order becomes complete through the acceptance of the fundamental fantasy underlying that order. Confronted with the impossibility of the Other’s desire, the subject faces its failure to belong. The respite of fantasy is an image of belonging to an order that seems to bar the subject’s entry. It is the password to a secret society. Even the subject who doesn’t belong to Skull and Bones at Yale effectively does belong to a larger version insofar as it accepts the society’s fundamental fantasy. 27 But the subject can never exist wholly in the world that fantasy constructs. The status of the fantasy must always be **tenuous** in order for it to work as a source of social cohesion. Capitalism utilizes fantasy to a remarkable extent, but it also sustains fantasy’s tenuousness.

Under capitalism, the desire of the Other both remains fundamentally unknowable and appears accessible through fantasy. The subject never knows exactly what commodity to produce or consume, and yet the commodity itself provides a fantasmatic answer to this mystery. The commodity presents itself at once as the unknown desire of the Other and the fantasized solution to that desire. The fact that it maintains these two contradictory positions gives capitalism great power in the psyche. It **rouses** us by showing the Other as mysterious while comforting us with the idea that we might solve this purported enigma of the Other. If capitalism just offered the mystery of the Other or the fantasized solution of this mystery, it would fail to gain a **psychic foothold**. The two positions must constantly play off each other, or else the subject’s disappointment—either in the irresolvable mystery or the ultimately inadequate solution—will break the commitment to the capitalist system. The fantasy constantly presents the possibility of full belonging to the subject, but, at the same time, the fantasy must remain an unrealized fantasy. The capitalist subject can never experience a sense of belonging while remaining a capitalist subject.

Of all previously existing economic systems, capitalism offers the most evident fantasmatic solution to the problem of the desire of the Other. That is to say, it offers the clearest path to social acceptance and belonging. When we imagine societies with clear marriage rules or entrance rituals, this claim seems clearly wrong. Their solution to the problem of desire appears superior to that of capitalism.28 Traditional societies don’t have the desire of the Other hidden in fashion trends or the production of electronics, but clearly spell it out in social regulations. But the psychic power of the commodity outstrips the most **rigid societal structure** in its capacity for illuminating the subject’s path. The commodity form has the effect of **clarifying the desire of the Other** by making it manifest in a concrete object. If I doubt what the Other wants me to do, I need only follow the money. It will provide a clear fantasized solution to the desire of the Other. Traditional society, in contrast, offers regulations whose explicit status prevents a complete psychic investment. Capitalism forces the subject to interpret its way into the social order and in this way attaches itself firmly to the subject’s desire. At the same time, it guides this interpretation through the commodity form and gives the subject a sense of security in the path of its desire.

When I feel as if I must have a new product, at that moment I fully immerse myself in the fantasy of what the Other desires. Often new products fail—many times more products enter the market each year than find a niche—because they do not manage to locate themselves within consumers’ fantasy space. The inventors of failed commodities such as Pepsi Clear did not adequately carve out an appealing fantasmatic position. The success of any product is inextricable from its capacity to lodge itself within this space and to appear as if it completely solves the question of the Other’s desire. Even products that endure, like Coke or Apple electronics, must constantly renew themselves in order to remain within the prevailing fantasy. Once they become old, once they are associated with an object that the consumer has already acquired and has discovered to be lacking, they will lose their fantasmatic power. This is why even successful brands have to continue to develop new selling points and to advertise this newness. Apple must produce a new version of the iPhone or the iPad or else consumers will abandon Apple entirely. The company will find itself in the situation of Zenith, a former leader in technological appliances and now a nonentity. We know that the old object does not respond to the desire of the Other, but the new object allows us to **keep this fantasy alive**.

#### The attempt to fantasize over imaginary scenarios is a form of traumatizing that shocks subjectivities with the endurance of the lack

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 132-134, 1 July 2013, MG)

Fantasy defines a subject’s subjectivity by providing it with a **private narrative** that explains the public loss of the privileged object.29 This loss, as we have seen, gives birth to the subject: the subject and the object don’t exist prior to the experience of loss but emerge through it. But when fantasy places the loss of the privileged object into a **narrative structure** — when it tells a story about how the loss occurred and what caused it — fantasy creates the illusion that the lost object had some **substantial status prior to being lost**. It is in this precise sense that fantasy functions as the primordial lie that the subject tells itself. Because fantasy imagines the lost object as substantial, it also envisions the possibility of recovering the lost object and recovering a lost satisfaction. Subjectivity is **unthinkable** without the fantasmatic lie. This lie gives the subject a reason for its suffering and permits the subject to **endure its lack with the possibility of the restoration of fullness**. Even psychoanalytic treatment doesn’t enable the subject to overcome its inherent proclivity toward and reliance on fantasy (though psychoanalysis does permit the subject to become reoriented relative to its fantasy life). Without some recourse to fantasy, no subject could go on. Fantasy gives the subject a **direction for its desire**, a center around which to organize its enjoyment, and it always has an obscene quality to it.

The obscenity of fantasmatic enjoyment stems from its manner of shortcircuiting the symbolic pact that constitutes the social bond. In our fantasies, we imagine ourselves **pulling one over on society at large**, enjoying in a way that no one else does. If ideology reduces all subjects to the same level, fantasy singles out the subject as the exception to every rule. The fantasmatic core of our subjectivity is the key to our uniqueness as subjects.30 Fantasy produces enjoyment for the subject by bypassing the constraints that govern all our activity. Thus, when our fantasies become exposed, everyone can see the extent to which **we are not a part of society**, the extent to which we don’t belong. And at the same time, everyone can see the **purely imaginary status** of our rebellion: rather than actually acting to break from the social bond, we have merely fantasized doing so. The subject with an exposed fantasy becomes visible as a pathetic would-be outsider. Realizing one’s fantasy involves the ultimate shame.

To examine this dynamic in concrete terms we can return to the mail clerk who fantasizes about being an executive. One of the benefits of this example is its counterintuitive status: becoming an executive — unlike, say, being caught masturbating in one’s bathroom — does not appear to expose anything other than a garden-variety ambition shared by almost everyone within capitalist society. The mystification here occurs because we assume that executives, or at least some of them, are former mail clerks who have realized their fantasies. But the fantasizing mail clerk never actually becomes the successful executive.31

Th e fantasy of the successful executive lies elsewhere than in being a successful executive. (Perhaps it involves being a lowly mail clerk.) Those who attain success in the business world or in any other domain are not those who fantasize about this success. They may plan their actions or envision goals being met, but these plans and visions are not, properly speaking, the domain of fantasy. Fantasy depends for its **erotic power on a degree of unreality**. It provides enjoyment for subjects because it allows them to cheat reality, and the enjoyment derives directly from this sense of cheating, of escaping the restrictions that bind others.

The sense of cheating a reality that others must obey forms the essential core of fantasy as such. It is for this reason that subjects hide their fantasies from public view. All fantasies share a formal hiddenness, and this hiddenness proclaims the subject’s own belief in the fantasy’s transgressive nature. It is not what the fantasy hides that threatens to traumatize the subject but the very fact of the hiding itself. The **form** of fantasy is shameful, not the **content**. No act is in itself shameful without hiddenness attached to it, which is why one of the most effective ways to avoid shame involves broadcasting one’s potentially shameful acts — talking about one’s interest in pornography, explaining one’s tendency to sweat too much, and so on.32 Self-exposure militates against having the fantasmatically charged act exposed by others and thereby revealed in its hiddenness. Exposing this hiddenness means exposing the subject’s privileged and seemingly unique mode of obtaining enjoyment.

If the mail clerk who fantasizes about becoming an executive actually does realize this fantasy, the effect would be shattering for this clerk’s erotic life and for her or his life as an executive. The erstwhile mail clerk would have no respite from this symbolic position — no hidden reservation where the “real me” could dwell. As a result, the clerk-become-executive would have to transform the position of executive itself, struggling against the very nature of this symbolic position. Realizing the fantasy **traumatizes both the subject itself** (depriving it of its treasured secret) **and the social reality** (depriving it of the underside it needs in order to function), and it leads to the transformation of both. It is in this sense that we should understand Freud’s statement defining success as the realization of one’s fantasies. It is far removed from how we usually define the word, and in fact, the subject who becomes what Freud sees as a success cannot be successful in the bourgeois sense of the term.

### FW – Consequentialism Bad

#### Analysis of the “terminal impact” and “final cause” crowd out the ability to address immanent dangers and forecloses the possibility for enjoyment

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 151-153, 1 July 2013, MG)

An Absence of Final Causes

The widespread failure to see that sacrifice occurs for its own sake stems from the ubiquity of thinking from the **perspective of the final cause**. The final cause, as first defined by Aristotle, is the “end or that for the sake of which a thing is done.”14 It causes the action in the sense that it provides a motivating purpose or a result that the action will effectuate. When we analyze an action in terms of its final cause, we look for purposiveness. This type of analysis doesn’t necessarily lead to an inability to identify other forms of causality. For Aristotle, of course, the final cause is but one aspect of an overall theory of causality that includes a formal cause, a material cause, and an effective cause.

One can, in short, sustain a pluralistic theory of causality in which the idea of the final cause does not eliminate other forms of causality. For instance, recognizing that the final cause for the American Civil War was the establishment of a unified industrial America with a basis in wage labor rather than slavery does not interfere with recognizing the development of modern war-making strategy as the formal cause, the military might of both sides as its material cause, and the decision to fire on Fort Sumter as the effective cause. But the dominance of the final cause over our thinking does obstruct our ability to grasp what we might call the immanent cause, the cause that inheres in an action done for its own sake rather than for a larger purpose.15

The perspective of the final cause **dominates** our thinking in the form of privileging the good that we might obtain. Whether we define the good as **avoidance of harm, physical pleasure, mastery of others, knowledge, survival**, self-interest, or material goods, we nonetheless almost inevitably see it as the **final cause motivating our actions**.16 No one would act, so this thinking goes, in a way that did not aim at producing some good. Most contemporary subjects would conceive of the good in relative terms — Henry’s good would not be Alexandra’s good, and they might even be opposed to each other — but they would accept the privileging of the good itself.

Th e most common reigning conception of the good is identifying it with power. This line of thought, inherited ultimately from Nietzsche and popularized in the contemporary intellectual universe by Michel Foucault, analyzes actions in terms of the power that they provide for those who embark on them: the executive chases power in the form of capital; the lover chases power in the form of new romantic conquests; the minister chases power in the form of a psychically submissive congregation; and the parent chases power in the form of a high-achieving child. Though this seems like a radical subversion of the traditional idea of the good as the end that motivates us, the analysis of actions in terms of power simply **replaces one idea of the good with another**. Even those who morally question power as an end nonetheless think of it as the good — that is, the final cause — that motivates actions. Power analysis remains teleological in its conception of causality, and thus it suffers from precisely the same limitation as traditional thinking about the good.17

When we think from the perspective of the final cause or the good at which our actions aim, we miss the possibility that **actions might be ends in themselves**. To think of the actions of society in terms of the enjoyment that they provide is not to simply replace power or happiness or physical pleasure with another end. Enjoyment is not a result that actions pursue and allow us to obtain but instead inheres in the action itself. This is why, in contrast to power or any other good, **no one can possess enjoyment**. Enjoyment is irreducible to a good that one pursues because, rather than benefiting the society, it **deprives the society of something**. Enjoyment is expenditure without the possibility of recompense. While we might pursue pleasure, we never pursue enjoyment, though it can function as the immanent cause of our actions, as that which drives us rather than motivating us as a conscious goal.

When Freud discovered the death drive in 1920, he effectively theorized enjoyment as the immanent cause of our actions. But with the onset of the psychoanalytic method more than twenty-five years earlier, Freud began his break with the dominance of the final cause. The psychoanalytic method of free association takes as its point of departure an attempt to put the final cause, which governs our conscious interactions, to the side. When the analysand speaks, the analyst focuses on the signifiers themselves and what they say rather than on the meaning that the analysand intends to impart with these signifiers. The premise of psychoanalysis is that the analysand puts signifiers into play for their own sake and that these signifiers do in fact **signify on their own**, beyond the conscious intentions of the analysand. The conscious meaning behind them — what analysands believe that they are trying to communicate — functions precisely like the final cause. It is the translation into consciousness of an unconscious desire, and it obscures this unconscious desire just like the **final cause obscures the immanent cause**. Psychoanalytic treatment involves assisting analysands to arrive at the point where they can avow the immanent cause, where they can adopt a different relationship to their own enjoyment.

### FW – Thesis

#### The aff’s approach to the world is constituted under a veil of ignorance – for every step they take towards the good in their imaginative politics, they take a corresponding step towards the bad

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 3-6, 1 July 2013, MG)

On the face of it, this claim appears counterintuitive: one can imagine, for instance, a psychoanalytic understanding of the nature of desire aiding political theorists in their attempts to free desire from ideology, which is the recurring difficulty of leftist politics. There are even historical examples of this theoretical assistance at work. Louis Althusser develops his theory of ideological interpellation through his acquaintance with Jacques Lacan’s conception of the subject’s entrance into language, and Juliet Mitchell elaborates her critique of the structural effects of patriarchy through her experience with Freudian conceptions of masculinity and femininity. In each case, psychoanalysis allows the theorist to understand how a prevailing social structure operates, and this provides a foundation for **imagining a way** to challenge this structure. As Mitchell claims, “Psychoanalysis is not a recommendation for a patriarchal society, but an **analysis** of one. If we are interested in understanding and challenging the oppression of women, we cannot afford to neglect it.”4 Precisely because she sees psychoanalysis as a useful tool for political struggle, Mitchell here dismisses feminism’s longstanding quarrel with psychoanalysis for its complicity with patriarchy.5

Underlying a position like Mitchell’s (which almost all political theorists who turn to psychoanalysis embrace) is the idea that the political usefulness of psychoanalysis stems, ironically, from its lack of a political commitment. That is to say, psychoanalysis aims to discover the **unconscious truth of the subject** and the society in which the subject exists, not to change this truth. It is thus at the most basic level a descriptive rather than a prescriptive art. Even the psychoanalytic cure itself does not portend radical change for the subject who accomplishes it. This subject simply recognizes, in Jacques Lacan’s words, “I am that.” The cure is more a recognition of who one is rather than a transformation of one’s subjectivity. Though psychoanalysis does view this recognition as the **most radical kind of revolution**, the revolution changes how the subject relates to its activity, not the activity itself. In this sense, psychoanalysis has no political axe to grind, which allows it to devote its energies to the project of interpretation and understanding. The understanding it produces can then form the basis for the different sorts of leftist political contestation that may appropriate it.

The problem with this appropriation is the point at which it arrests the descriptive process of psychoanalytic interpretation. Psychoanalysis does not merely describe the structure of one culture or socioeconomic formation (such as patriarchy or capitalism); it instead insists on a **fundamental validity** across cultural and socioeconomic boundaries. It also insists on this validity across different historical epochs. It is, in short, a **universal theory** concerning the relationship between the individual subject and society.6 Of course, Freud discovered psychoanalysis in a particular historical situation that shaped how he presented his insights and even the ideas he could formulate. But one can separate the particular elements (like the Oedipus complex or the labeling of homosexuality as a perversion) from the universal ones (like the antagonistic nature of society or the fact of castration as the requirement for entrance into society). The challenge for the psychoanalytic theorist is discovering the universality in Freud’s discoveries, but it is this universality that presents an obstacle for any political project. If the antagonism between the subject and the social order is irreducible, then the stumbling block is not just capitalism or patriarchy but human society itself.

The insights of psychoanalysis, if valid at all, apply not simply to the past and the present but also to whatever **future society we might envision** or even realize. Though Freud developed the insights of psychoanalysis in a particular historical situation, this situation enabled him to discover universal structures of subjectivity and of the social order, even if his way of conceptualizing these structures initially reflected the constraints of his historical situation. The insights apply not only to contemporary patriarchal society but also, pace Juliet Mitchell, to the future society that frees itself from patriarchy. This is not to say that we will always have the same forms of neurosis and psychosis that we have now but that we will not surmount the fundamental antagonism between the social order and the individual subject that produces these specific disorders. As a result, for psychoanalysis **the good society becomes an unattainable fiction.**

You’re No Good

The great challenge that psychoanalysis poses for emancipatory politics — and for politics as such — is its absolute rejection of the good or the good society. In the opening of the Politics, Aristotle describes the good as the basic aim of political activity, and this aim has remained constant in the intervening 2,500 years.7 Aristotle never attempts to prove this constitutive remark in his treatise but simply takes it as an unassailable postulate of political thinking. For subsequent political thinkers, the question does not concern Aristotle’s claim about the good but in what the good consists. There is unanimity about the political pursuit of the good not just among political theorists but among almost everyone who thinks about politics at all.

From the perspective of psychoanalysis, however, **there is no good at all.** The good society is unattainable not just as a result of the competing desires of the individuals within the society. The theory that aligns social conflict with the coexistence of competing individual desires fails to go far enough in envisioning the antagonistic nature of the social order. No matter how divergent individual desires are, one could always imagine reconciling them with each other through some sort of compromise. A thinker such as John Rawls can imagine a just society despite positing a society divided by innumerable competing desires on the level of the individual. Justice here would consist in the idea of fairness — using **one’s imagination to envision society** through what Rawls labels a “veil of ignorance” that allows one to make decisions about justice without taking into account one’s individual interests or desires or social position.8 This would facilitate a good society in which any inequality would be socially justified, and it would thus reconcile competing individual desires with each other.

But the barrier to the good society runs deeper than this. It derives from the very idea of the good, which Freud sees as fundamentally at odds with itself. The good itself, not our failures to achieve it, is the problem. This is the fundamental political insight that psychoanalysis brings to the table. It is at once the challenge that it poses to emancipatory politics and the basis for its implicit project for emancipation. As we get closer to the ideal of a good society, we simultaneously approach the **emptiness concealed** within the ideal. The notion of the good does not emerge simply from moral reasoning and speculation about the proper arrangement of society. We develop this notion only through the experience of its prohibition. That is to say, the prohibition of the good doesn’t form an obstacle to a preexisting ideal but constitutes the ideal as such.

The good has no existence outside of the barriers that we erect around realizing it. As Jacques Lacan points out in one of his most important political statements, “The step taken by Freud at the level of the pleasure principle is to show us that there is no Sovereign Good — that the Sovereign Good, which is das Ding, which is the mother, is also the object of incest, is a forbidden good, and that there is no other good. Such is the foundation of the moral law as turned on its head by Freud.”9 The foundational link between the good and prohibition renders its pursuit completely contradictory. Every step toward the good occasions a **corresponding step away from it**. The closer we come, the more we undermine the social stability that we hoped to achieve. This occurs not just among the many utopian socialist projects that have failed but across all types of social structures.

For psychoanalysis, the good is not just an unrealizable ideal but a deception **incapable of orienting a coherent and sustainable politics**. This critique threatens to undermine the **very idea of a political project** because political theorists write in order to help bring about change, which means moving society in the direction of the good (even if they admit that the ideal itself is not realizable). Conservative theorists seem immune to this critique, but they envision a return to the good or the creation of a social stability that they associate implicitly with the good.10 Political theorists of all stripes write to change the world and assist its progression (or its return to a better state), whereas psychoanalysis interprets the world and uncovers the repetition at work where it seems to be progressing.

#### Only psychoanalysis can explain the relationship between the social order and subjectivity

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 143-146, 1 July 2013, MG)

It is impossible to divorce the **question of** **subjectivity** from the question of the **structure of the social order**. How one understands the relationship between the individual subject and society definitively marks one’s theoretical position. This is true for psychoanalytic thought no less than for other theories. The understanding of this relationship almost inevitably exists as a theoretical presupposition or as a **starting point for whatever theory one espouses**. The two predominant positions on the interaction between individual and society see the isolated individual as the starting point on the one hand or the social organization as the starting point on the other. In modernity, the former derives from the tradition of British liberal philosophy, and the latter derives from the tradition of German dialectical thought.

For a liberal thinker such as John Locke, society doesn’t form the individual; individuals come together to form society. In the tradition of thinkers from Thomas Hobbes to John Stuart Mill to Ayn Rand, Locke conceives the individual existing outside society as a clear and distinct being. According to Locke, one can analyze the situation of the individual removed from the fabric of societal construction. In this natural state, the subject is free. As he puts it, “The Natural Liberty of Man is to be free from any Superior Power on Earth, and not to be under the Will or Legislative Authority of Man, but to have only the Law of Nature for his Rule.”1 Locke can deduce the inherent freedom of the individual because he isolates the individual from the social production of identity. Individual identity emerges apart from the socialization process, which only affects it in an external fashion. Society constrains the choices that the individual subject might make, but it doesn’t create the will to choose itself within the individual. This is where someone like Karl Marx, coming from the opposed tradition, would see a fundamental blind spot in Locke’s philosophy.2

Marx’s critique of individualism is as vehement as Locke’s endorsement of it. But rather than simply reducing the individual to the status of a social construction, as one might expect, Marx historicizes even the concept of the individual. Prior to a specific historical epoch (that of capitalist relations of production), the individual did not exist. Social forces constrain individuals to such an extent that they can produce worlds that have no individuals at all, which is how Marx envisions the **precapitalist universe**. In the Grundrisse he states this directly: “Human beings become individuals only through the process of history. . . . Exchange itself is a chief means of this individuation.”3 The very fact of a subject relating to itself in isolation from the social order is a result of social processes that owe nothing to the individual as such.

Beginning with either the individual or society, each position encounters a difficulty trying to account for the emergence of its opposite — society or the individual. Locke explains the societal impulse from the **individual desire to protect property**, and Marx deduces the development of the individual from structural changes in the means of production that form the basis of the social order. But each position runs aground on the power that the opposing force amasses and wields. Locke’s liberalism cannot properly weigh the degree of social coercion in the individual’s existence, and Marx’s communism cannot fully address the conflict between the individual’s desire and the social good.

In light of the limitations of the extreme positions, most thinkers take up a middle ground, seeing a struggle or tension in the relationship between the individual and the social order. For most, society shapes the individual profoundly, but individuality emerges through the way that each subject responds to this shaping. If, as Marx contends, there is no individual outside of society, there is also no society without the array of individual difference, and these differences can trigger changes in the social structure with which they interact. This is probably the dominant position today because it speaks to our sense that both the individual and society influence each other.4 It is close to the position implicit in psychoanalytic theory, but psychoanalysis formulates the interaction between the individual and the social order in a very precise way that enables it to provide an explanation for why each comes into existence out of the other.

According to psychoanalytic thinking, **neither the subject nor the social order exists independently** but instead emerges out of the **other’s incompleteness**. The subject exists at the point of the social order’s failure to become a closed structure, and the subject enters into social arrangements as a result of its own failure to achieve self-identity. The internal contradictions within every social order create the space for the subject, just as the internal contradictions of the subject produce an opening to externality that links the subject to the social order. Failure on each side provides the **connective apparatus and constitutes the bond between the subject and the social order.**

To put it another way, the subject’s entrance into a group or society depends on the **originary loss** that gives birth to its subjectivity. Without this loss and the desire that it produces in the subject, no one would agree to enter into a social bond, a bond that places a fundamental restriction on the subject’s ability to enjoy. The psychoanalytic name for this foundational loss is the human animal’s “premature birth,” a condition that creates an undue dependence not present in other animals. But whether or not one wants to defend the idea of humanity’s premature birth, the idea of a foundational loss is nonetheless **essential for theorizing the emergence of subjectivity**. Without loss, there could be **no desire and no subjectivity.** This loss leads the subject to society as the site where loss might be redeemed.

Once deceived by the lure of an imaginary complete enjoyment and disappointed with all the enjoyment it experiences, the subject is ready to agree to the entrance requirements of a society. The frustrated subject accedes to societal restrictions on enjoyment as she/he sees that others have also accepted these restrictions. A society circumnavigates the antagonisms between its members by promoting equality or justice among them all. This equality is an equality born through self-denial. As Freud points out, “Social justice means that **we deny ourselves many things** so that others may have to do without them as well, or, what is the same thing, may not be able to ask for them. This demand for equality is the **root of social conscience** and the sense of duty.”5 The subject’s individual frustration with the inadequacy of every actual enjoyment measured against the anticipated enjoyment finds an outlet in the societal demand for equality, a demand that proscribes this enjoyment for all. The subject sacrifices a complete enjoyment that it never attains for the equality that derives from membership in society.

#### The Western order has become the de facto global symbolic order – that means not only are structures constituted by the West, but so are their minds

Kapoor 18 (Ilan Kapoor - professor of Critical Development Studies at the Faculty of Environmental and Urban Change at York University in Toronto, “Psychoanalysis and the GlObal”, University of Nebraska Press, Page 23, 1 September 2018, MG)

Let me tackle the problem in two ways. First, I want to suggest that, for all intents and purposes, the Western symbolic order has become the **de facto global symbolic order**. As suggested earlier, through processes of globalization and (neo)colonialism, the West’s dominant representational and knowledge systems are **all-pervasive** (although not unchallenged). Ashis Nandy (1983, xi) contends in this regard that “colonialism colonizes minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within the colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once and for all. . . . The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside; in structures and in minds.” Psychoanalysis is thus applicable in **non-Western cultures**, not because of universal categories of mind but because of the history of globalization/colonialism, which has ended up imposing a Western(ized), and increasingly capitalistic, symbolic order.

And second, even putting aside this historically constructed universalism, the Lacanian viewpoint is notable for what can be called a **negative universalism**, which is represented by the Real. The idea here is that every symbolic order—Western or non-Western, contemporary or historical—is undone by the Real. As Eisenstein and McGowan put it, “There are **no transcendent principles that every society shares**, but there is a constitutive failure that marks every society” (2012, 69). In the same vein, Žižek writes, “What all epochs share is not some trans-epochal constant feature; it is, rather, that they are all answers to the same deadlock” (Žižek and Daly 2004, 76). The Real is, therefore, a contextualized antagonism: it is not some unchanging and transcendental substance but immanent to every social order, reflecting any such order’s inability to fully constitute itself.

This is why Lacanian psychoanalysis can be seen as negatively (or contingently) universal, and hence universalizable.2 It is sensitive to sociohistorical specificities (e.g., to the different manifestations of **patriarchy** or **perversion** across the world or to the predominance of **racial** over **patriarchic** law in some contexts, or vice versa), while pointing out the internal selfdivision of every social order (e.g., **capitalist globalization and the glObal**; urban landscapes in Singapore, Frankfurt, and Dallas; or popular **protest** movements in Brazil and Egypt).

Outline of the Book

An important implication of all this is that the traumatic Real that psychoanalysis aims to uncover is **not simply destabilizing but productive and creative**. That is, as Žižek intimates, social reality is constructed precisely as a response to trauma; it comprises multiple repeated attempts at answering a deadlock (see also Blum and Secor 2014). This is why psychoanalysis maintains that subjecthood would be impossible without trauma. And it is also why it can be argued in this book that the glObal is meaningless without reference to the Real or unconscious (hence the formula, the GlObal = Globalization + the Real). As the contributors contend, diverse global phenomena—from capitalist accumulation and gender programs to climate change, urbanization, and social uprisings—are **specific responses to a constitutive loss or lack**. So the ideology of mainstream globalization may well be averse to its inherent castration, denying the lack at its core, but our goal in this volume is nonetheless to expose such disavowal, probing a range of unconscious desires and deadlocks. The glObal, in this sense, is an indicator of trauma, and the book’s contributors aim at revealing its unconscious underpinnings.

### AT: Falsifiability

#### Best studies prove our theory

Pizzato 10 [Mark, Researches Affective Neuroscience and Lacanian psychoanalysis as professor @ UNC-Charlette Film Studies, published 4 studies of Lacan and neuroscience. 4“Inner Theatres of Good and Evil: The Mind's Staging of Gods, Angels and Devils,” 2010]

I argue that these three Lacanian orders relate to the basic areas of neural anatomy: the left and right neocortex, plus the subcortical areas (from limbic system to brainstem).21 Humans share with all pre-existing animals, at least as far back as reptiles, a core brainstem that regulates internal functions and processes instinctual responses to outside stimuli, such as the body's instant, unconscious reaction to danger. We share with mammals a limbic system (including the temporal lobes at the sides of the head) that evolved around the brainstem to process more complex emotions and learned behaviors.22 Like other primates, we also have an expanded neocortex as the outermost layer of our brain (with occipital lobes in the back of the head, parietal lobes at the top rear, and frontal lobes).23 However, humans evolved distinct functional areas on each side of the neocortex. The left neocortex has audioverbal, linear, causal, executive, prosocial, routine functions, in contrast to the right hemisphere's visuospatial, holistic, intuitive, devil's advocate, anxiety- biased, novelty-detecting processes.25 Distinctive language systems (syntax and semantics) are in the left hemisphere, in Broca's and Wernicke's areas,2' in nearly all right-handed people and most left-handed.2. The right brain has further ties to the emotional limbic system and instinctual brainstem, but the left tends to operate separately (especially in men28), expressing or inhibiting limbic emotions and right-cortical intuitions, through its rational language and executive controls. Specifically regarding theatrical mimesis, the left inferior parietal lobe (IPL) is used for recognizing "pantomimes executed by others" because it stores the "complex digrams" or schemas used in the "higher level intentional planning" of actions, while the right IPL is used for interpreting spatial orientation (Jacob and Jeannerod 253). Thus, certain left-cortical functions correlate with Lacan's Symbolic order of language, rules, and social codes, the right with the Imaginary, and the limbic system and brain- stem areas with the Real. Yet these three orders arc "inmixed" dimensions (Ragland-Sullivan 190), as are the corresponding areas of our brains. The Symbolic order resides primarily, but not solely within and between left brains, like the Imaginary in and between right hemispheres, and the Real in limbic systems and brainstems.2- I say "primarily" because there are also aspects of Symbolic language, involving imagery and emotions, in certain right-brain functions: making and interpreting metaphors, contextual meanings, puns, prosody, and non- verbal gestures (Ornstcin 103-08; Cozolino, Neuroscience of Psychotherapy 109). Thus, the right brain is used more for language, along with the left, by "expert" readers (Wolf 162). While the right brains Imaginary order is crucial for "sell-image" (Ornstein 132, 175-76), the spatial sense of ego also depends upon the left brain's "orientation area," as I will consider in the first chapter The general correspondence of Real, Imaginary, and Symbolic orders to the brainstem/limbic system, right hemisphere, and left hemisphere is confirmed by research on developmental growth spurts in the neocortex during childhood. As in Lacan's theory of the mirror stage, with the infant's Imaginary ego initially developing through preverbal communication with the (m)Other, neuroscience shows that right-brain to right-brain "attunement" between the mother and child, during its first two years of life, profoundly shapes its emotional and perceptual pathways, especially its sense of self in relation to others (Cozolino, Neuroscience of Human 38, 66-75, 84-85; Neuroscience of Psychotherapy 191-92). The "prosocial self then shifts, through language development, into the left brain, with its growth in subsequent years (118; Wolf 185-88). This relates to the Lacanian Symbolic order of words and laws shaping the child more directly after the initial mirror stage, at 6-18 months. According to neuroscience, the self as a "distributed neural network that encompasses shared self-other representations" continues to be "right- hemisphere based" (Deccty and Sommerville 527). Recognition of one's own face can be lost when the right hemisphere is anesthetized (529)—demon- strating that the Imaginary perception of ego (or the Freudian "imago"), and its possible fading or Lacanian "aphanisis," is based in the right cortex.31 Regarding our potential for therapeutic and theatrical catharsis, there appears to be a crucial filter between Symbolic/Imaginary and Real orders (or superego /ego and id) in the prefrontal area of the neocortex, at the edge of the limbic system.3 Neurologists locate a "stimulus barrier" between the Freudian superego and id in the "ventromesial [or ventromedial regions of the prefrontal lobe [where it] merges into the limbic system" and protects the ego "from the incessant demands of instinctual life" (Kaplan-Solms and Solms 275-76).34 Here, cathartic changes may occur in how remnant natural instincts are expressed (or transformed through greater awareness), from mostly unconscious, limbic, Real emotions, through right-brain, Imaginary perceptions and fundamental fantasies, to the Symbolic order of language, rules, and self identity in relation to the social Other. Neurologists have also found four layers of the prefrontal cortex (PFC) with distinctive, nested, hierarchical functions (Koechlin et al.; Murphy and Brown 133-35). The premotor cortex, at the rear of the PFC, exerts sensory control, selecting specific motor (bodily action) responses to stimuli. The caudal lateral PFC, the next layer moving forward, adds contextual control regarding the current situation when stimuli are received. The rostral lateral PFC, a further anterior layer, then exerts episodic control over the other two, by tracking present and past information regarding general behavior, thus allowing for changing contingencies. (Murphy and Brown give the examples of answering the phone when it rings, not answering it at a friend s house, or answering it there because the friend IS in the shower and asks you to, as illustrating these three levels of stimulus response.) A fourth area is posited in the frontopolar cortex, used for cognitive branching and controlling the shifts between different episodes of behavior, while exerting control over the other three layers. Likewise, the orbitofrontal cortex (OFC) determines "reward value" choices, including the selection of "stimuli on the basis of familiarity and [selection of] responses on the basis of a feeling of Vightness" (Elliott et al. 308). The lateral regions of the OFC arc involved with "the suppression of previously rewarded responses." Brain imaging studies find that these areas are "fundamental" in behavioral choices, especially in "unpredictable situations." One might argue that the Lacanian Symbolic and Imaginary orders of cultural rules and personal perceptions connect with the Real of stimuli and actions through these areas of the PFC (just behind and above the ventrome- dial). The brain responds to familiar or unpredictable stimuli with inner theatrical representations and outer performances, through shifting, time-bound, contextual, sensory controls. Such controls are shaped in each human brain through learned cultural experiences of the social Other, which create further top-down constraints utilized by the PFC's layered functions, in relation to bottom-up stimuli. And yet, theatrical performances are ways that the Other, as well as the individual, may change. A culture can explore extended possibilities of Symbolic and Imaginary shifts in situation, context, and sensation, using a collective dreamlike space. This may also involve divine and demonic characterizations of top-down or bottom-up forces, experienced in nature, in the body and brain, or in social networks. Lacan's three orders relate not only to the brain's anatomy, but also to cognitive psychologist Merlin Donald's theory about the evolutionary stages of cultural development in our hominid ancestors. About two million years ago, early hominids evolved beyond the "episodic" experience of other animals (and prior australopithecines)— with the "mimetic" stage of human evolution.3 Donald cites the evidence of increasing brain size in our hominid ancestors,-' the first stone tools, big game hunting, a more group-oriented way of life, and thus "a cultural strategy for remembering and problem solving" (Mind 261).' Instead of being "immersed in a stream of raw episodic experience, from which they ... [could not] gain any distance," early hominids developed a new cognitive capacity, "mimetic skill, which was an extension of conscious control into the domain of action. It enabled playacting, body language, precise imitation, and gesture" (120, 261). This also included prosody, which is processed today in the brain's right hemisphere: "deliberately raising and lowering the voice, and producing imitations of emotional sounds. About a half million years ago, archaic Homo sapiens gradually evolved a "mythic" stage of culture and brain development, culminating with the emergence of our own subspecies, Homo sapiens sapiens, about 125,000 years ago (Donald, Mind 261). The mythic stage is evidenced by a much higher rate of innovation than in prior hominids: sophisticated tools, "beautifully crafted objects, improved shelters and hearths, and elaborate graves" (261-62). This stage included oral traditions of language and narrative thought — beyond the gesture, mime, and imitation of prior mimetic hominids, or the basic awareness and event sensitivity of episodic primates (260)." It thus involved a fundamental change in the human brain (and vocal tract): an "invasion" of the left parietal lobe by language, replacing spatial perception and movement, which then became a more distinctive function of the right parietal lobe (LcDoux, Synaptic 303, 318).40 Donald's mythic stage shows the evolution of the Symbolic order of mind and society, as well as our current left hemisphere functions. The mimetic stage correlates to right brain processing and the Lacanian Imaginary. Today's human brains also bear the remnant animal emotions and drives of primal episodic awareness in the limbic system and brainstem, as a lost yet disruptive Real or chora\*1 Indeed, each child moves through similar developmental stages, recapitulating hominid phylogeny: from primal episodic awareness to the mimetic "interlinking of the infant's attentional system with those of other people" and then to narrative speech (Donald, Mind 255). Or, in Lacanian terms, a child moves from the Real of natural being to the Imaginary order of mirrored illusions of ego in the (m)Others desires and then, through verbal language, to the Symbolic order of superego incorporation, with the Others discourse and social rules, via the Name and No of the Father. This basic outline of Lacanian orders, brain anatomy, and hominid evolution shows that "theatre" (and dance) in the most primal sense — as Imaginary, mimetic performance —began about two million years ago. At that time, our ancestors developed a new skill that eventually became specialized in the visuospatial, prosodic, Imaginary functions of the right hemisphere, with ties to the emotional/instinctual Real of the limbic system and brain- stem. Later hominids developed oral language and myth-making, as further Symbolic orders, through distinct areas of the left brain about a half million years ago. As with the modern child's development from primary to higher- order consciousness, through the Real and Imaginary dimensions of the mirror stage and the later Symbolic acquisition of language and rules, these layers of the brain and of hominid culture continue to interact today — with each human being transformed by a particular family and society. As Donald points out, primal mimesis in early hominids relates not only to the current playacting of children (Mind 266), but also to the "many institutionalized versions of pretend play in theater and him, and [to the] imaginative role playing [that] is integral to adult social life" (263). A crucial aspect of this evolutionary skill is emotional regulation, which involves the germ of self-consciousness, through a "mimetic controller" in the brain, "a whole-body mapping capacity ... under unified command" (269). Thus, early hominids developed larger frontal lobes, setting the stage for the later evolution of a distinctive left hemisphere (271).'15 Like children today (starting with the Imaginary dimension of the Lacanian mirror stage), our hominid ancestors developed a "kinematic imagination" with the physical "image of self" becoming an anchor to experience and awareness (273). This involved rhythmic body movements, expressing temporal relations, through the intersubjective medium of performance, as a "public theatre of convention" (272-74). However, the full emergence of theatre as narrative performance began with oral storytelling during the hominid "mythic" stage, starting about a half million years ago. Then, about forty thousand years ago, humans evolved a further, "theoretic" stage, through the "externalization of memory ... [using] symbolic devices to store and retrieve cultural knowledge" (Donald, Mind2G2). During this current stage of hominid evolution, the tradition of recorded theatre and drama developed, along with other artistic technologies,44 a "Symptom" of being human that has vastly expanded in recent centuries.45 Thus, theatre in the theoretic sense may have started with Paleolithic cave art (as considered in the first chapter). Eventually, the theoretic technologies of theatre, externalizing and interconnecting the performance elements of the human brain, developed in various ways through different cultures — culminating in the current globalism 01 virtual media screens, often dominated by Western paradigms. Our theoretic stage with its evolving technologies continues to reshape the skills of prior stages and "liberate consciousness from the limitations of the brains biological memory systems" (305). However, such an external memory field can also be a "Trojan Horse," Donald warns, "a device that invades the innermost personal spaces of the mind. It can play our cognitive instrument, directing our minds toward predetermined end states along a set course" (316). Such a Trojan Horse potential, with good and evil effects, becomes even more significant through divine characters and godlike ideals, at various points in Western history, from stage to screen performances, as explored throughout this book. Donald's stages of cognitive psychology match with Stephen Mithens archeological theories and research.4fl According to Mithen, the early hominid social intelligence of Homo erectus> 1.6 million years ago, involved the communication of "contentment, anger or desire" through a "wide range of sounds (Prehistory 144) —as with the mimetic prosody theorized by Donald. Human verbal language with "a vast lexicon and a set of grammatical rules" began 500,000 to 200,000 years ago, with Neanderthals and archaic Homo sapiens, as evidenced by brain and throat structure, indicated in fossils of their bones (140-42, 208). This corresponds to Donald's mythic stage of hominid evolution. Mithen also cites archeological evidence that a dramatic shift occurred 40,000 years ago. Early humans in the Upper Paleolithic period changed from having separate types of intelligence—natural history intelligence (such as interpreting animal hoofprints), social intelligence (with intentional communication), and technical intelligence (producing artifacts from mental templates) — to a new cognitive fluidity between them, creating artifacts with "symbolic meanings ... i.e. art" (163-65).47 This shows the begin- ning of Donald's theoretic stage and relates to the possible shamanic visions and performances evidenced by Paleolithic cave art.48 The evolutionary stages, neurological layers, and psychoanalytic orders of self and Other awareness, developing through shared cultural performances, reflect what might be called an "inner theatre" of the brain.49 By this, I do not mean a "Cartesian theatre" with the mind inside the brain as a single ghostly spectator watching the machinery of inner scenes, or as a play-wright-homunculus inhabiting a central control area (the pineal gland, according to Descartes. 400 years ago). This theory has been fully critiqued by cognitive philosophers, from Gilbert Rylc to Daniel Dennett, as well as by current neurological evidence. However, cognitive scientist Bernard Baars uses theatrical terms in other ways to explain the global workspace of human consciousness. Less than 10 percent of brain activity is conscious, like a "spot- light" on the visible actors and scenery (Theater 46-47).5 The rest involves unconscious agents, like a legislative "audience," competing and collaborating to focus attention on particular perceptions and ideas onstage. There are Deep Goal and Conceptual Contexts, like "backstage" workers, as well as immediate expectations and intentions, forming an unconscious sense of self as "director" of the brains inner theatre (144-45).52

#### The aff’s theory of desire is scientifically correct and their standard proves that math and physics are also wrong

Dean 5 COLIN LESLIE DEAN, BSC, BA, B.LITT(HON) ,MA, B.LITT(HON), MA, MA(PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDIES), "THE IRRATIONAL AND ILLOGICAL NATURE OF SCIENCE AND PSYCHOANALYSIS: THE DEMARCATIONOF SCIENCE AND NON-SCIENCE IS A PSEUDO PROBLEM" gamahucherpress.yellowgum.com/books/psychoanalysis/THE\_IRRATIONAL\_AND\_ILLOGICAL\_NATURE\_OF\_SCIENCE\_AND\_PSYCHOANA.pdf

Grunbaum, in 1984, published a book which took issue with the positivist attack upon the un-falsifiablity of psychoanalysis Grunbaum " argues that, although perhaps more difficult to study than in the physical sciences, cause-effect principles apply just as strongly in psychology as in physics. He also shows that many psychoanalytical postulates are falsifiable ..." A, Bateman, & J, Holmes claim that repression, unconscious awareness, identification and internalization are scientifically proven. Now despite Grunbaum's apparent demonstration of the falsifablity of psychoanalysis some theorists claim that the external validation of psychoanalysis is doomed to fail. These theorists follow Ricoeur in claiming a hermeneutic understanding of psychoanalysis. They claim that instead of a correspondence with reality, as being the criteria upon which to assess psychoanalysis, they claim that ". internal coherence and narrative plausibility as the basis for settling disputes." Thus we see there are those, like Grunbaum, who argue that psychoanalysis can be tested against the facts of reality and potentially its postulates can be falsified by reality. On the other hand there are those, like Ricoeur, who advocate a hermenutical approach where it is not a correspondence with reality that matters but whether the psychoanalytic theory is internally consistent and its interpretations or narratives satisfying or not. A theory is falsifiable, in the correspondence theory of 'truth' if it does not agree with reality. In the coherence theory of 'truth' a theory is falsifiable ifit is inconsistent in terms of the system. I will argue that both criteria are flawed and lack epistemological support. In this regard we see that the debate on the falsifiablity of psychoanalysis is a debate between correspondence and coherence theorists. Now the correspondence and coherence theories of 'truth' are philosophically flawed. I will show how they are flawed and lack epistemological support. What I will draw from this is my claim that it does not matter whether psychoanalysis is falsifiable or not either in terms of the correspondence or coherence theories of 'truth' because both lack epistemological support. A way of looking at a theory is to see at as a set of statements which say something about a state of affair about reality. Under this viewpoint the issue is what is the relation between the statement and reality that makes it 'true' or 'false'. O'Hear notes 'true' statements correspond or picture reality . But the problem with this is that " how can a statement- something linguistic - correspond to a fact or state of affairs. Certainly it cannot be a replica of a state of affairs , nor does it fit with it in the way a nut might be said to correspond with a nut. Further, even if we could make some sense of a simple affirmative factual statement .... There are considerable problems with knowing just what it is other statements are supposed to correspond to." What about negative statements that say something is not or does not exist? What aboutcounterfactural statements? Do mathematical and moral statements correspond to something in reality? Are there universal statements that correspond to reality? The correspondence theory of 'truth' that sees statements as corresponding to reality is thus problematic. The problems are such that, as O'Hear notes " ... the correspondence relation are simply shadowy reflections of statements we regard as true for other reasons rather than as generally mind-independent realities." When we realize that there is no non-conceptual view about reality we realize that even 'reality' is a value-laden conceptual laden term. As some argue all theory is value laden there are no facts uncontaminated by epistemological, metaphysical, other theories, and ontological views. The result of all this is to undermine the claims of the correspondence theory such that "... there is something futile in thinking that what we know is achieved by direct access to a mind-independent reality, which would suggest that a naive correspondence view of truth, at least, is likely to be able to give us little guidance in our actual inquiries and researches." We shall see that the coherence theory of 'truth' fares no better in guiding our research or acessing our actual statements about 'truth' or falsidity. In the coherence theory of 'truth' the criteria of 'truth' is that a statement does not contradict other statements. O'Hear notes that "systems here are regarded as being governed by nothing more mysterious than normal relations of implication and contradiction." But as has been pointed out it is quite easy to avoid contradiction by dropping inconsistent statements . If a statement is inconsistent with theory or observation we can just drop either the theory or observational statement. Also many scientific theory suffer from empirical counter-evidence which we nevertheless still accept. What happens when two or more theories i.e. Kleinian, Lacanian, Freudian, ego-psychology etc, are lets say coherent but contain mutually contradictory statements in regard to each other. In other words what about the situation when theories are coherent but contradict each other. O'Hear points out " that many would regard this as a conclusive objection to the coherence theory of truth, for surely whether a statement is true or not depends on the facts and not on the systems we are using to interpret the facts." But here is the big problem. We showed above that facts are themselves value conceptual laden. The correspondence theory of 'truth' in fact is not epistemologically or metaphysically etc neutral- we see the facts through other theories. But we have just seen that in seeing the facts through other theories assumes that the theories are coherence, but coherence theories of 'truth' as we have seen are epistemologically flawed. Thus we see that epistemologically both the correspondence and coherence theories of 'truth' are flawed. This to my mind say that it does not matter whether psychoanalysis is falsifiable. Whether it is, or is not is based upon a particular theory of 'truth' that has no epistemological support. Now regardless of these philosophical investigations I will show that in terms of each theory there is evidence that even though their criteria are not met for some theories these theories are still used with ongoing validity. This evidence will also lend weight to my claim that it does not matter whether psychoanalysis is falsifiable or not, it can still have validity. There are examples from physics where correspondence with reality has not resulted in the abandonment of the theory. A theory has been falsified yet nevertheless it is still used. A classic example is that of Newtonian physics. Newtonian prediction of black-body radiation failed -this was left to quantum physics to do. Also Newtonian physics failed to predict the motion of three bodies in combined gravitational motion i.e. planets . Kuhn points out that no one denied that Newtonian physic was not as science because it could not predict the speed of sound, or Newton's laws of gravitation failed to predict and account for the perigee of the moon or the motion of the moon; as he states " no one seriously questioned Newtonian theory because of the long recognized discrepancies between predictions from the theory and both the speed the speed of sound and the motion of Mercury." Thus we see that even if psychoanalysis is falsified in terms of the correspondence theory of 'truth ,the case of Newtonian physics shows us that it need not matter in the least. In this regard there is truth in Freud's provocative idea, when he states, " even if psychoanalysis showed itself as unsuccessful in every other form of nervous and psychical disease as it does in delusions, it would still remain completely justified as an irreplacable instrument of scientific research. It is true that in that case we should not be in a position to practice it." Now even in science and mathematics there are un-falsifiable entities but this does not stop them being used in those disciplines. At the very core of science and mathematics there are un-falsifiable entities. Such things as matter, the mathematical point, anti-matter force etc. are unfalsifiable. Freud notes the presence of un-falsiable objects in psychoanalysis when he states " too it will be entirely in accord with our expectations if the basic concepts and principles of the new science (instincts, nervous energy, etc) remain for a considerable time no less indeterminate than those of the older sciences (force, mass, attraction, etc)." Thus we see that even if psychoanalysis is not falsifiable, in terms of the correspondence theory of 'truth'. just like in mathematics and science, it does not matter for a theories validity. The coherence theory of 'truth's says that if a theory or statement is inconsistent then it is false. But there are examples where this is the state of affairs but nevertheless the theories are still used.

#### Reject their appeal to expertise.

**McGowan 13**(Todd, Ph.D. professor of English at UVM, Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis, 2013)

Psychoanalytic thought provides a way of understanding the role that enjoyment plays in structuring individual subjectivity and the social order. But it also allows us to see how enjoyment shapes the field of political contestation, which has undergone a fundamental historical shift in parallel with a similar shift in the location of authority. The onset of capitalism inaugurates a significant change not just in the structure of the economy and of social relations but also in the nature of social authority. As Michel Foucault and many others have documented, power relocates at the time of capitalism’s emergence: diffuse networksof powerreplace a central social authority. The point is not simply that rule by royalty gives way to representative government, in which power is shared among a wider spectrum of people, but that the location and foundation of authority in society undergoes a revolution. Even when monarchs or despots persist in the capitalist epoch, they become fundamentally changed figures, no longer embodying the position of ultimate authority, which instead multiplies throughout the social fabric. A unified law becomes a hodgepodge of rules and recommendations. Or one might say that the master controlling social relations from a transcendent position gives way to a variety of expertscaught up within the very relations of power in which they exert their influence. In the absence of a central law uniting the social field, these experts provide rules to live by and guidance for the variegations of life. According to Anthony Giddens, what emerges is a universe ruled by “expert systems,” which are “systems of technical accomplishmentor professional expertisethat organise large areas ofthe material and socialenvironmentsin which we live today.” Knowledge, not mastery,becomes the source of social authority.The reign of expert systems is the denouement of the process that originates when, at the dawn of the capitalist epoch, “all that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned.” This famous description of bourgeois society from the Communist Manifesto attempts metaphorically to chronicle the radical social leveling process that a capitalist economy entails. An economy based on exchange, like that of capitalism, demands that the objects exchanged have an equivalent value. If the exchange did not involve equivalents or, to say the same thing, involved cheating on one side, the system could not sustain itself. A system of unequal exchange is not a viable system of exchange. The equivalence of all objects under the rubric of the commodity implies the equivalence of all subjects as well: if one entity is excepted from universal equivalence, the entire system would cease to function because its logic would no longer hold true. One of Marx’s great insights consists in recognizing the transformative effect of the dominance of universal equivalence that capitalist society necessarily institutes. But ironically, this process, as Marx and Engels describe it, ends up ultimately undermining the project that Marx and Engels themselves undertook to topple it. Marx composed the three volumes of Capital and a multitude of other writings in order to supply knowledge about capitalist relations of production that leftist militants could use to change those relations. He fought capitalism with knowledge, with expertise, even as he hoped that it would not remain merely theoretical but become practical. Early on in his career, Marx tried to theorize in a practical way, to create a mode of thinking that actively engages in the world rather than reflecting on it (which is the position that knowledge, he claims, has historically occupied). This is apparent throughout The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 and in the “Theses on Feuerbach.” In the former, Marx claims: “The resolution of the theoretical antitheses is only possible in a practical way, by virtue of the practical energy of men. Their resolution is therefore by no means merely a problem of understanding, but a real problem of life, which philosophy could not solve precisely because it conceived this problem as merely a theoretical one.” Marx orients his theory toward praxis not because he is wary of knowledge’s complicity with power (as Foucault is) but because he worries about its historical fecklessness. As the final thesis on Feuerbach indicates, Marx wants to intervene and change the world rather than comment on it after history has already been made. But the problem of knowledge in the epoch in which Marx wrote lies elsewhere. The danger isn’t that knowledge will be powerless but that it will be too powerfuland act as a form of social authority. As a purveyor of knowledge concerning how the capitalist system actually works, Marx cannot escape being an expert. And yet, within the process that capitalism unleashes, the expert functions as a figure of authority. In this sense, the transmutation of Marxism into Stalinism, though it is not inevitable, follows from the change in the structure of authority that capitalism triggers. Stalin is the ultimate figure of expert knowledge, tightly controlling Soviet society in order to develop its productivity to the maximum potential. Stalin is the bureaucratic counterpart to Henry Ford, the expert of the free market. By establishing his doctrine as a system of expertise, Marx inadvertently succumbs to the logic that he aims to contest and makes someone like Stalin possible, though it is not clear that there is an alternate solution. Marx is an Enlightenment thinker.At the beginning of the Enlightenment, knowledge was a force for liberationand revolution. Someone like Galileo represents a danger to the authority of the Catholic Church because this authority rests on the power of the master signifier rather than on the power of knowledge. In Bertolt Brecht’s play depicting Galileo’s recantation, the church’s philosopher upbraids Galileo for seeking knowledge that might bring upheaval to the established order, but Galileo himself insists that the true scientist seeks knowledge without considering where it will lead. His advice to those thinkers who fear shaking the foundations of the church’s authority is emphatic: “Why defend shaken teachings? You should be doing the shaking.”7 The position of the scientist or knowledge seeker, as Galileo sees it here, is unequivocal. The pursuit of knowledge involves one in a combat against the power of authority, and it represents a power that authorities fear, which is why the Inquisition targeted Galileo. In actual history and in Brecht’s play, Galileo’s courage to defy authority wanes. He recants and capitulates to the power of the church, which deals a temporary blow to the Enlightenment project and its liberating potential. Descartes, for one, withheld the publication of his treatise *The World* out of fear that he might become a target of the Inquisition, as Galileo did. Butthe power of the Enlightenment andknowledge wins its historical strugglewith the authority of the master signifier. When this occurs and knowledge becomes a source of social authority, knowledge loses its connection to the Enlightenment project of universal emancipation. Knowledgebecomes a force for subjugation rather than freedom, and the Enlightenment is transformed into its opposite. When experts become the voice of authority, the political landscape undergoes a dramatic change, the ramifications of which have become increasingly visible in the last few decades. The transformation of authority that began in the seventeenth century realized itself at the conclusion of the twentieth, and the result has been a reversal of traditional political alignments. This social revolution strips the forces of social change of their favorite weapon — knowledge — because use of this weapon has the effect of turning subjects against social change, despite the fact that that change is clearly in their best interests. In today’s world, expert knowledge necessarily confronts the subject as an external imperative laced with the power of prohibition. The rise of the expert corresponds to the increasing complexity and treacherousness of everyday life; contemporary existence seems to demand expert analysis to render it navigable. In his account of the emergence of what he calls a “risk society,” Ulrich Beck notices the politics of expert knowledge changing sides. He points out: “The non-acceptance of the scientific definition of risks is not something to be reproached as ‘irrationality’ in the population; but quite to the contrary, it indicates that the cultural premises of acceptability contained in scientific and technical statements on risks are wrong. The technical risk experts are mistaken in the empirical accuracyof their implicit value premises, specifically in their assumptions of what appears acceptable to the population.” Experts provide guidelines that allow subjects to navigate the contours of contemporary society, in which risk confronts us everywhere, butthe experts performthis functionwith nopropersense ofwhat the populationdesires.In this process, experts inevitably assume the role of authority figures. As Beck’s statement above indicates, from the perspective of the general population itself, the relationship between the expert and the population is adversarial. Through psychoanalytic thought, we can gain insight into the ramifications of the rise of the expert authority and the decline of the master. The emergence of the expert as the figure of authority fundamentally changes the political terrain, and our political thinking must adjust to this transformation. Psychoanalytic thought represents a privileged vehicle for making the adjustment. Combating the expert is much more difficult than combating the master: the knowledge that would subvert mastery becomes part of the power that the expert wields and thus loses its subversive power.A different political program — one that focuses on enjoymentrather than knowledge —becomes necessarybecause the master and the expert take up radically different positions relative to enjoyment. Unlike the master, the earlier form of social authority, the expert not only prohibits enjoyment but also appears to embody this enjoyment through the act of laying down regulations. The expert enjoys informing subjects about the dangers they face or the ways they should alter their behavior, and it is this enjoyment that subjects rebel against.The enjoyment that the expert derives from providing counsel is the explicit focus of Peter Segal’s Anger Management (2003), which finds comedy in the abuse that an anger management therapist heaps on his client. The film recounts the travails of a timid businessman, Dave Buznik (Adam Sandler), who is sentenced to anger management therapy after a misunderstanding occurs between a flight attendant and him while he is traveling. His therapist, Dr. Buddy Rydell (Jack Nicholson), practices an aggressive treatment that involves intimidating Buznik, screaming at him, and even invading his personal life. At the end of the film, rather than helping Buznik, Rydell appears to have wooed Buznik’s girlfriend away from him and basically destroyed his life. Here we see all the ways that the expert enjoys deploying knowledge, and this enjoyment occurs at the expense of the subject receiving the advice. But in the last instance Anger Management remains fully ensconced in the regime of the expert, despite the comedy it tries to create at the expense of this regime. The film’s ending reveals that Rydell has set up the entire experience — including the incident with the flight attendant and the sentencing by the judge — in order to impel Buznik to express himself, especially to his girlfriend. Rather than a course in anger management, Rydell has actually been offering a course in self-expression. This denouement transforms the film’s (and the viewer’s) relationship to the expert: rather than impugning the rule of expertise and knowledge, the film becomes an affirmation of it. The ending of the fi lm doesn’t simply spoil an otherwise trenchant critique of expert rule but infects the critique throughout the fi lm. The critique — and the comedy, unfortunately — never go far enough because the idea that the expert really knows and really has the best interests of the client at heart informs the entirety of the film. The film’s investment in the expert that it appears to critique portends the film’s failure as both comedy and critique. The rule of the expert has such a degree of hegemony today that it is difficult to think of any films, novels, and other artworks that attempt to contest it or expose the expert’s enjoyment without ultimately partaking of it. On the other hand, the works that allow audiences to enjoy along with the expert multiply throughout the culture. Television shows such as csi: Crime Scene Investigations and House M.D. display this dynamic in its most open form: the shows present a problem that appears utterly unsolvable to the viewer, and then they reveal the expert’s genius at finding a solution. Expert knowledge — a knowledge not accessible to the ordinary subject — has all the answers and thus becomes the undisputable locus of authority. The popularity of these shows derives from their ability to allow audiences to share in the expert’s enjoyment, an enjoyment that typically is the site of trauma for the subject. Contact with expert authority has a traumatic effect on the subjectbecause of the proximity of the expert. While the old master remained at a distance, the expert is always in the subject’s face, like Dr. Buddy Rydell in Anger Management, never allowing the subject room to breathe. As Anger Management shows, this proximity has the effect of stimulating the subject. Under the rule of the expert, subjects experience what Eric Santner calls “a sustained traumatization induced by exposure to, as it were, fathers who [know] too much about living human beings.” Exposure to this type of authority, to “this excess of knowledge,” produces “an intensification of the body [that] is first and foremost a sexualization.” Instead of emancipating the subject, knowledge traumatizes and plays the central role in the subjection of the subject to the order of social regulation.

#### Psychoanalysis is both falsifiable and accurate.

**Grant & Harari ‘5** (Don and Edwin, psychiatrists, “Psychoanalysis, science and the seductive theory of Karl Popper,” Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry 39)

Attacks on psychoanalysis and the long-term therapies derived from it, have enjoyed a long history and much publicity [1-4]. Yet, the justification for such attacks has been challenged on many grounds, including their methodology [5] and the empirically demonstrable validity of core psychoanalytic concepts [6,7]. Also, burgeoning neuroscience research, some of which is summarized below, indicates likely neurological correlates for many key clinically derived psychoanalytic concepts such as self-coherence [8], repression [9] and projective identification [10].

Furthermore, the effectiveness of psychoanalysis and its derivative therapies has been supported by empirical research[11,12], particularly for patients with DSM axis II pathology. Despite this evidence, the attacks on psychoanalysis continue unabated, not only from some psychiatrists [13,14] but also from the highest levels of politics and health bureaucrats [15], although what exactly is being attacked is often unclear.

#### Drives are verified too.

**Guterl ‘2** (Fred, “What Freud Got Right,” Newsweek, Nov 11, <http://www.neuropsa.org.uk/what-freud-got-right>)

But a funny thing happened to Freud on the way to becoming a trivia question: as researchers looked deeper into the physical structure of the brain, they began to find support for some of his theories. Now a small but influential group of researchers are using his insights as a guide to future research; they even have a journal, Neuropsychoanalysis, founded three years ago. “Freud’s insights on the nature of consciousness are consonant with the most advanced contemporary neuroscience views,” wrote Antonio Damasio, head of neurology at the University of Iowa College of Medicine. Note that Damasio did not refer to psychoanalysis or the Oedipus complex. Instead the work is going on at the fundamental level where emotions are born and primitive passions lurk in the shadows of dreams.

HOW THE MIND WORKS

       Beyond the basic animal instincts to seek food and avoid pain, Freud identified two sources of psychic energy, which he called “drives”: aggression and libido (the latter encompasses sexuality but also had a more expansive meaning, involving the desire for stimulation and achievement). The key to his theory is that these were unconscious drives, shaping our behavior without the mediation of our waking minds; they surface, heavily disguised, only in our dreams. The work of the past half-century in psychology and neuroscience has been to downplay the role of unconscious universal drives, focusing instead on rational processes in conscious life. Meanwhile, dreams were downgraded to a kind of mental static, random scraps of memory flickering through the sleeping brain. But researchers have found evidence that Freud’s drives really do exist, and they have their roots in the limbic system, a primitive part of the brain that operates mostly below the horizon of consciousness. Now more commonly referred to as emotions, the modern suite of drives comprises five: rage, panic, separation distress, lust and a variation on libido sometimes called seeking. Freud presaged this finding in 1915, when he wrote that drives originate “from within the organism” in response to demands placed on the mind “in consequence of its connection with the body.” Drives, in other words, are primitive brain circuits that control how we respond to our environment—foraging when we’re hungry, running when we’re scared and lusting for a mate.

The seeking drive is proving a particularly fruitful subject for researchers. Although like the others it originates in the limbic system, it also involves parts of the forebrain, the seat of higher mental functions. In the 1980s, Jaak Panksepp, a neurobiologist at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, became interested in a place near the cortex known as the ventraltegmental area, which in humans lies just above the hairline. When Panksepp stimulated the corresponding region in a mouse, the animal would sniff the air and walk around, as though it were looking for something. Was it hunger? No. The mouse would walk right by a plate of food, or for that matter any other object Panksepp could think of. This brain tissue seemed to cause a general desire for something new. “What I was seeing,” he says, “was the urge to do stuff.” Panksepp called this seeking.

To neuropsychologist Mark Solms of University College in London, that sounds very much like libido. “Freud needed some sort of general, appetitive desire to seek pleasure in the world of objects,” says Solms. “Panksepp discovered as a neuroscientist what Freud discovered psychologically.” Solms studied the same region of the brain for his work on dreams. Since the 1970s, neurologists have known that dreaming takes place during a particular form of sleep known as REM—rapid eye movement—which is associated with a primitive part of the brain known as the pons. Accordingly, they regarded dreaming as a low-level phenomenon of no great psychological interest. When Solms looked into it, though, it turned out that the key structure involved in dreaming was actually the ventral tegmental, the same structure that Panksepp had identified as the seat of the “seeking” emotion. Dreams, it seemed, originate with the libido—which is just what Freud had believed.

        Freud’s psychological map may have been flawed in many ways, but it also happens to be the most coherent and, from the standpoint of individual experience, meaningful theory of the mind there is. “Freud should be placed in the same category as Darwin, who lived before the discovery of genes,” says Panksepp. “Freud gave us a vision of a mental apparatus. We need to talk about it, develop it, test it.” Perhaps it’s not a matter of proving Freud wrong or right, but of finishing the job.

#### They have placed an emphasis on the final status of truth – real science proceeds not through a pursuit of truth but through a sense of incompleteness which it relies on to test itself. Their writing out of psychoanalysis makes them the unscientific ones.

Levine ‘1 [Michael Levine, lectures in the Department of Philosophy, University of Western Australia, July 2001, “A Fun Night Out: Horror and Other Pleasures of the Cinema” Freud's Worst Nightmares - Psychoanalysis and the Horror FilmIssue 15 <https://www.sensesofcinema.com/2001/freuds-worst-nightmares-psychoanalysis-and-the-horror-film/horror_fun/> // K. 9/17/21]

Until recently most, but by no means all, philosophical work in connection with Freud has been concerned with the question whether Freud’s work was scientific- whether it was testable, verifiable, or falsifiable, in accordance with accepted scientific procedure. Grünbaum (1984; 1993); Erwin (1996; 1993); Macmillan (1997); Cioffi (1988; 1985); and others (cf. Robinson, 1993) have been far less concerned with the significance and wide-ranging philosophical implications of psychoanalytic theory, or even with the truth of such theory, than with the nature and methods of science. (4) But arguably the scientific status of psychoanalysis has always been a problem for the philosophy of science in general, rather than having any intrinsic connection to psychoanalysis. What constitutes a scientific theory (cf. Lear 1990: 216ff)? What are appropriate scientific inductivist canons? (5) Furthermore, **even if psychoanalysis is not a “science”** given some agreed upon scientific inductivist canons, **it may nevertheless be more or less true.** **Since a theory can be true without being scientific it is a mistake to see psychoanalysis as false if not scientific**. Its support may come from various sources and considerations- both theoretical and empirical. Grünbaum’s account of Freud’s “Tally Argument” shows that Freud himself was responsible for focusing so much attention on the scientific status of his theories. Freud says that, “After all, his [the patient’s] conflicts will only be successfully solved and his resistances overcome if the anticipatory ideas [i.e., psychoanalytic interpretations] he is given tally with what is real in him. Whatever in the doctor’s conjectures is inaccurate drops out in the course of analysis. .it has to be withdrawn and replaced by something more correct” (1917, XVI: 452). Grünbaum interprets this “as a conjunction of the following two causally necessary conditions. (p. 1) Only the psychoanalytic method of interpretation and treatment can yield or mediate for the patient the correct insight into the unconscious causes of his neuroses. (p. 2) The patient’s correct insight into the conflictual cause of his condition and into the unconscious dynamics of his character is in turn causally necessary for the durable cure of his neuroses” (1988:14). He refers to the conjunction of these claims as the Necessary Condition Thesis. (6) Such claims appear subject to inductive assessment in accordance with scientific (inductivist) canons, and Freud’s apparent adherence to the Necessary Condition Thesis suggests that he agrees. (7) No doubt Freud believed his theories to be scientific and testable to a degree. However, it should not be overlooked that, whether or not he had sound and/or ulterior motives in claiming scientific status for psychoanalysis, it was probably a good thing for psychoanalysis that he did. It is unlikely that psychoanalysis would have received the attention it did had it not associated itself early on with the mystique of science in a scientistic age. At any rate, even a cursory reading of Freud suggests that his theories were not based solely on clinical data and “evidence,” but also, and perhaps even more so, on his observations of everyday life. He understood only too well the presence of mitigating factors, and the difficulty of achieving a psychoanalytic cure. Textual evidence notwithstanding, he never strictly adhered to the Necessary Condition Thesis. Freud carried his couch around with him. In psychoanalysis, like anything else, too selective a reading-or too close a reading-can at times be as misleading as the alternatives. What then is the evidence for the validity of psychoanalytic theory? According to Hopkins, psychoanalytic explanation is an extension of common sense or folk psychology. (8) The relevance of thematic affinity (e.g., dreaming of drinking water when one is thirsty)-how it supports Freud’s theory-is crucial to Hopkins’ defense of psychoanalysis. He says that Grünbaum objects to the idea that claims as to a causal connection between mental items can be cogently supported by a connection in content-a “thematic affinity”-between them. He speaks of “what might be dubbed ‘the thematic affinity fallacy’,” and appears to reject the basing of causal claims on connection in content “no matter how strong the thematic affinity.” For, he stresses, “thematic affinity alone does not vouch for etiologic linkage in the absence of further evidence” [34 ].(9) Grünbaum has made no case against the view.that much of Freud’s reasoning can be regarded as cogently extending commonsense psychology. If Grünbaum has missed something about connection between content and wish-fulfilment [i.e., the significance of thematic affinity], and if what he has missed constitutes reason to accept Freudian claims, then his conclusions systematically understates the support for Freudian theory. (1988: 59) In addition and related to instances of thematic affinity found in dreams and neurotic symptoms, ordinary experience of the kinds Freud relied upon should not be discounted in support of psychoanalysis. Thus, the view that our strongest denials are often affirmations; that slips of the tongue are (often) meaningful; that individuals regularly deploy a variety of ego defence mechanisms at their disposal- all are Freudian insights that have now become commonplace. They can jointly be taken as part of the evidence for the truth of psychoanalytic theory. Together, they allegedly support the inference that psychoanalytic explanations of these phenomena are often the most plausible ones (see Freud 1901). When judged against alternative explanations, psychoanalytic explanations of phenomena like racism and sexism can also allegedly support fundamental psychoanalytic truths. (10) Whether or not Woody Allen’s psychoanalysis reaches a successful conclusion is-except for Woody- relatively unimportant. Prince states that “the primary and to my mind insurmountable problem with basing general theories of spectatorship on psychoanalysis is that such theories must remain unsupported because psychoanalysis is a discipline without reliable data” (1996: 72-73). However, just as the hard science’s notion of falsifiablity is too narrow as applied to psychoanalysis), so too is Prince’s notion of “reliable data.” They are too narrow given the kind of “science” psychoanalysis is. Prince endorses Colby and Stroller, who claim that “psychoanalytic evidence is hearsay, first when the patient reports his or her version of an experience and second when the analyst reports it to an audience. Reports on clinical findings are mixtures of facts, fabulations, and fictives so intermingled that one cannot tell where one begins and the other leaves off” (1988: 3, 29). This charge of unreliable data is just another way of systematically rejecting the kinds of support for psychoanalysis that are in fact available. The criticism falsely assumes that what constitutes reliable and accurate psychoanalytic data and interpretation is up for grabs- that there are no criteria for judging what is and is not correct in psychoanalysis. Of course there is going to be disagreement amongst theorists as to what those criteria are, both generally and in specific cases. And of course those criteria are going to be very different than the criteria for theoretical adequacy in, say, the physical sciences. But the idea that psychoanalytic practice and theory necessarily employ “unreliable data” is a roundabout way of failing to recognize what does constitute psychoanalytical data and why. (11) Far from regarding his work as final, Freud frequently reiterated that psychoanalysis has a bright future regarding “further discoveries” about the individual, civilization, and the connections between them. Freud constantly revised his theories in view of theoretical concerns and new data. Perhaps the most notorious example (recently notorious) is his revision of the seduction theory. Freud first claimed that actual childhood seductions were the cause of various neuroses. He later claimed that imagined seductions could suffice in terms of the aetiology of neuroses- given all the other conditions of susceptibility, instinctual endowment, etc. Wishful phantasies of various sorts came to be considered important, including phantasies of seductions (e.g., phantasies of parental intercourse). Both the original and altered positions were heavily and vehemently criticized, though for different reasons. Another example is Freud’s introduction of the death instinct in 1920 to supplement the sexual (libidinous) instinct. The conflict between libido and ego-instincts becomes a conflict between eros and the death instinct. There is also his revision of the account of anxiety in 1926: first he thought that anxiety was transformed libido; then he realized that (signal) anxiety was a reaction to threat from the external world, the superego, and instinctual forces. And then there is Freud’s change in topography from Uc.-Pcs.-Cs. to id, ego and superego in 1923. Such revision-and the extent to which he revised truly is striking-goes hand in hand with the falsification of earlier theory and interpretation. So aspects of Freud’s theory were (and are) not only falsifiable, but were indeed falsified, and recognized by Freud as such. Subsequent developments in psychoanalysis build on aspects of Freud’s views without regarding those earlier views as sacrosanct. The work of Melanie Klein, for example, and David Winnicott, accept as well as revise aspects of Freud. The ongoing development of psychoanalysis is indicative of the fact that it continues to be revised, refined, and in many cases corrected. By its own light, **aspects of psychoanalysis-even key aspects-are falsifiable.** **The standards or criteria for falsification are different for psychoanalytic theory than they are, e.g., for physics. But even those in psychoanalysis who claim that it is science have never claimed the standards to be the same**- or if they did, they were confused and mistaken. If the demand for criteria of falsification is a demand for criteria of the falsification of psychoanalysis in its entirety, then this is different kind of demand and standard. It is more akin to asking for criteria of falsification not just for a theory or aspect of physics, but for physics per se. And **it would seem that there is no more readily acceptable standard of falsification for physics per se than there is for psychoanalysis as such.**

#### Scientific consensus supports psychoanalysis – just look at all these scientists that agree with us!

Target 10 [“On Psychoanalysis” is an open letter with 54 signatories who are distinguished researchers at leading world universities; Mary Target PhD is Professor of Psychoanalysis at University College London, and Professional Director of the Anna Freud Centre, London. She is a Clinical Associate Professor in the Yale University School of Medicine. She is a Fellow of the Institute of Psychoanalysis in London, and maintains a half-time adult psychoanalytic practice; Peter Fonagy, Anthony Bateman, Peter Hobson, University College London, UK; Falk Leichsenring, University of Giessen, Germany; Sidney Blatt, Linda Mayes, Yale University, New Haven Connecticut, US; Robert Michels, Barbara Milrod, Steven Roose, David Olds, Frank Yeomans, Columbia University, New York City, US; Joseph Schachter; Mark Solms, University of Cape Town, South Africa; Jonathan Shedler, University of Colorado, Denver, US; Marianne Leuzinger-Bohleber, Sigmund Freud Institute and University of Kassel, Germany; Mardi Horowitz, George Silberschatz, University of California, San Francisco, US; Diana Diamond, Eric A. Fertuck, Elliot Jurist, City University of New York, US; Helmut Thomä, Horst Kächele, University of Ulm, Germany; Raymond Levy, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, US; Stephan Hau, Andrzej Werbart, Stockholm University, Sweden;; Anna Buchheim, University of Innsbruck, Austria Jeremy Safran, The New School for Social Research, New York City, US; Stijn Vanheule, Ghent University, Belgium; Geoff Goodman, Long Island University, Brookville, New York, US; Lewis Aron, New York University, US; Joel Weinberger, Adelphi University, Garden City, New York, US; Nancy McWilliams, Rutgers University, New Jersey, US; Allan Abbass, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada; Joseph Masling, State University of New York at Buffalo, US; Kenneth N. Levy, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, US;; Golan Shahar, Ben-Gurion University, Beer-Sheva. Israel John Auerbach, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, US; Henning Schauenburg, University of Heidelberg, Germany; Dorothea Huber, Technical University of Munich, Germany; Stephen Soldz, Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis, US; Bethany Brand, Towson University, Maryland, US; Karin Ensink, Laval University, Quebec City, Canada; Clara López Moreno; Alessandra Lemma, University of Essex, Colchester, UK; Saskia de Maat, Mentrum Institute for Mental Health, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Patrick Luyten, Catholic University of Leuven (KUL), Belgium; Margaret R. Zellner, The Rockefeller University and The Neuropsychoanalysis Foundation, New York City, US; Mary Beth Cresci, Division of Psychoanalysis, American Psychological Association, Washington DC, US; William H. Gottdiener, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, New York City, US; David Taylor, Tavistock & Portman NHS Foundation Trust, London, UK; Sherwood Waldron, Psychoanalytic Research Consortium, New York City, US; Paolo Migone, Editor, Psicoterapia e Scienze Umane, Parma, Italy; Henriette Löffler-Stastka, Medical University of Vienna, Austria; “On Psychoanalysis”; New Scientist; October 27, 2010; https://www.newscientist.com/letter/dn19567-on-psychoanalysis/]//eleanor

Psychoanalysis has developed greatly since Freud’s time, producing substantial research and productive connections to other branches of science. Many basic psychoanalytic propositions have been widely accepted, such as the formative impact of early childhood relationships on adult personality. Some of Freud’s specific propositions have been eclipsed by later formulations – as you would expect for bodies of knowledge evolving for more than a century, and certainly for any science. The basic idea of a dynamic unconscious that actively shapes conscious experience and relations with others has made productive connections with disciplines such as neuroscience. Psychoanalysts have been testing the outcomes of psychoanalytic therapies for decades, using randomised controlled trials and systematic follow-up studies, as called for by Bunge in his article. Most trials have found good evidence of the effectiveness of psychoanalytic therapies, when tested in the same way as other approaches. Contrary to Bunge’s assertion, studies included in Jonathan Shedler’s review of meta-analyses of therapeutic outcomes of psychoanalytic therapy did, of course, have control groups (American Psychologist, vol 65, p 98). The 54 signatories to this letter include distinguished researchers in psychoanalysis in the science faculties of leading world universities, who have acquired major public grants and have published papers in high-impact, peer-reviewed scientific journals. This level of scientific contribution compares very well with that in other clinical professions.

#### It's scientific.

Hopkins 10 [Jim Hopkins, department of philosophy, King’s College London, and research department of clinical, educational and health psychology, University College London; “On Psychoanalysis; New Scientist; October 27, 2010; https://www.newscientist.com/letter/dn19567-on-psychoanalysis/]//eleanor

Anyone inclined to credit Bunge’s claim that psychoanalysts are “foreign to the scientific community” should consider examples. The psychoanalyst John Bowlby founded the burgeoning field of attachment research partly to test hypotheses inspired by psychoanalysis about the role of parents. The psychoanalyst Mark Solms has contributed to the neuroscience of dreaming with research indicating that REM sleep and dreaming are dissociable, and that dreams are caused not by the REM mechanisms themselves but by basic motivational systems which are common to all mammals and which arguably form the core of emotion and emotional experience in human beings. Programmes linking psychoanalysis and neuroscience were initiated by analysts 20 years ago, and the journal Neuropsychoanalysis was established in 1999 with an editorial board including leading neuroscientists, cognitive scientists and psychoanalysts. For the past 10 years there have been yearly conferences at which neuroscientists and psychoanalysts have presented research and discussed areas of overlapping interest (video proceedings and other information available at neuropsa.org.uk/npsa). Psychoanalytic journals publish contributions involving psychoanalysts and neuroscientists. Leaders in neurophysiological research on depression have recently put forward an explicitly Freudian model in the Annals of General Psychiatry (vol 7, p 9). This year in Brain, neuroscientists Karl Friston and Robin Carhart-Harris undertake to “demonstrate consistencies between key Freudian ideas and recent perspectives on global brain function that have emerged in imaging and theoretical neuroscience” to show “construct validity” for Freudian concepts and enable “dialogue between psychoanalysts and neurobiologists” (vol 133, p 1265). Such collaboration may, of course, contradict rather than confirm psychoanalytic hypotheses, but it is enough to falsify Bunge’s claim that psychoanalysis should be seen as pseudoscience. Or rather, it would be enough, if Bunge’s claim itself were subject to evidence, rather than abuse masquerading as philosophy.

#### Even if we’re unfalsifiable, who cares – as long as we can develop some empathy or there’s any possibility we can help each other, it’s a reason why our method solves and is good

Benvenuto 19 (Sergio Benvenuto - researcher for the Institute of Cognitive Sciences and Technologies of the Italian National Research Council in Rome and Professor Emeritus in Psychoanalysis at the International Institute of Depth Psychology in Kiev, “CONVERSATIONS WITH LACAN Seven Lectures for Understanding Lacan”, Routledge, 6 December 2019, <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9780429053757/conversations-lacan-sergio-benvenuto>, MG)

Today the key signifier of this syrup is “**empathy**.” Even in everyday life, we no longer say of someone that they’re “rotten,” but that they “lack empathy.” I think that deep in the background, the success of “empathy” is the proof of a powerful return of a certain type of philosophical phenomenology, also relaunched by a particular variety of neuroscientific research (Francisco Varela, mirror neurons, and so on). This is often a vulgarized phenomenology, summarized, for the benefit of psychotherapists, as follows: the analyst, like anyone who offers herself as helper, must be **empathic** towards patients, in the sense of trying to “**step into their shoes**.” The analyst must “understand” the other in the plain sense of the term, like when we say “I understand why you want a divorce,” meaning by this: “if I were in your shoes, I’d want to send that whoremonger of a husband of yours to hell too!” If we focus entirely on “stepping into the patient’s shoes,” practically nothing distinguishes analysis from a good friendship, and it just becomes something like an occasional get-together between two friends at the pub to chat about their woes. In fact, we tend to prefer talking to “empathic” people, who somehow respond to our joys and pains. Today the most successful psychoanalysis is a “**pub get-together” psychoanalysis**.

I think that this kind of psychoanalysis, even when theorized with great subtlety, is the symptom of a sort of disintegration of mainstream psychoanalysis. With the term mainstream I refer to the most important psychoanalytic institutions, excluding the Lacanian.

For decades, scholars who don’t believe in psychotherapies have said: “When a psychotherapy does have curative effects, this is not due to the psychotherapeutic theories themselves, but to the fact that a subject has found someone who is haloed with the prestige of the specialist who is actually listening to them and giving them empathy, attention, and suchlike.”

In other words, all psychotherapies are a placebo, as there is no “**active substance**” apart from this conviviality “that pleases.” And, indeed, it could be helpful to **systematically increase placebo effects in medicine**. For example, with a little more empathy we could increase the number of people recovering from illnesses thanks to plain water from 40% to 50%. Why not?

Now, it seems to me that these relational and interpersonal currents have fully accepted these criticisms. It’s as if they were saying: “**we admit it, there’s nothing ‘real’** at the basis of psychoanalysis; it is merely an empathic relationship between two human beings, in which one may help the other.” We are witnessing a placebation, if you will forgive me the horrendous neologism, of analysis. This is why I believe that relationism – so popular today – is a sign of the crisis of traditional psychoanalysis, under fire by the scepticism towards any talking cure .

I believe that this insistence on relation and empathy is a **sort of return to where psychoanalysis began: hypnosis**. Before psychoanalysis, Freud practiced the “cathartic method,” with the use of suggestion. “Hypnosis” and “empathy” are apparently opposites: Hypnosis is based on the fact that the curing subject imposes his will on the hypnotized subject, whilst empathy is based on the fact that all of the patient’s feelings and life experiences are imposed on the healer. The analyst embraces all of the former’s desiderata. It’s as if psychoanalysis has come full circle, capsizing on itself. But hypnosis and empathic effects have one thing in common, namely: that **one of the two subjects adapts to the will or feelings of the other.**

Now, Lacan would have shown contempt for the “relational” approach, though he was sometimes empathic himself; at the beginning of an analysis a dose of empathy is a fine stimulus. But real analysis begins when this specific understanding between analyst and patient makes room for something else. Allow me to give an example.

Some time ago I followed a young man who had embarked on a university career in Italy. He would continuously condemn the pettiness, dullness, and frauds of the Italian university world, which he considered responsible for his failure to obtain tenure. Now, being quite well-acquainted with Italian academic environments, I felt in total empathy with what he was saying. I too had gone through the ordeal he was describing. Like most when they start a psychotherapeutic relationship (before becoming analysands), in me he was looking for a conniving “specialist” who would say to him: “you’re quite right! You’re dealing with some abominable characters!” Most people “go into therapy” wanting to buy your empathy; this is their demand. The wholesalers who copiously supply the goods the patients are asking for – approval, solidarity, often even fondness – remain at the level of connivance. Whilst for Lacan, analysis begins when one moves from the reiteration of the demande to a **sometimes unpleasant level,** that of désir. Unpleasant, because according to Freud, we are truly horrified by our desire.

Lacan conceptualizes this passage in Hegelian terms, as a dialectical overcoming of the “beautiful soul,” die schöne Seele. I shan’t delve into the full dialectics of the beautiful soul, but limit myself to what is of interest to us here, i.e. at a certain point **the analyst must confront the patient** – the client, in today’s terminology, who has come to purchase empathy from you – with the following observation: **“what was your own contribution to the decay you are decrying**?” But this means the suspension of empathy at the risk of being disliked by the patient.

Now, it was precisely by abandoning my empathy towards the aspiring tenured professor that I gradually began to help him realize that the academic defeats he kept falling victim to were somehow of his own making. That he was basically doing everything he could to make the powerful reject him. Why? The analysis had now begun to focus on this question. But for it to emerge, I had to set my empathy aside – my knowledge that all the Italian academic decay he complained about was perfectly true.

In addition to empathy, another somewhat opposite prescription is popular today, particularly in Italy: Bion’s “suspension of memory and desire” by the analyst. A slogan that seems to me to be just as dubious as the appeal to empathy. Because if analysts completely suspended memory and desire, they would become like a camera – according to Freud, we are human because **we desire and remember**. It’s true that analysts should suspend certain desires and certain memories, but **not all.** It’s crucial that analysts burn with a specific desire: the desire to analyze. It is thanks to the fact that patients are infected by this desire that they connect in transference and become analysands. And analysts should have memories of certain aspects, for example, of everything that keeps repeating itself in the lives of their analysands.

Psychoanalysis works when it steers clear of **both the Scylla of reducing analysis to an empathic relationship and the Charybdis of stripping its own flesh**, which relegates the analyst to being outside the world of desirers and rememberers.

There should also be “empathic” phases of course, because analysis is never pure, it is always seasoned with a dose of psychotherapy, i.e. with relations of favouritism. But analysts, if they can really call themselves that, hope something else will emerge **beyond the “relation**,” i.e. the structure of the symptom, which for Lacan is everyone’s specific way of enjoying.

### AT: Hook 21 [Theft of Enjoyment Wrong]

#### They’ve cut the strawman part of the article – Derek Hook is a Lacanian psychoanalyst who agrees with racism as theft of enjoyment and literally line by lines their card – we’ve cut the conclusion.

Hook 21 [Derek Hook is an Associate Professor in Psychology at Duquesne University and an Extraordinary Professor in Psychology at the University of Pretoria. A former lecturer at the London School of Economics and Birkbeck College, he is the author of A Critical Psychology of the Postcolonial and (Post)apartheid Conditions.; “Pilfered pleasure: on racism as “the theft of enjoyment”,” Lacan and Race: Racism, Identity, and Psychoanalytic Theory; Routledge; June 2021]//eleanor

Conclusion What have we gained in our assessment of the Lacanian idea of racism as enjoyment? Well, we have been able to offer a series of responses to the four basic critiques highlighted in the opening sections of this paper. In respect of the first critique (of psychological reductionism), we have, I hope, taken a series of decisive steps away from thinking jouissance within the domain of the psychological. I have asserted that in its varying social formations jouissance is—paradoxically enough—more a sociological than a psychological concept. Once we grasp that enjoyment does not float free of the socio-historical context and that it is necessarily grounded in a particular socio-Symbolic matrix of laws and social ideals, then we have to reject the idea that enjoyment is reducible to a psychological dynamic of resentment. Any viable analytical reference to the notion of jouissance should then of necessity be tied to the Symbolic domain from within which it has arisen. It is however true that the “racism as theft of enjoyment” thesis is often deployed in ways (this is typical of Žižek’s work) that are glaringly inattentive to socio-economic and historical detail. This much I concede: such illustrative descriptions of the concept should entail more by way of nuance and empirical texture. Analytical application should particularize these concepts, investigate how they might appear in highly distinctive fields of analysis, rather than summarily generalize across empirical contexts. That being said, I have nevertheless suggested that the “formalist” quality of this Lacanian thesis may in fact be viewed an analytical asset. After all, as a variable of a social analysis, enjoyment must surely remain empty of essential contents precisely because of the malleability of jouissance in differing historical and cultural contexts? Indeed, this was one of the responses to the second of the critiques offered above (enjoyment as conceptually under-differentiated, over-inclusive): yes, jouissance can refer to virtually any object or activity, so long as it has taken on libidinal value. We can argue that this apparent over-inclusiveness proves a crucial anti-essentialist dimension of the concept of jouissance. The racism as (theft of) enjoyment thesis should, accordingly, be used as an empty thesis that must of necessity be anchored in empirical detail. So, rather than operating as an all-subsuming, “one size fits all” trans-historical formula, the idea of racism as (the theft of) enjoyment should be treated precisely as hypothetical, as an exploratory device that focuses our attentions on specific facets of the analytical field. One prospective use of the thesis is precisely as a heuristic device, a provisional analytical frame that challenges the analyst of racism to identify the various interconnected components of a prospective libidinal economy (the superegoic functioning of law, the narrative frame of ideological fantasy, various instantiations of object petit a such as the threatened libidinal treasure, the presumed “thief of jouissance,” etc.). Moving on to the third of my critiques, I have distinguished between different modes of enjoyment (jouissance as bodily intensity, libidinal treasure, and surplus vitality of the other) and explained, via the concept of object petit a, how jouissance can at once refer to presumed narcissistic (and, indeed, phallic) possession and to a fantasy of dispossession by a thieving other. Responding to the fourth critique noted above (that jouissance is often used in a conceptually decontextualized manner) I have linked the idea of jouissance to a set of related psychoanalytic concepts (the drive, fantasy, castration, the phallus, object a), placing it thus on a conceptual horizon that allows us to apply the term in a way that is more rigorous—and arguably more nuanced—than is often the case. A number of associated qualifications (such as that enjoyment must be conceived in relation to the law/superego, that jouissance arises from the signifier) have, furthermore, lent definition2 to the concept of jouissance as an analytical tool. For many of course, analytical problems persist. Some would claim that even such an empty and ostensibly “de-essentialized” exploratory thesis presumes too much. We can anticipate the argument: the pattern of libidinal dynamics implied by this thesis (the resented thief of jouissance, the precious stolen object, the robbed subject, etc.) inevitably impedes the work of a more textured sociological analysis. Such is the position of Engelken-Jorge (2010) who argues that Lacanian theories of enjoyment involve a recurring “psychologistic bias that impoverishes the sociological imagination” (69). While I have tried to show that this need not necessarily be the case, I nonetheless appreciate Engelken-Jorge’s point. This line of critiques suggest that Lacanian theorizations of enjoyment may not suffice without additional methodological and theoretical resources, without greater sociohistorical and empirical contextualization. True enough. Let me add just this: if it is the case that libidinal enjoyment is what most powerfully binds subjects to a given ideology (Dean 2006; Stavrakakis, 2007; Žižek 2002)—then to neglect this variable in favor of apparently more detailed and contextualized historical or socio-economic analyses is to make a serious error of omission. More bluntly put, to omit analytical attentions to jouissance is to risk not having understood the psychical and historical tenacity of racism.

### AT: No Scale-Up

#### There’s difference between structuralism and essentialism --- realism and positivist theories of IR reduce the social to the individual level far more than psychoanalysis

**Epstein 10** [Charlotte Epstein, Government and International Relations at the University of Sydney, NSW, Australia, “Who speaks? Discourse, the subject and the study of identity in international politics,” *International Relations*: 17(2), p. 327–350, 2010]

A non-essentialist social theory of identity that accounts for the role of agency How, then, is Lacan’s understanding of identity non-essentialist? The key distinction here is between ‘structuralism’ and ‘essentialism’. Lacan’s thought is structuralist, insofar as he develops an understanding of the human psyche as a dynamic, symbolic structure.6 It is not, however, grounded in some quest for the true human essence or nature. In the words of Yannis Stavrakakis (1999: 36) ‘the object of Lacanian psychoanalysis is not the individual, it is not man [sic]. It is what he is lacking.’ Consequently, Lacan also avoids the ‘essentialist reductionism of the social to the individual level’ (Stavrakakis, 1999: 3). In other words, Lacan steers clear of the methodological individualism that characterizes most attempts at developing social theories that are premised on the possibility of a cohesive, pre-social self, including that of Alexander Wendt (see also Wight, 2004). Notwithstanding Wendt’s (1999: 227) claim that his recourse to role identities, in particular, allows him to ‘take the dependency on culture and thus Others one step further’, his insistence on a core self underlying the different social roles thus taken (professor, student) places important limits on being able to capture the centrality of self–other relations to the making of identities. Lacan’s analysis, by contrast, goes the full length towards showing how the dependence on the Other, that is, on the social or symbolic order, is central to the making of the self.

To return to the core question of this article, how to study identity in international politics, Lacan’s ontology undermines the constructivist approach insofar as it uproots the notion of a pre-social self on which that approach is premised. In that sense, then, it validates post-structuralist analyses that foreground identity just as centrally without harbouring essentialist assumptions. However, rehabilitating post-structuralist approaches alone is insufficient if it is only to ignore constructivism’s valid criticism regarding the question of agency. What remains valid in particular is Wendt’s injunction to develop a structurationist social theory of international politics, that is, one that can also account for the ways in which the actors shape the structures that in turn shape them. Thus an important advantage of the Lacanian perspective is that his analysis of subjectivity does not evacuate agency, because of the central role he grants to desire, that other pillar of individual identities, alongside language. In this sense it adds an important corrective to the Foucauldian understanding of the ways in which the subject is created through subjection to power (see also Butler, 1997).

### AT: Permutation

#### Give us the ballot as payment for services rendered – the Aff must pay to make passage to the Act possible

Zizek 8 [Slavoj, International Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities at University of London, Senior Researcher at the Institute of Sociology at University of Llubljana, the Elvis of cultural theory, former candidate for Slovenian presidency, *For They Know Not What They Do*, p.xxxviii-xlii]

Here, however, Lacan's statements on psychoanalysis and money, and on the anticapitalist nature of psychoanalysis, are to be taken seriously.41 Consider Jacques-Alain Miller's joke about how, in psychoanalytic treatment, exploitation works even better than it does in capitalism: in capitalism, the capitalist pays the worker who works for him, and thus produces profit; while in psychoanalysis, the patient pays the analyst in order to be able to work himself... In psychoanalysis, therefore, we have an intersubjective money relationship in which all parameters of exchange break down. The key point is: why does the patient pay the analyst? The standard answer (so that the analyst stays outside the libidinal circuit, uninvolved in the imbroglio of passions) is correct, but insufficient. We should definitely exclude "goodness": if the psychoanalyst is perceived as good, as doing the patient a favour, everything is bound to go wrong. We should, however, tackle a further question: how does the patient subjectivize his paying? This is where the logic of exchange breaks down: if we remain within the parameters of "tit for tat" (so much for an interpretation of a dream, so much for the dissolution of a symptom), we get nowhere. "Paying the price for services rendered" contains the analysis within the limits of avarice (it is easy to imagine a further acceleration of this logic: pay for two interpretations, and get a third one free...)• What is bound to happen sooner or later is that the analysis gets caught in the paradigmatic obsessional economy in which the patient is paying the analyst so that nothing will happen - so that the analyst will tolerate the patient's babbling without any subjective consequences. On the other hand, there is nothing more catastrophic than a psychoanalyst acting out of charity ("goodness") to help the patient; if anything, this is the most effective way of turning a "normal" neurotic into a paranoiac psychotic. Is the answer to be found, then, in the shift from having to being, along the lines of Lacan's definition of love as an act in which one gives not what one has, but what one doesn't have - that is to say, what one is? The gesture of giving one's being can also be a false (megalomaniac or suicidal) one - witness Nietzsche's final megalomaniac madness, whose structure is strictly homologous to the suicidal passage a I'acter. in both cases, the subject offers himself (his being) as the object that fills, in the Real, the constitutive gap of the symbolic order - that is, the lack of the big Other. That is to say, the key enigma of Nietzsche's final madness is: why did Nietzsche have to resort to what cannot fail to appear to us as ridiculous self-aggrandizing (recall the chapters tides in his Ecce homo: "Why I am so wise", "Why I am so bright", up to "Why I am a destiny")? This is an inherent philosophical deadlock, which has nothing whatsoever to do with any private pathology: his inability to accept the nonexistence of the big Other. Within these co-ordinates, suicide occurs when the subject perceives that the megalomaniac solution does not work.4 2 As Lacan emphasized, one cannot analyse the rich, for whom paying does not matter. So there has to be payment, a price paid - it must hurt.4 3 What, however, does one get for it? The analysis proper begins when one accepts the payment as a purely arbitrary expenditure. By paying for nothing, by engaging in pure expenditure, the patient gets back that for which there is no price - the objet petit a, the cause of desire, that which can emerge only as a pure excess of Grace. The vicious circle of thrift is thus doubly broken: the patient does something totally meaningless within the horizon of the capitalist logic of consumption/accumulation, and receives in exchange the pure surplus itself. The Lacanian name for this gesture of breaking the vicious cycle of the superego is act, and the lack of a clear elaboration of the notion of act in its relation to fantasy is perhaps the key failing of The Sublime Object.

#### The perm is the purest form of ideological disavowal, functionally saying “I know very well that the Aff links, but nevertheless I’ll act as if it doesn’t.” Even if the perm is technically true in the sense that it is hypothetically possible to do the Aff and the K, the perm is still a lie because it is a rationalization that is unable to incorporate into its symbolic universe the implication of the critique.

Zizek 8 [Slavoj, International Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities at University of London, Senior Researcher at the Institute of Sociology at University of Llubljana, the Elvis of cultural theory, former candidate for Slovenian presidency, *For They Know Not What They Do*, p.241-3]

This predominance of the superego over the law disturbs the relationship of knowledge and belief that determines our everyday ideological horizon: the gap between (real) knowledge and (symbolic) belief. We can illustrate it with the well-known psychological experience of when we say of something (as a rule terrible, traumatic) "I know that it is so, but nevertheless I can't believe it": the traumatic knowledge of reality remains outside the Symbolic, the symbolic articulation continues to operate as if we do not know, and the "time for understanding" is necessary for this knowledge to be integrated into our symbolic universe.2 3 This kind of gap between knowledge and belief, in so far as both are "conscious", attests to a psychotic split, a "disavowal of reality"; propositions of this type are what linguistic analysis calls "pragmatic paradoxes". Let us take, for example, the statement "I know that there is no mouse in the next room, but nevertheless I believe that there is a mouse there": this statement is not logically irreconcilable - since there is no logical contradiction between "there is no mouse in the next room" and "I believe there is a mouse in the next room" - the contradiction comes only on the pragmatic level, in so far as we take into account the position of the subject of the enunciation of this proposition: the subject who knows that there is no mouse in the next room cannot at the same time, without contradiction, believe that there is a mouse there. In other words, the subject who believes this is a split subject. The "normal" solution to this contradiction is of course that we repress the other moment, the belief, in our unconscious: in its place enters some spare moment which is not in contradiction to the first - this is the logic of so-called "rationalization". Instead of the direct split "I know that the Jews are guilty of nothing, but nevertheless... (I believe that they are guilty)" comes the statement of the type "I know that the Jews are guilty of nothing; however, the fact is that in the development of capitalism, the Jews, as the representatives of financial and business capital, have usually profited from the productive labour of others"; instead of the direct split "I know that there is no God, but nevertheless... (I believe that there is)" appears a statement of the type "I know that there is no God, but I respect religious ritual and take part in it because this ritual supports ethical values and encourages brotherhood and love among people." Such statements are good examples of what might be called "lying by way of the truth": the second part of the statement, the claim which follows the syntagm "but nevertheless... ", can on a factual level be largely accurate but nevertheless operates as a lie because in the concrete symbolic context in which it appears it operates as a ratification of the unconscious belief that the Jews are nevertheless guilty, that God nevertheless exists, and so on - without taking into account these "investments" of the unconscious belief, the functioning of such statements remains totally incomprehensible. One of the greatest masters of this was the Stalinist "dialectical materialism", the basic achievement of which, when it was necessary to legitimize some pragmatic political measure which violated theoretical principles, was "in principle it is of course so; nevertheless, in the concrete circumstances... ": the infamous "analysis of concrete circumstances" is basically nothing other than a search for rationalization which attempts to justify the violation of a principle. This gap between (real) knowledge and (symbolic) belief determines our everyday ideological attitude: "I know that there is no God, but nevertheless, I operate as if (I believe that) he exists" - the part in brackets is repressed (belief in a God whom we witness through our activity is unconscious).

### AT: Psychoanalysis Bad—Eurocentric

#### The claim that psychoanalysis is Eurocentric links to itself – it reestablishes the authority of the speaking subject. The “diversity” of the other is becomes a fetish object that preserves the identity of our own subjective position.

Zizek 08 [Slavoj, International Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities at University of London, Senior Researcher at the Institute of Sociology at University of Llubljana, the Elvis of cultural theory, former candidate for Slovenian presidency, *For They Know Not What They Do*, p.101-3]

This kernel of the Real encircled by failed attempts to symbolize-totalize it is radically non-historical: history itself is nothing but a succession of failed attempts to grasp, conceive, specify this strange kernel. This is why, far from rejecting the reproach that psychoanalysis is non-historical, one has to acknowledge it fully and thus simply transform it from a reproach into a positive theoretical proposition, therein consists the difference between hysteria and psychosis: hysteria/history is more than a trivial word game - hysteria is the subject's way of resisting the prevailing, historically specified form of interpellation or symbolic indentification. Hysteria means failed interpellation, it means that the subject in the name of that which is "in him more than himself" - the object in himself - refuses the mandate which is conferred on him in the symbolic universe; as such, it falls conditional with the dominant form of symbolic identification - that is, it is its reverse; while psychosis, the maintenance of an external distance from the symbolic order, is “unhistorical" - that is, on the level of psychosis it is not difficult for us to pose equality between psychotic outbursts reported in classical sources, and contemporary clinical cases. The act qua "psychotic" in this sense is ahistorical. However, an ahistoric kernel of the Real is present also in history/hysteria: the ultimate mistake of historicism in which all historical content is "relativized", made dependent on “historical circumstances", - that is to say, of historicism as opposed to historicity - is that it evades the encounter with the Real. Let us take the usual attitude of the university discourse towards the great "Masters of Thought" of our century - towards Heidegger, towards Lacan: its first compulsion is to carry out an arrangement of their theoretical edifices into "phases": Heidegger I (Being and Time) in contrast to Heidegger II ("thought of Being"); phenomenologically Hegelian Lacan of the 1950s, then structuralist Lacan, then the Lacan of the "logic of the Real". In such an arrangement there is of course some pacifying effect, the thought is rendered transparent, properly classified... but we have nevertheless lost something with such a disposition into "phases": we have actually lost what is crucial, the encounter with the Real. We have lost (with Heidegger) the fact that Heidegger's various phases are only so many attempts to grasp, to indicate, to "encircle", the same kernel, the "Thing of thought" which he constantly tackles, dodges and returns to. 2 The paradox is thus that historicity differs from historicism by the way it presupposes some traumatic kernel which endures as "the same", non-historical; and so various historical epochs are conceived as failed attempts to capture this kernel. The trouble with the alleged "Eurocentricity" of psychoanalysis is homologous. Today it is a commonplace to draw attention to the way Freud's myth in Totem and Taboo is based on the Eurocentric anthropology of his time: the anthropologies on which Freud relied were "unhistorical" projections of the modern patriarchal family and society into primeval times - it was only on this basis that Freud could construct the myth of the "primeval father". A breakthrough was only later achieved with Malinowski, Mead, and others who demonstrated how sexual life in primitive societies was organized in a completely different way, how we cannot therefore talk about an "Oedipus complex", how inhibition and anxiety were not associated with sexuality. Things thus appear clear, we know where we are, where the "primitives" are; we have not reduced the Other, we have preserved its diversity,.. nevertheless such historicizing is false: in the simple distinction between our own and past societies we avoid calling into question our own position, the place from which we ourselves speak. The fascinating "diversity" of the Other functions as a fetish by means of which we are able to preserve the unproblematic identity of our subjective position: although we pretend to "historically relativize" our position, we actually conceal its split; we deceive ourselves as to how this position is already "decentred from within". What Freud called the "Oedipus complex" is such an "unhistorical" traumatic kernel (the trauma of prohibition on which the social order is based) and the miscellaneous historical regulations of sexuality and society are none other than so many ways (in the final analysis always unsuccessful) of mastering this traumatic kernel. To "understand the Other" means to pacify it, to prevent the meeting with the Other from becoming a meeting with the Real that undermines our own position. We come across the Real as that which "always returns to its place" when we identify with the Real in the Other - that is to say: when we recognize in the deadlock, hindrance, because of which the Other failed, our own hindrance, that which is "in us more than ourselves".3 Much more subversive than "entering the spirit of the past" is thus in contrast the procedure by which we consciously treat it "anti-historically", "reduce the past to the present". Brecht made use of this procedure in The Affairs of Mr Julius Caesar, where Caesar's rise to power is presented in twentieth-century capitalist terms: Caesar is concerned with stock market movements and speculation with capital he organizes Fascist-style "spontaneous" demonstrations of the lumpenproletariat, and so on. Such a procedure could be brought to self-reference when the contemporary image of the past is projected into the past. So, today, pre-Socratic times are known only in fragments which have survived a turbulent history; we thus inadvertently forget that Heraclitus and Parmenides did not write "fragments" but long, verbose philosophical poems. So it would really be some kind of subversive philosophical humour if we were to represent Heraclitus, let us say, as saying: "I can't write any good fragments today!" (or, on another level, the unknown sculptor of Milos saying: “I can't break the arm off my Venus today!"). Relying on a similar “reductionist", "unhistorical" procedure, Adorno's and Horkheimer’s Dialectic of Enlightenment4 reads The Odyssey retroactively, from the experience of contemporary technical-instrumental reason: of course, such a procedure is "unhistorical"; however, precisely through the feeling of the absurd which it awakens in us, it opens actual historical distance to us (just as with Hegel's claim "the Spirit is a bone", where the real effect of the absurd contradiction is the discord that it awakens in the reader).

#### Universal openness is rooted in Western modernity

Zizek 08 [Slavoj, International Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities at University of London, Senior Researcher at the Institute of Sociology at University of Llubljana, the Elvis of cultural theory, former candidate for Slovenian presidency, *In Defense of Lost Causes*, p.20]

This notion of civility is at the very heart of the impasses of multiculturalism. A couple of years ago, there was a debate in Germany about Leäkultur (the dominant culture): against abstract multiculturalism, conservatives insisted that every state is based on a predominant cultural space which the members of other cultures who live in the same space should respect. Although liberal leftists attacked this notion as covert racism, one should admit that, if nothing else, it offers an adequate description of the facts. Respect of individual freedoms and rights, even if at the expense of group rights, full emancipation of women, freedom of religion (and of atheism) and sexual orientation, freedom to publicly attack anyone and anything, are central constituent elements of Western liberal Leitkultur [culture], and this can be used to respond to those Muslim theologians in Western countries who protest against their treatment, while accepting it as normal that in, say, Saudi Arabia, it is prohibited to practice publicly religions other than Islam. They should accept that the same Leitkultur [culture] which allows their religious freedom in the West, demands of them a respect for all other freedoms. To put it succinctly: freedom for Muslims is part and parcel of the freedom for Salman Rushdie to write what he wants —you cannot choose the part of Western freedom which suits you. The answer to the standard critical argument that Western multiculturalism is not truly neutral, that it privileges specific values, is that one should shamelessly accept this paradox: Universal openness itself is rooted in Western modernity. And, to avoid any misunderstanding, the same applies to Christianity itself. On May 2, 2007, L’Osservatore Romano, the Vatican's official newspaper, accused Andrea Rivera, an Italian comedian, of "terrorism" for criticizing the pope. As a presenter of a televised May Day rock concert, Rivera attacked the pope's position on evolution ("The pope says he doesn't believe in evolution. I agree, in fact the Church has never evolved.") He also criticized the Church for refusing to give a Catholic funeral to Piergiorgio Welby, a victim of muscular dystrophy who campaigned for euthanasia and died in December 2006 after a doctor agreed to unplug his respirator ("I can't stand the fact that the Vatican refused a funeral for Welby but that wasn't the case for Pinochet or Franco"). Here is the Vatican's reaction: "This, too, is terrorism. It's terrorism to launch attacks on the Church. It's terrorism to stoke blind and irrational rage against someone who always speaks in the name of love, love for life and love for man." It is the underlying equation of intellectual critique with physical terrorist attacks which brutally violates the West European Leitkultur [culture], which insists on the universal sphere of the "public use of reason," where one can criticize and problematize everything— in the eyes of our shared Leitkulture, Rivera’s statements are totally acceptable. Civility is crucial here: multicultural freedom also functions only when it is sustained by the rules of civility, which are never abstract, but always embedded within a Leitkidtur. Within our Leltkultur, it is not Rivera but L'Osservatore Roimino which is "terroristic" with its dismissal of Rivera's simple and reasonable objections as expressions of "blind and irrational rage. " Freedom of speech functions when all parties follow the same unwritten rules of civility telling us what kind of attacks are improper, although they are not legally prohibited; civility tells us which features of a specific ethnic or religious " way of life" are acceptable and which are not acceptable. If all sides do not share or respect the same civility, then multiculturalism turns into legally regulated mutual ignorance or hatred. One of the Lacanian names for this civility is the “Master-Signifier," the set of rules grounded only in themselves ("it is so because it is so, because it is our custom")—and it is this dimension of the Master-Signifier which is more and more threatened in our societies.

### AT: Psychoanalysis Bad—Racist

#### Lacanian psychoanalysis provides critical and unique insights into the production of racialized identity – critiques of Lacan’s failures as an individual do not indict the value of his critical toolbox for understanding and critiquing racism.

Seshadri-Crooks 2000 [Kalpana, Assistant Prof of English at Boston College, *Desiring Whiteness: A Lacanian Analysis of Race*, p.2-3]

I suggest that Lacan’s theory of subject constitution provides us with cognitive landmarks or positions by which to bring the subject of race into representation. Lacan’s provocative thesis that the unconscious is structured like a language and the general precision of his “anti-system” seemed to provide the requisite tools and a language with which to explore and delineate the subject’s acquisition of racial identity. My use of Lacanian psychoanalysis is not a passive “application of Lacanian concepts to issues of race.” I have tried to work with the richest aspects of the theory, and in the process have found it necessary to wrestle with it, and to exert considerable force in inducing it to address race. However, the “appropriation” of Lacan that follows does not take the expected form of ideological revision. I have deliberately avoided the customary ideological “critique” of Lacan, nor do I press the obligatory charge against him for neglecting the all-important issue of race in a France that was, at the moment of his theoretical elaboration, involved in a bloody colonial and racist war against the Algerians. Attention to the person of Lacan and his political responsibility in failing to detail a theory of race is not relevant to my project.2 It seems much more important to stay focused on the question of race itself, and to derive some insight into the issues rather than to be distracted by an essentially academic argument about the “politics of psychoanalysis.” The evident fealty I demonstrate to Lacanian psychoanalysis derives from my belief that first, in its consistency and precision, Lacanian theory offers a vocabulary of linguistic deciphering in relation to subject constitution that is simply unavailable elsewhere; and second, it is important to remain tenacious in one’s intellectual pursuit, here the interrogation of the mystique of “race.” Where race is concerned too much energy is spent on talking about how we talk about race; thus with the clamor of voices sounding off on political correctness, hate speech, the rights of representation, etc., very little attention is devoted to analyzing what race is and why we need it.3

#### Despite the racist history of psychoanalysis, there can and should be a productive dialogue between black scholarship and the psychoanalytic account of visibility

Tuhkanen 09 [Mikko, Prof of English and Africana Studies at Texas A&M, The American Optic, p.xi-xxii]

This study argues for the benefit of psychoanalysis in rethinking race as a visible category. Engaging African American literary and theoretical texts with Jacques Lacan’s work, it asks what happens when we interrogate “the American optic” (Baldwin, “Last” 210) through what Lacanian theory teaches us about the role of the visible and the scopic drive in the constitution of the human subject. Subsequently, it proposes a shift in race theory, arguing that the visibility of race does not merely assign the subject a social category or discipline one’s mobility in society but may have an ontological status: in certain symbolic configurations, the subject’s emergence, taking place through the visible, may involve “racialization.” The benefit of such a shift is twofold. First, with the psychoanalytic understanding of the visible, one can better delineate not only the ways in which racialization functions, and is contested, in historically specific symbolic orders but also why race remains an indelible category of identification and politics even after critical race theory has demonstrated the groundlessness of most racial categorizations.2 Second, by engaging psychoanalysis in a dialogue with African American literature and culture, we can open what Houston Baker, Jr., identifies as the “scholarly double bind”—our being constrained by questions and paradigms that, with teleological predictability, guide our work to certain conclusions (Modernism 12–13)—and locate “a signifying device sufficiently unusual in its connotations to shatter familiar conceptual determinations” (Blues 144). That is, through the dialogue between psychoanalytic and African American texts, we are able to revisit, to cast an awry look on, moments in African American literary history that may have been evacuated of their potential for newness. I suggest that Richard Wright’s work is one such site.3 What we know of Wright’s biography supports a psychoanalytic approach to his work. His association with the psychoanalysts Frederic Wertham and Benjamin Karpman, as well as the texts found in his library—among them books by Karl Abraham, Helene Deutsch, Otto Fenichel, Sandor Ferenczi, Anna Freud, Sigmund Freud, Ernest Jones, Melanie Klein, Th eodor Reik, and Géza Roheim—attest to his familiarity with psychoanalysis.4 According to one biographer, he remained “intensely Freudian”—indeed, “obsessed with psychoanalysis” (M. Walker 286, 245)—throughout his literary and philosophical career.5 Yet, proposing a dialogue between Wright and psychoanalysis invokes inevitable methodological problems. Given that psychoanalysis often comes to us as yet another one of the master’s tools, is it possible to approach questions of race from a psychoanalytic perspective? More specifically, considering psychoanalysis’s historical ties to the discourses of the unprecedented colonial expansion of late-nineteenth-century Europe, as well as the seeming irrelevance of late-twentieth-century Lacanianism to the concerns of African American culture, how are we to open a dialogue between Lacan and Wright, to introduce Jacques to Richard, as I propose to do here? In terms of psychoanalysis’s relation to Wright’s work, nothing may be more decisive than the fact that his writings have been seen as a precursor to the militant black movements of the 1960s and was adopted by numerous Black Panthers and Black Muslims as the emblem of black male rage.6 That psychoanalysis was among the “white” solutions to be rejected in favor of more authentic African American approaches is mediated by Eldridge Cleaver, who recalls his encounters with a prison psychiatrist in Soul on Ice (1968): I had several sessions with a psychiatrist. His conclusion was that I hated my mother. How he arrived at this conclusion I’ll never know, because he knew nothing about my mother; and when he’d ask me questions I would answer him with absurd lies. What revolted me about him was that he had heard me denouncing the whites, yet each time he interviewed me he deliberately guided the conversation back to my family life, to my childhood. That in itself was all right, but he deliberately blocked all my attempts to bring out the racial question, and he made it clear that he was not interested in my attitude toward whites. This was a Pandora’s box he did not care to open. (11) Suggesting the bad faith that informs psychoanalysis’s encounter with politics, Cleaver articulates African American writers’ and thinkers’ distrust of such white disciplines. In the prison psychiatrist, he offers us the stereotypical image of a (psycho)analyst who imposes family romances on everything and hears repressed Oedipal secrets in every word communicated by the analysand, while remaining stubbornly blind to the life-and-death concerns of the latter’s everyday existence. As Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari write, there remains “a fundamental relation to the outside of which the psychoanalyst washes his hands, too attentive to seeing that his clients play nice games” (Anti-Oedipus 356). Consequently, psychoanalysis appears for Cleaver not only irrelevant but directly oppressive: concertedly disregarding cultural and political specificity, it ignores the reality of disenfranchisement. Cleaver makes a telling comparison in that, immediately before recounting the above dismal scene, he writes of his first encounter with Wright’s work: “In Richard Wright’s Native Son, I found Bigger Thomas and a keen insight into the problem [of black men’s desire for white women]” (10). Whereas the psychiatrist will not listen to Cleaver, the problems with which the latter is struggling are brought into relief through an encounter with two “authentic” black men, Bigger Thomas and Richard Wright; the issues that take Cleaver to prison and to the psychiatrist are in fact better illuminated by Wright than by psychoanalysis. Contrasting the psychiatrist’s myopic impositions to Wright’s “keen insight,” he effectively disassociates the two and implies that Wright, as a black man, can speak of African American experience where psychoanalysis remains impotent, blind, and oppressive. Cleaver’s example illustrates the argument that psychoanalysis is either impervious to the urgency of political questions or directly racist in its basic assumptions. For example, a number of writers point out psychoanalysis’s colonial loyalties by referring to its analogy between “savagery” and infantilism. While examples abound in Freud, this is perhaps best evidenced by Octave Mannoni’s Prospero and Caliban (1950), whose theorization of colonialism as a response to the psychic “dependence complex” (40) of the natives has become, fairly or unfairly, an exemplary case of the political misappropriation of psychology and psychoanalysis.7 Already in 1955, Aimé Césaire notes that the Eurocentric investment in these disciplines is evident in their insistence on depicting “Negroes-as-big-children” (40).8 In addition to Mannoni’s work, psychoanalytic anthropology has produced numerous other case studies that have elicited vehement criticism.9 In Deleuze and Guattari’s famous estimation, “Oedipus is always colonization pursued by other means” (Anti-Oedipus 170). At worst, psychoanalysis is seen as “conceal[ing] realities and legitimiz[ing] oppression” (Hartnack 233; qtd. in Seshadri-Crooks, “Primitive” 183), while Freud is identifi ed as “the great colonizer of psyches” (Torgovnick 198).10 Wright himself offers similar reservations, writing that any discussion of psychology of the colonized is usually rejected by enlightened commentators because it carries “an air of the derogatory” (White 41). Yet, the last two decades have seen the emergence of studies that, without “exonerating” psychoanalysis, complicate these charges. In Freud scholarship, two trends have developed: one exploring questions of racialization in Freud, the other appropriating (aspects of) Freudian psychoanalysis to read “black” texts. For a number of scholars, Freud’s anthropological texts, such as “Moses and Monotheism,” “Totem and Taboo,” and the early “cocaine papers,” suggest “the historical importance of racial categories in Freud’s work” (Marez 68).11 Focus is placed on the significance of Freud’s own racialized position in fi n-desiècle Europe, where, as Sander Gilman points out, the Jewish “race” was associated with eff eminacy, disease, and “criminal perversions” (“Sigmund” 47).12 Daniel Boyarin similarly argues that Freud’s shift from the so-called seduction theory to the theory of oedipalization was precipitated by the racialization of the Jew, the invention of the homosexual, and the acceleration of racism and homophobia at the end of the nineteenth century (Unheroic 189–220).13 While Gilman and Boyarin tease out the historical complexities in psychoanalysis’s emergence, others have accused Freud of purposefully utilizing the representations of the “savage,” widely circulated in the rapidly expanding colonial Europe, to escape his own racially stigmatized position. In contradistinction to the “primitive,” the argument goes, Freud could claim the privileges of whiteness and civilization, much like Jewish entertainers in early twentieth-century Hollywood could disappear, according to Michael Rogin’s thesis, into racial unmarkedness by donning blackface.14 Thus the significance of Freud’s “race” to the formation of psychoanalytic knowledge is generally acknowledged, but its implications remain contested. While Marianna Torgovnick, for example, finds in Freud a more or less self-serving mechanism of displacement (199),15 for Boyarin the necessity for such negotiations suggests Freud’s “postcolonial anguish,” making him “both the object and the subject of racism” (“Jewish” 42, 40). Jacqueline Rose similarly remarks that, because of his own racial markedness, Freud could not “unproblematically or unequivocally embody the master narrative of the West” (50), and Barbara Johnson locates in Freud’s position something akin to the Du Boisian “double consciousness” (Feminist 10). Apart from considering Freud’s racialized status, or the repression of racial difference in other early psychoanalytic texts,16 critics have involved psychoanalysis in their readings of African American texts and culture, thereby attempting to redress “the poverty of language offered by psychoanalysis for addressing issues of race and culture” (Luciano 158). A number of biographies of African American literary figures, for example, are allegedly “quite Freudian” (Murray 163).17 Similarly, given the psychoanalytic emphasis on family relations, it is not surprising that slavery’s violent disruption of familial ties has been discussed in psychoanalytic terms. Without explicitly engaging psychoanalysis, Hortense Spillers’s influential essay “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe” (1987) pointed the way for subsequent theorists to explore the forms of relatedness that African slaves created during their captivity.18 In Mastering Slavery, for example, Jennifer Fleischner considers women’s slave narratives as examples of the self-narration that psychoanalysis, according to her, solicits from the analysand with the hope of his or her “liberation” from childhood traumas (5 and passim).19 The question that more immediately concerns me in this study, however, is the precise way we can engage Lacanian psychoanalysis with African American literature. While Freud’s anthropological texts have provided an obvious starting point for a consideration of his implication in colonialism, Lacan’s possible contribution to an investigation into race is harder to tease out: as opposed to issues of sexual diff erence, there is very little in Lacan’s writing that explicitly relates to questions of race or seeks to explain racism. Nevertheless, the recent turn in Lacanian criticism to politics suggests an opening for this investigation. Antonio Viego, for example, reads Lacan’s abhorrence of ego psychology’s adaptive models, especially their prevalence in the United States, in terms of a critique of “North American coercive assimilatory imperatives working on ethnic-racialized subjects . . . that demand of them a certain mandatory adjustment and adaptation to North American ‘reality’” (5) and suggests an “overlap” between Lacan’s anti-assimilatory critique in the 1950s “and the similar critique of assimilation crafted by early Chicano movement activists” (25). Ernesto Laclau and Slavoj Žižek have similarly suggested some ways in which we can approach politics from a Lacanian perspective.20 Recent examples of Lacanian scholarship that engage questions of race and colonialism include the collection The Psychoanalysis of Race (1998), edited by Christopher Lane, Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks’s theory of racialized subjectivity in Desiring Whiteness: A Lacanian Analysis of Race (2000), Abdul JanMohamed’s study of Wright, The Death-Bound Subject: Richard Wright and the Archaeology of Death (2005), and Viego’s psychoanalytic reading of Latino/a cultures and literatures, Dead Subjects: Toward a Politics of Loss in Latino Studies (2007). Seshadri-Crooks, and some contributors to Lane’s volume21 may be seen as “the New Lacanians” of psychoanalytically inflected critical race theory, given their “emphasi[s on] Lacan’s late notions of drive, jouissance, and the real at the expense of his early concepts of desire, the imaginary, and the symbolic” (Mellard 395).22 Perhaps because of the vagaries of Lacan translations into English, the question of the real, with which Lacan was increasingly concerned in the late 1960s and 1970s, has until recently been neglected in Anglo-American scholarship. If the impact of this shift in Lacanian theory from the imaginary and symbolic aspects of subjectivity to the nonhuman, asubjective realm of the real “has not yet fully registered with [Anglo-American] psychoanalytic theorists of gender” (Dyess and Dean 738), its ramifications for psychoanalytic theories of race has remained similarly unexplored. It is this question that Lacanian race theory needs to concern itself with. The current study is a contribution to this emergent field of scholarship. Yet, the specter Cleaver evokes—of psychoanalytic arrogance that dismisses the concerns of African American subjects or texts—is not completely exorcised by the proliferation of these psychoanalytic studies of race and racialization. Given the history of psychoanalysis and race, any attempt to read Wright psychoanalytically will conjure up the threat of infl icting on him the reductive readings to which Cleaver was subjected. Predictably enough, this has been the exact outcome of many a psychoanalytic attempt at Wright scholarship. Two examples of this are Margaret Walker’s psychobiography Richard Wright, Daemonic Genius (1988) and Allison Davis’s chapter on Wright in Leadership, Love, and Aggression (1983): both demonstrate the necessity of relentless suspicion in the face of psychoanalytic approaches to questions of race. Apart from the many inaccuracies Michel Fabre points out in his “Margaret Walker’s Richard Wright,” Walker stands as a representative of a reductive tradition in psychoanalytic criticism that misreads not only the literary (or [auto]biographical) texts under consideration but also psychoanalysis.23 Similarly, Davis’s reading of Wright’s autobiography exemplifi es an elision of the social and political specifi city of the “analysand’s” situation. Davis writes that while “Wright may have allowed his public to believe that his character and behavior were formed by the impact of racial oppression by Mississippi whites,” “[o]ne only needs to read his Black Boy . . . to understand that Wright considered his family the primary source of his anger and his hatred.” In a reading that is both authoritarian and misogynist, Davis insists that Wright’s revolt and anger were not primarily directed against his racist environment, or even that the family structures might have been determined by or mediating such oppressive social structures. Instead, Wright, like his father, was rebelling against his maternal family, “a long, grim line of puritan matriarchs,” which “consisted of a clan of obsessively religious and sadistic women” (156–58). At the very least, Davis fails to realize that “[r]acism becomes a part of the subject’s unconscious because the parents consciously and unconsciously refl ect the racist values of the culture onto the subject from the fi rst moment of life” (Tate, Psychoanalysis 133). We may approach the thorny relation between race and psychoanalysis by noting how it echoes many other interdisciplinary encounters in which the latter has been involved. Discussing its relationship with feminism, Jane Gallop writes: “the worst tendency, the inherent constitutional weakness of psychoanalysis, is to be apolitical (which is to say, to support the institutions in power)” (Daughter’s 101). “One of psychoanalysis’s consistent errors,” she continues, aptly describing Cleaver’s situation, “is to reduce everything to a family paradigm. Sociopolitical questions are always brought back to the model father-mother-child. Class confl ict and revolution are understood as a repetition of parent–child relations. Th is has always been the pernicious apoliticism of psychoanalysis” (144).24 Interrogating the link between literature and psychoanalysis, Shoshana Felman suggests that, to avoid such traps of psychoanalytic application—in which, according to her, psychoanalysis stands as the Hegelian master over the bondsman of literature (“To Open” 5)—we must “engage in a real dialogue between literature and psychoanalysis.” We begin this by reversing the master–slave positions and by “consider[ing] the relationship between psychoanalysis and literature from the literary point of view” (6). Th e objective in establishing this dialogue, Felman continues, is not, however, simply to overturn the positions, but, rather, “to disrupt this monologic, master–slave structure” (6) altogether so that one can “avoid both terms of the alternative” and “deconstruct the very structure of opposition, mastery/ slavery” (7). Yet, skeptical about the possibility of nonreductive psychoanalytic approaches to other disciplines, Françoise Meltzer, in her introduction to Th e Trial(s) of Psychoanalysis (1988), sees psychoanalysis as an inherently colonial project, a form of “empire-building”—what Deleuze and Guattari in Anti-Oedipus call “the analytic imperialism of the Oedipus complex” (23)— that seeks to incorporate all other disciplines within its own paradigm and assumptions (Meltzer 7). According to her, Felman’s attempted reversal of the master–slave relationship of psychoanalysis and literature betrays the constitutive reductiveness and “totalizing teleology” of the psychoanalytic approach. For what guarantees that such a reversal has any deconstructive eff ects on the dialectic hierarchy? According to Meltzer, Felman’s unstated assumption is that the positions of the master (for psychoanalysis) and that of the slave (for literature) are so “natural” that any role reassignment would, by its sheer absurdity, quickly abolish the structure itself (3). At bottom, Felman’s argument is a mere variation of psychoanalytic narcissism in which all other disciplines are but mirroring surfaces for psychoanalysis to discover its inalienable and unchangeable truths: “Not content to see itself as one in a number of enterprises, the psychoanalytic project has at its foundation a vision of itself as the meaning which will always lie in wait; the truth which lies covered by ‘the rest’” (2). According to Meltzer, psychoanalysis must be reduced from its position of metadiscursive arrogance: “Psychoanalysis is not on trial in order to be attacked,” she writes, “but in order to be put back into its place—or, at least, into a place” (5). For her, the only way to bring psychoanalysis and other disciplines together is to return the violence of the previous encounters in the exact same form onto psychoanalysis. Meltzer’s response to Felman indicates the diffi culty in engaging ethically and productively with any constellation of discourses contaminated by histories of violent hierarchies. (And we may suspect that all such encounters are marked by a certain degree of violence.) She correctly admonishes us that, rather than applying psychoanalytic theory to other disciplines, we must interrogate it. Th is does not mean primarily that we are to criticize it—rather, we must not assume that we are already familiar with its insights, which can then be applied to other fi elds of knowledge. Yet, what should give us pause is Meltzer’s desire to repeat the dialectic of violent reduction of which psychoanalysis stands accused. Here we should ask, what is the ethics of a justice that announces the defendant’s incarceration and confi nement to “its place” in the opening statement of the trial? Moreover, wanting to “put [psychoanalysis] back into its place” (emphasis added), Meltzer assumes that we already know what this place is. In this, we are reassured that nothing unexpected will be uncovered during the trial, nothing new unearthed. Th e testimony will not complicate notions of guilt or responsibility; the whole procedure is committed to a rigid politics of foreseeability. It is precisely an opening to the unexpected that Gallop points to as ethical engagement in analysis. She suggests that, as a way to negotiate the difficult division between psychoanalysis and politics—which Cleaver’s example perfectly illustrates—we must involve the analyst in the scene of interpretation: “Analysis, if it is not to be a process of adapting the patient to some reigning order of discourse, must include the risk of unseating the analyst” (Daughter’s 102; emphasis added).25 For Frantz Fanon and James Baldwin, for example, the adaptive aims of psychiatry and psychoanalysis reveal the disciplines’ colonialist and racist allegiances.26 Always insisting on what may be called the maladaptive aims of treatment, Lacan, too, refers to the dangers of misdirected analysis when he writes that “the inability to authentically sustain a praxis results, as is common in the history of mankind, in the exercise of power” (“Direction” 216). Yet, while critics such as Deleuze and Guattari condemn psychoanalysis tout court—“It is certain that psychoanalysis pacifies and mollifies, that it teaches us resignation we can live with” (“Deleuze” 229)—Lacan identifies the adaptive methods of ego-psychology as inauthentic practice. Hence, while observing the reductive approaches in the history of psychoanalysis— where psychoanalytic knowledge appears as an uncontested master interpreting its objects—we should note with Lacan that such a rigid postures of self-identity belong to the unethical subject whose relationship to the other is characterized by imaginary misrecognition. The ethical subject, for Lacan, is the mobile subject of desire or, increasingly in his later work, of the drive. That the institution of psychoanalysis is often characterized by rigid, masterly interpretative ambition should not prevent us from seeing what remains unfixable and mobile—that is, inherently ethical—in psychoanalytic discourse. Our inability to rest in one position long enough for it to materialize into a master’s throne or the voyeur’s keyhole constitutes the ethics of psychoanalysis. In this ethical perspective, moreover, lies psychoanalysis’s availability for political work. “Psychoanalysis,” as Tim Dean writes, “is political precisely to the extent that the position of the analyst diametrically opposes that of the master” (Beyond 108). Correspondingly, Meltzer’s assumption of already knowing what psychoanalysis can do and her ambition to firmly locate psychoanalysis—to “be actively reductive with psychoanalysis” (7) and to “put [it] back into its place” (5)—appear in this context as decidedly unethical. As Adam Phillips observes, “the fact that psychoanalysis is difficult to place . . . may be one of its distinctive virtues” (3). One should nevertheless remain doubtful about all claims to “good-natured” exchanges between discursive fields. Edward Said argues that the seemingly neutral setting of “discursive situations” usually masks the fact that “far from being a type of idyllic conversation between equals, [these situations are] more usually of a kind typefied [sic] by the relation between colonizer and colonized, the oppressor and the oppressed” (“Text” 181–82; see also Gandhi 28). Like all exchanges established across disciplines, discourses, and knowledges, the dialogue between African American and psychoanalytic literatures is inevitably marked by disparities. Establishing such encounters is an effort where we find our “good intentions” always compromised and endlessly betrayed. However, while violence may indeed be unavoidable in these encounters, we must resist letting this violence solidify into a structure. Furthermore, in all their inherent dangers and pitfalls, such dialogues are precisely what psychoanalysis is all about. Through its engagement with an other, psychoanalysis— and, importantly, other disciplines participating in this dialogue—retains the mobility characteristic of the ethical subject of desire. I am not the first to see such troubled encounters as potentially productive. The editors of Female Subjects in Black and White: Race, Psychoanalysis, Feminism (1997) observe in the intersection of race and psychoanalysis (and, in their project, of feminism) as many “transformative possibilities” as “stubborn incompatibilities” (Abel et al. 1). Encounters that take place or erupt in this treacherous middle-ground, they warn, must not be considered entirely reconcilable. Yet, through such implication we can avoid, however momentarily and without any guarantees of success, reductive psychoanalytic readings that, in their insistence on “reduc[ing] everything to a family paradigm” (Gallop, Daughter’s 144), bypass sociopolitical questions of power and disenfranchisement. It is, exactly, this reductive analytical reading to which Cleaver objects in his account of his sessions in prison—not the fact that analysis implicates the family: “each time [the psychiatrist] interviewed me he deliberately guided the conversation back to my family life, to my childhood. That in itself was all right, but he deliberately blocked all my attempts to bring out the racial question” (11; emphasis added). (Psycho)analysis’s emphasis on the familial is not necessarily oppressive; Oedipus becomes “the fountainhead where the psychoanalyst washes his hands of the world’s inequities” (Deleuze and Guattari, Anti-Oedipus 128) only when the analyst refuses everything outside the family, turns a blind eye to the possibility that the family may be imbricated in society and its politics. Thus, if psychoanalysis has participated in the Western projects of colonialism, Fanon’s example clearly shows that its historical role in anti colonial and antiracist struggles is anything but negligible. Similarly, in African American thinking, Du Bois’s disillusionment with the ability of objective, scientific knowledge to fight race prejudice coincides with his discovery of racism’s unconscious support. In his autobiographical texts, he suggests that this “twilight zone” of “stronger and more threatening forces” that remain in excess of “conscious and rational” motivation behind race prejudice can be explored through Freud’s insights (Dusk 282, 283, 296). I thus suggest that the question, What can psychoanalysis do?, can and must be answered only through the future encounters in which it will be engaged. One way to think about the transformative potential of these encounters is to give the term its Deleuzian specifi city. Th at is, we can think of the dialogue between psychoanalytic and African American texts as an encounter between bodies, as an opening onto an unforeseeable becoming that may transform the encountering bodies beyond recognition—with all the violence that this phrase suggests.27 Deleuze teaches us that, unlike what Meltzer assumes in her trial scenario, encounters cannot be legislated. For him, bodies are always defi ned by their relations to other bodies, by their ability to be transformed by the “resonance” that exists between their internal and external relations. Our regarding bodies as autonomous betrays the fact that we have misunderstood their interimplication, have missed their profound resonance. Bodies, consisting of smaller bodies and their relations to one another, are separable yet interconnected: separable in the specifi city of their internal relations, yet connected through the bodies they inevitably share with other bodies, in which they enter into a diff erent relation. In their encounter, bodies are never completely compatible, never pieces of a puzzle that snugly complement one another, but are always held together by a certain friction, gravitational pull, or violent harmony. Our success in joining two separate bodies (of work) seamlessly cannot but betray the fact that we have dismissed their true complexity. I suggest that the Deleuzian understanding of bodies’ interimplication, eschewing any notions of harmonious compatibility, characterizes the most productive work emerging from the encounter between psychoanalysis and race. Conversely, the understanding of the necessary transformation that takes place in all encountering bodies reveals some problems in the recent studies on psychoanalytic and African American texts. I take Claudia Tate’s Psychoanalysis and Black Novels as an example: her work warrants detailed attention because of the centrality it accords to Wright and the largely favorable reviews it has drawn as a timely opening between psychoanalysis and African American writing.28 As Tate notes in her introduction, many commentators, “demanding manifest stories about racial politics,” have marginalized African American texts that engage questions not directly dealing with society’s racial and racist structuring. Texts that “focus on the inner worlds of black characters without making that world entirely dependent on the material and psychological consequences of a racist society” (5) have been rejected for neglecting to interrogate and critique racism and, consequently, considered “not black enough” (4). Tate counters this critical history by reading a number of novels that, from the perspective of the African American canon, have appeared “anomalous” in the output of their authors. She argues that these texts in fact reveal what has been implicit in the more canonical works: according to her, they are central to their authors’ oeuvre and the concerns of the black canon in that they “not only inscribe[] but exaggerate[] a primary narrative, an ‘urtext,’ that is repeated but masked in the canonical texts” (8). Tate in eff ect proposes that, rather than continuing what Henry Louis Gates, Jr., calls the “curious valorization of the social and polemical functions of black literature” that has stunted black literary criticism (“Criticism” 5–6),29 critics of African American texts should pay attention to the workings of unconscious processes, which can neither be explained as eff ects of a (racist) environment nor contained by the authors’ or readers’ political designs. In her impressively researched readings, she shows how black texts are amenable to analyses that pay attention to what she calls “textual subjectivity . . . structured by the mediation of desire and prohibition” (25) or the “implicit narrative fragments of desire and pleasure inscribed in the rhetorical organization and language of the text” (27). Her range of references in psychoanalytic theory is similarly ambitious: she draws from Lacan, Freud, and Melanie Klein while gesturing to Karen Horney’s and Marie Bonaparte’s theories of femininity. Although demonstrating her familiarity with the fi eld of psychoanalysis, however, Tate does not extend to its theories the kind of detailed investigative eff ort with which she reads African American texts. Th is is a conscious choice: she writes in her introduction that, because her audience consists mainly of scholars and readers of African American literature, she is “not interested in consolidating and privileging the theoretical demands of individual schools of psychoanalysis” (12). For her, the numerous psychoanalytic theories “facilitate [her] analysis of unconscious textual desire in the novels as unacknowledged fantasies of lost and recovered plenitude” (13). What she ends up doing, however, is not merely refusing to take sides in intra-disciplinary debates around diff erent psychoanalytic approaches. Rather, her neglect of critical engagement with psychoanalysis leads not only to a reductive theoretical understanding, but also to psychoanalysis’s approximating the kind of “narcissistic,” “ubiquitous subject, assimilating every object into itself,” that Meltzer sees it as. In the mode of psychoanalytic “facilitat[ion],” where what is being read are the black novels, not the psychoanalytic texts, Tate unwittingly perpetuates a familiar hierarchy between literature and psychoanalysis: their potential dialogue is reduced to an application where our understanding of psychoanalysis is not aff ected by its encounter with African American writing. Similarly, in Mastering Slavery, Fleischner, while sympathetic to a psychoanalytic approach to slave narratives, ultimately fails to achieve (what Deleuze would call) an encounter between, or (in Felman’s terms) the implication of, psychoanalytic and literary texts.30 For Tate and Fleischner, psychoanalysis never emerges as a body of text to be read; rather, it surfaces as received theory, “enabl[ing] an approach” to literature (Fleischner 4). Immobilizing psychoanalysis as a body of texts with transparent meaning, texts that need not be read, such an approach reduces the “mutually illuminating and interpenetrative” (Spillers, “‘All’” 77) encounter to an application. A failure to engage psychoanalysis allows it to function as a master discourse through which the meaning of other texts can be glossed. Such a dynamic can be discerned in the history of the institutionalization of psychoanalysis: psychoanalysis becomes most oppressive and normative precisely when it congeals into institutions with a received and well-understood canon; at the moment of institutionalization and canonization psychoanalysis loses its capacity for the kind of self-interrogation that I argue marks psychoanalytic approaches proper. It is to avoid the kind of unintentional reduction that Tate and Fleischner exemplify that I will spend a fair amount of time considering psychoanalytic texts in this study, beginning with the fi rst chapter, which outlines in detail Lacan’s theory of the visible. Lacan allows us to understand how the process of racialization, in immobilizing the racial(ized) subject, also enables the “imaginarization” of the white symbolic order—a concept I will explicate as the study progresses—whereby the symbolic is rendered blind and vulnerable to challenges. Understood psychoanalytically, subject formation is not predetermined by societal or historical contingencies but opens a space for the subject’s “incalculability” (Copjec, Read 208), premised on the unpredictable interventions of the unconscious and the real. Mobilizing such incalculability, Bigger Thomas— the protagonist of Wright’s debut novel, Native Son (1940)—disappears from the disciplinary radar of the white symbolic order. Even though he is soon arrested in and by his own strategies of subversion, his “flight,” in repeating the dynamics of dissemblance and performance familiar from African American history, opens the possibility of understanding contingency and unpredictability as politically salient strategies.

#### Even if they’re right that psychoanalysis enacts some of the dynamics of racism, it is precisely for this reason that the psychoanalytic frame is critical to understand our cultural symbolic of whiteness

Winnubst 06 [Shannon, Professor of Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies at Ohio State, *Queering Freedom*, p.58-9]

In “Love Thy Neighbor? No, Thanks!” Slavoj Zizek (1998) begins with some general musings on the bad press that psychoanalytic approaches to racism enjoy these days. Arguing against these critiques of “psychological reductionism” and an “abstract-psychologistic approach,” Zizek persuades us in his ever-entertaining ways that the psychoanalytic frame is exactly the lens that can diagnose the machinations of racism in northern-western cultures and, by exposing their internal inconsistencies, presumably help us to disrupt them. I agree with Zizek and much of the recent work in the intersections of psychoanalysis and race1 that the dynamics of psychoanalysis have much to offer to readings of race and racism in contemporary settings of Eurocentric cultures—particularly the dead-end, circular readings of social constructionism.2 However, I also suggest that these lenses of psychoanalysis have much to tell us about white inhabitants of these cultural symbolics of phallicized whiteness and, more particularly, some of the silent assumptions about space and embodiment which constitute that whiteness. Psychoanalysis may be an appropriate lens for diagnosing our cultural racism exactly because it enacts some of the central dynamics which sediment that racism. Of course, in carving out a space that I refer to as ‘our cultural symbolic,’ I am already at odds with most Lacanians’ understandings of ‘the symbolic.’ While I understand that Lacan was attempting to unravel the structures of signification and dynamics of subjectivation that occur within the symbolic, I wish to speak of this symbolic as a historicized and particular phenomenon. Referring to ‘our cultural symbolic,’ I am referring more specifically to the symbolic that dominates cultures of phallicized whiteness and structures signifiers in a way that gives disproportionate and abusive power to some persons— some bodies—over others. Following out Lacanian dynamics of signification and subjectivation, I am reading ‘our cultural symbolic’ as a process that signifies some bodies as more powerful, more valuable, and more meaningful than others—namely, those white male straight Christian propertied bodies that we have already encountered in the emergence of the neutral liberal individual.

### AT: Robinson

#### Robinson’s arguments are beyond comprehension – all their indicts are inevitable, unfactual, and don’t preclude our theorization of the world

Thomassen 04 (Lasse Thomassen PhD – PhD in Ideology and Discourse Analysis as well as Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the University of Copenhagen and Professor of Politics and Queen Mary University of London, “Lacanian Political Theory: A Reply to Robinson”, The British Journal of Politics and International Relations, 1 November 2004, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1467-856X.2004.00157.x>, MG)

The first issue I would like to raise in this regard concerns the relation between ontology and politics. Robinson writes: ‘The books discussed here thus tend to suggest that it is not possible to derive an original, distinct and attractive political agenda from Lacanian politics’ (p. 268, emphasis added). And: ‘since Lacan’s work deals with politics only very occasionally, the entire project of using Lacan politically is fraught with hazards’ (p. 261). Hazards indeed, but not quite in the way that Robinson thinks. What would be the condition of possibility of deriving a political agenda from a political theory or ontology? Such derivation would presuppose that one could move in a necessary fashion from a set of theoretical or ontological assumptions to a set of political conclusions applicable to a concrete context. Ontology, theory and political agenda would have to be part of the same homogeneous whole comprising ontological, theoretical and political elements linked by necessity. Clearly, if one subscribes to a post-structuralist viewpoint, there can **be no such homogeneity**, whether between ontological, theoretical and political elements or whether within a particular political agenda, for instance. This is a recurring theme in post-structuralism. The impossibility of this sort of derivation may be a ‘hazard’, but one that we will **just have to live with.**

Robinson believes that, since Lacan did not provide a specific theory of politics, but only a more abstract ontology, all the political appropriations of Lacan can do is to subsume politics to pregiven Lacanian categories (p. 261). This is obviously a potential danger, and one that must be avoided. One must insist that analytical categories are always rearticulated when applied; as Wittgenstein has shown, there is no application that leaves intact the rule being applied. But this **does not preclude the theorisation of politics** through categories that were not originally thought to apply (directly or indirectly) to politics. This would assume a regional conception of politics: politics as determined as a particular region with particular (essential) limits and requiring a theory only applicable to this region. This, in turn, would require a theory **transcending all regions** and thus capable of delimiting the specifically political region—again **not a feasible alternative** from a post-structuralist viewpoint. It is the merit of, among others, the theorists considered by Robinson, that they have introduced a distinction between, on the one hand, politics as the region of practices usually referred to as politics and, on the other hand, the political as the moment of the contingent institution of politics and the social. The political cannot be reduced to a specific region, but instead refers to a logic permeating society in its entirety, even if in some places more than others. Since the political understood as contingency permeates politics, we can use the political as a principle of analysing politics. This is one of the contributions of post-structuralist (including **Lacanian) political theory.**

(3) According to Robinson, Lacanian political theory is inherently conservative. ‘Lacanians’, Robinson writes, ‘urge that one reconcile oneself to the inevitability of lack. Lacanian politics is therefore about coming to terms with violence, exclusion and antagonism, not about resolving or removing these’ (p. 260). And, about Mouffe, he writes that, ‘as a Lacanian, Mouffe cannot reject exclusion; it is, on a certain level, necessary according to such a theory’ (p. 263). Such assertions are only possible if we believe in the possibility of opposing exclusion to a situation of non-exclusion, which is exactly what post-structuralists have challenged. Moreover, the post-structuralist (and Lacanian) view **does not necessarily preclude the removal of any concrete exclusion**. On the contrary, the acknowledgement of the constitutivity of exclusion shifts the focus from exclusion versus non-exclusion to the question of which exclusions we can and want to live with. Nothing in the poststructuralist (and Lacanian) view thus **precludes a progressive politics**. Of course, this is not to say that a progressive politics is guaranteed—if one wants guarantees, post-structuralist political theory is not the place to look.

There are similar problems with Robinson’s characterisation of i ek’s ‘nihilistic variety of Lacanianism’: ‘the basic structure of existence is unchangeable ... [ i Zˇ zˇek’s] Lacanian revolutionism must stop short of the claim that a better worldcan be constructed’ (p. 267). This, according to Robinson, ‘reflects an underlying conservatism apparent in even the most radical-seeming versions of Lacanianism’ (p. 268). Again, the constitutivity of exclusion and violence **does not necessarily mean** that ‘**the new world cannot be better than the old’** (p. 268). The alternative to guaranteed progress is not necessarily conservatism or nihilism, and the impossibility of a perfect society does not exclude attempts at improvement—with the proviso that what counts as improvement cannot be established according to some transcendental yardstick.

Thus, while Robinson raises many interesting points, there are **also some problems** with his position. Here, I have focused on some misunderstandings of the status of the claims made by post-structuralist political theorists, but there are also some simple misreadings of the texts under review. For instance, when dealing with Mouffe’s view that antagonism is ineradicable, Robinson links this to a Hobbesian statism: ‘the exclusionary and violent operations of coercive state apparatuses must be accepted as an absolute necessity for any kind of social life. This is Hobbesian statism updated for a post-modern era’ (p. 261). How Robinson is able to move from the ineradicability of antagonism and exclusion to ‘the exclusionary and violent operations of coercive state apparatuses ... as an absolute necessity’ and ‘Hobbesian statism’ is **beyond comprehension**. There is certainly nothing to suggest such an interpretation in the pages referred to by Robinson (Mouffe 2000, 43, 105, 129–132)

### AT: You Want Ballot Too

#### Gotta be negative

Zupančič 8 [Alenka, researcher @ Institute of Philosophy of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Artsand a Visiting Prof. @ European Graduate School, *Why Psychoanalysis? Three Interventions*, “Intervention 2: Freedom and Choice” p. 52-54]

The big question, the 'million dollar question,' that necessarily arises here is, of course, this: can this singular type of tie function as the ground of any social tie, or is the latter always based on the repression of the former? I will not answer this question here, but will say something else instead. If there is any intrinsic politics of psychoanalysis, it consists in insisting on its work of unbinding and of separation (in the sense sketched out above), and in not succumbing to the following criticism, which is becoming louder and louder: psychoanalysis only disintegrates, dismantles, separates, it is obsessed with negativity and lack, it never amounts to any affirmative, positive project (be it political or simply 'human'). The politics of psychoanalysis today should be to not yield to this (by trying to 'nevertheless' propose something 'positive'), but to pursue its work of analysis which has always had an intrinsically social character.

Does this mean that psychoanalysis has to abstain from passing any kind of social judgment and to uncritically accept, if not even actively support, the contemporary disintegration of social ties, the crumbling of solidarity and of collective projects, the spectacle of the social tissue breaking into tiny pieces, small individual islands of enjoyment? I believe that it has to do something else, namely to critically examine this diagnosis itself, the diagnosis that should raise suspicion already on account of its being so gladly embraced by everybody, by those on the right and those on the left, by the rich and the poor, the religious and the not religious, the exploited and the exploiters. Do we really live in the times of an accelerated dissolution of the social ties and of the emergence of an untied multitude of individuals as solipsistic islands of enjoyment? What if this diagnosis itself is a form of repression, a 'compromise formation' fiercely criticizing a certain content (the criticism of which is utterly acceptable) in order to avoid the real source of the problem? What we could say, for example, is this: the existence of the multiplicity of individuals as solipsistic islands of enjoyment is precisely the form of existence of the contemporary *social link*. The socio-economic mobilization of lndividuals may not take the same form as 100 or 200 years ago, yet this is not to say that it does not take place and that we are not - as individuals with our own way of enjoyment - very much engaged in 'feeding' the present social link, which binds us to itself, and to each another. Here we should stress again what we have already indicated: that perhaps the crucial mistake lies in the fact that we are too fast and too willing to understand enjoyment as something essentially 'atavistic,' solipsistic, or simply a-social, cut off from the field of the Other. Contrary to this, we should recognize the point where - through the dialectics of repression and its maintenance - enjoyment is very much linked to the Other and is always-already social. More precisely: the subject of enjoyment does not need the Other, except at the point where the latter, with its 'bare' existence, guarantees the repression that the enjoyment 'needs' in order to emerge as enjoyment.

#### You’re not gonna like it.

McGowan 13 [Todd, Associate Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Vermont, *Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis*, Symploke, University of Nebraska Press (Lincoln, NE): 2013, p. 54-55]

When we think of therapy of any kind, including psychoanalysis, we usually think of a trajectory moving from dissatisfaction to some degree of satisfaction. Subjects enter therapy with a psychic ailment causing dissatisfaction, and if the treatment succeeds, they leave with the ability to lead a more satisfying existence.3 If subjects didn't feel dissatisfaction, they wouldn't enter into any therapy, and if they didn't attain some satisfaction as a result, therapy would cease to be a viable practice.

But despite its commonsensical appearance, this model does not apply to psychoanalytic therapy - or, rather, psychoanalysis is not therapy in this sense. Rather than effectuate a qualitative change in the subject by transforming dissatisfaction into satisfaction, psychoanalysis attempts to intervene - and finds the justification for its intervention - on a quantitative level. Rather than attempting to cure dissatisfied subjects, psychoanalysis confronts subjects who are satisfied but who spend too much psychic effort or who take a path that is too circuitous for the satisfaction they obtain. In this sense, psychoanalysis is fundamentally an economic theory of the psyche.

The death drive and the repetition that it installs in the subject follow a self-satisfying course. The death drive finds a path to satisfaction or enjoyment despite - or because of - whatever obstacles the external world might erect. The satisfaction of the subject is the one constant in psychoanalytic thought, and it leads Freud to postulate the existence of the drive as the source of that satisfaction.4 The satisfaction that the death drive produces stems from its circular structure: rather than trying to attain satisfaction through an external aim, the drive produces that satisfaction through the process of the repeated movement itself.

The self-satisfied quality of the drive differentiates it from physiological need: needs undergo fluctuation from a state of dissatisfaction to one of satisfaction when they achieve their aim. The drive, on the other hand, never fluctuates.5 Unlike biological need (which might be satisfied or not, depending on whether it discovers its object), the drive (which has an absent object) always involves satisfaction. Thus, psychoanalysis, a practice oriented around the drive, cannot intervene by way of offering a missing satisfaction or providing a helping hand to those down on their luck.6

The psychoanalytic intervention must be strictly economic, that is, involving the quantity of psychic effort expended by the analysand. The aim of the psychoanalyst – the analyst's desire – must be to remove the detours that the analysand has placed along the path of the drive in order to allow the analysand to take up completely her or his position in the drive. In Seminar XI, Lacan lays out the situation confronting the analyst: "What we have before us in analysis is a system in which everything turns out all right, and which attains its own sort of satisfaction. If we interfere in this, it is only in so far as we think that there are other ways, shorter ones for example:'7 In submitting to analysis, the analysand submits, albeit unknowingly, to this desire for shortening or economizing the path of the drive. This shortening is the analytic cure, and Freud first comes to understand it as such in the 1895 Project where he emphasizes the costs of psychic detours that the subject erects to the flow of psychic energy.

#### They’re going to say that we want the ballot too, but the framing question should be whether the affirmative has justified *winning* the ballot. Our point is that the 1AC’s critique and strategy of disorientation is unproductive politics.

McGowan 13 [Todd, Associate Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Vermont, *Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis*, Symploke, University of Nebraska Press (Lincoln, NE): 2013, p. 71-72]

We might think of this change of perspective in terms of the way that athletes and fans view their devotion to sports. The increasing importance of sport in the contemporary world testifies in one sense to the dominance of commodity logic and its narcotizing effect. Sports figures and their fans associate the ultimate enjoyment with victory, and their focus on victory provides an escape from the dissatisfaction that inheres in everyday life under capitalism. But the focus on victory hides where the real enjoyment lies both for the athletes themselves and for the fan. Though one finds fleeting pleasure in winning, enjoyment derives from the sacrifice of time and the effort that go into making victory possible.

Both the athlete and the fan make this sacrifice to different degrees – the athlete through long hours of difficult training and the fan through giving up free time to follow the trajectory of the individual athlete or team – though the prevailing commodity logic obscures the role that this sacrifice plays as the source of enjoyment in both cases. According to this logic, the pleasure of the victory justifies the sacrifice, when in fact pleasure functions as an alibi for the enjoyment of sacrifice. Psychoanalysis allows us to turn the tables on commodity logic and to place the emphasis on the act of sacrifice. One strives for or roots for victory only in order to sustain the sacrifice that makes it possible. This shift in emphasis represents a radical transformation that stems from recognizing how we already enjoy, not from changing the nature of our enjoyment.

Though a simple shift in emphasis hardly seems likely to transform society in a fundamental way, this is precisely what Giorgio Agamben suggests in a stunning passage from *The Coming Community*. Agamben cites a story that Walter Benjamin purportedly told to Ernst Bloch describing the kingdom of the messiah. In the messianic kingdom, Benjamin says, "everything will be as it is now, just a little different.”29 Agamben sees the image of the halo as the indication of this slight difference that Benjamin identifies, but we might equally view the halo as a different way of approaching the commodity – a capacity for seeing the commodity as an object of sacrifice rather than as an object of accumulation.

Though capitalist ideology focuses the attention of subjects on the process of accumulation and on having the object rather than experiencing it as lost, capitalism as a mode of production continually forces subjects to endure the object in its absence. In this sense, capitalist ideology and the practice of capitalism are completely at odds with each other, and this discrepancy is crucial for the functioning of capitalism. The accumulative logic doesn't allow one to recognize oneself as a subject of loss or identify one’s enjoyment with the object's absence. But nonetheless capitalism delivers enjoyment to the subject through a process of securing this absence.

This contradiction is pivotal for the reproduction of capitalist relations of production. The satisfaction that capitalism provides sustains subjects, while the desire that capitalist ideology provokes pushes them to expand the system, which is what it requires in order to survive. Because capitalism forces subjects to endure perpetually the absence of the privileged object, it does offer enjoyment to the subjects who invest themselves in its ideology. However, this ideology never allows these subjects to locate the actual source of their enjoyment. Through the act of relocating our enjoyment – of exposing the link between enjoyment and loss or absence – we undermine the ability of capitalist ideology to seduce contemporary subjects.

### Alt – Anxiety

#### Both cynicism and law are wrong moves – only an embracement of anxiety can endure an encounter with the Other and create the experience of enjoyment

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 115-117, 1 July 2013, MG)

But as theorists of contemporary cynicism have shown, cynical subjects don’t really sustain a thoroughgoing cynicism relative to enjoyment. While they disbelieve in the possibility of enjoyment or authentic commitment, they do believe in belief. That is, they believe that there are others who really believe. Despite the cynical knowledge that this belief is false, the cynical subject does believe in the enjoyment that comes from belief, and as a result, cynicism **doesn’t** offer the respite from anxiety that it initially promises.

Unlike cynicism, the opposite strategy — the attempt to restore prohibition and paternal law — involves an avowal of the lost object and its ability to deliver enjoyment. We try to create the requisite distance from enjoyment through our various efforts to resurrect prohibition, to return to the reign of traditional symbolic authority. These efforts most often take the form of various fundamentalisms. One of the chief appeals of fundamentalism is its promise to reintroduce a barrier to enjoyment into the experience of contemporary subjectivity. By reintroducing this barrier, fundamentalism promises to keep anxiety at bay, to allow us to attain some distance from the enjoying other.

But like cynicism, efforts to restore prohibition end up **returning the subject to the situation of anxiety** rather than providing relief. Contemporary fundamentalism derives its energy not from the idea of restricting enjoyment but from the idea of unleashing it. It promises increased enjoyment through restriction, and it delivers on this promise, though in doing so it produces even more anxiety. As fundamentalism restores prohibitions, it creates more intense sites of enjoyment. Whereas the cynical subject sees no enjoyment in the revelation of an almost-naked body, the fundamentalist subject sees enjoyment proliferating with the baring of a small patch of skin. In a world of anxiety, even the attempt to create distance has the effect of **creating more enjoyment**. Both cynicism and fundamentalism emerge in response to the contemporary subject’s anxious proximity to the present object. Both see distance from the enjoyment of the other as the only possible solution to the experience of anxiety.

**The alternative** — the ethical path that psychoanalysis identifies — **demands an** **embrace of the anxiety that stems from the encounter with the enjoying other**. If there is a certain ethical dimension to anxiety, it lies in the relationship that exists between anxiety and enjoyment. Contra Heidegger, the ethics of anxiety does not stem from anxiety’s relation to absence but from its relation to presence — to the overwhelming presence of the other’s enjoyment. In some sense, the encounter with absence or nothing is easier than the encounter with presence. Even though it traumatizes us, absence allows us to **constitute ourselves as desiring subjects**. Rather than producing anxiety, absence leads the subject out of anxiety into desire. Confronted with the lost object as a structuring absence, the subject is able to embark on the pursuit of the enjoyment embodied by this object, and this pursuit provides the subject with a clear sense of direction and even meaning. This is precisely what the subject lacks when it does not encounter a lack in the symbolic structure. When the subject encounters enjoyment at the point where it should encounter the absence of enjoyment, anxiety overwhelms the subject.

In this situation, the subject **cannot constitute itself along the path of desire**. It lacks the lack — the absence — that would provide the space through which desire could develop. Consequently, this subject confronts the enjoying other and experiences anxiety. Unlike the subject of desire — or the subject of Heideggerean anxiety — the subject who suffers this sort of anxiety actually experiences the other in its real dimension.

The real other is the other caught up in its obscene enjoyment, caught up in this enjoyment in a way that intrudes on the subject. There is no safe distance from this enjoyment, and one cannot simply avoid it. There is nowhere in the contemporary world to hide from it. As a result, the contemporary subject is necessarily a **subject haunted by anxiety** triggered by the omnipresent enjoyment of the other. And yet, this enjoyment offers us an ethical possibility. As Slavoj Žižek puts it, “It is this excessive and intrusive jouissance that we should learn to tolerate.”27 When **we tolerate the other’s “excessive and intrusive jouissance**” and when we endure the anxiety that it produces, we **acknowledge and sustain the other** in its real dimension.

Tolerance is the ethical watchword of our epoch. However, the problem with contemporary tolerance is its insistence on tolerating the other only insofar as the other **cedes its enjoyment** and accepts the prevailing symbolic structure. That is to say, we readily tolerate the other in its symbolic dimension, the other that plays by the **rules of our game**. This type of tolerance allows the subject to feel good about itself and to sustain its symbolic identity. The problem is that, at the same time, **it destroys what is in the other** more than the other — the particular way that the other enjoys.

It is only the encounter with the other in its real dimension — the encounter that produces anxiety in the subject — that sustains that which defines the other as such. Authentic tolerance tolerates the real other, not simply the other as mediated through a symbolic structure. In this sense, it involves the experience of anxiety on the part of the subject. This is a difficult position to sustain, as it involves enduring the “whole opaque weight of alien enjoyment on your chest.”28 The obscene enjoyment of the other bombards the authentically tolerant subject, but this subject does not retreat from the anxiety that this enjoyment produces.

Whose Enjoyment?

If the embrace of the anxiety that accompanies the other’s proximate enjoyment represents the ethical position today, this does not necessarily provide us with an incentive for occupying it. Who wants to be ethical when it involves **enduring anxiety** rather than finding a way — a drug, **a new authority**, or something — to alleviate it? What good does it do to sustain oneself in anxiety? In fact, anxiety does the subject no good at all, which is why it offers the subject the possibility of enjoyment. When the subject encounters the other’s enjoyment, this is the form that its own enjoyment takes as well. To endure the anxiety caused by the other’s enjoyment is to experience one’s own simultaneously. As Lacan points out, when it comes to the enjoyment of the other and my own enjoyment, “nothing indicates they are distinct.”29 Thus, not only is anxiety an **ethical position**, it is also the key to embracing the experience of enjoyment. To reject the experience of anxiety is to **flee one’s own enjoyment**.

The notion that the other’s enjoyment is also our own enjoyment seems at first glance difficult to accept. Few people enjoy themselves when they hear someone else screaming profanities in the workplace or when they see a couple passionately kissing in public, to take just two examples. In these instances, we tend to recoil at the **inappropriateness of the activity** rather than enjoy it, and this reaction seems completely justified. The public display of enjoyment violates the social pact with its intrusiveness; it doesn’t let us alone but **assaults our senses**. It violates the implicit agreement of the public sphere constituted as an enjoyment-free zone. And yet, recoiling from the other’s enjoyment deprives us of our own.

### Alt - Satisfaction

#### The alternative is to interpret the 1AC and turn it towards total satisfaction – only by uncovering what is hidden in the psyche can the banality of the everyday and capitalism be addressed

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 267-271, 20 September 2016, MG)

Capitalism bombards us with the **image of our dissatisfaction**. Challenging capitalism today doesn’t depend on focusing subjects on how dissatisfied they are with capitalist relations of production. This type of response plays **into the hands of the capitalist** system and the promise of a better future that it employs. This is the response that manifested itself in the nineteenth-century critique of capitalism’s injustice and in the twentieth-century critique of capitalism’s repressiveness. Despite the vast differences between these two lines of critique, they share an emphasis on the dissatisfaction that capitalism produces, and this line of attack does fully uncover capitalism’s real psychic appeal.

Though dissatisfaction with capitalism seems necessary for any critique of the system, dissatisfaction as such **inheres within the capitalist economy**. Capitalist subjects remain capitalist subjects because they see themselves as dissatisfied beings in pursuit of satisfaction and thereby misrecognize the satisfaction they have found. The critique of capitalism must begin out of our **satisfaction with capitalism** and not our dissatisfaction with it. But the capitalist system never avows this satisfaction. Recognizing it requires the most radical act today—that of **interpretation**.

It is important never to take a system at its word. This is especially true in the case of an economic or political system, in which the workings of the system aren’t self-evident to anyone. Even when leaders are caught revealing the machinations that take place behind the scenes, we should not assume that they are giving away the keys to the kingdom. Freud’s discovery of the unconscious implies that the **subject knows what it’s doing but cannot articulate this knowledge**. As a result, others, from the perspective of interpretation, have more insight into the subject’s designs than the subject itself. This is just as true for an economic or political system.

The secrets of every system are present in what the system says about itself, but these **statements require interpretation**. They cannot be taken at face value. This imperative to interpret exists for the analysts of capitalism, despite the system’s apparent obviousness. Capitalism deceives us as to its structure and appeal by laying its cards on the table. The proponents of capitalism readily avow that it speaks to our baser instincts, to human selfishness, and to the desire for more. The most extreme of these proponents translate selfishness into a virtue, but even those who don’t see how an inducement to selfishness among individuals might create a more prosperous and thus happier collective. Greedy individuals produce a wealthy and secure social order.

This interpretation of capitalism fails because **it never interprets**. It simply accepts how capitalists characterize themselves and how the laws of the system explicitly structure the economy. Within the capitalist system, self-interest seems pervasive, and the benefits of the pursuit of self-interest are plain for everyone to see. But the act of interpretation requires seeing **what is hidden amid obviousness**. What seems self-evident must itself become subject to interpretation, and this is what Marx does in the move from the first volume of Capital to the second.

In the first volume of Capital, Marx explores how capitalism views itself. He famously points out that capitalism operates according to a single imperative. In the place of any religious duty or Kant’s categorical imperative, capitalism proclaims, “**Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets**!”1 Even manual laborers who are just trying to survive must, according to this transcendental imperative, concern themselves with accumulation in order to survive and possibly prosper in the future. Capitalist subjects cannot get by simply by getting by but must always concern themselves with tomorrow. One always accumulates with an eye to future prosperity, but this capitalist imperative has a superegoic dimension to it, which means that one can never accumulate enough. The imperative to accumulate doesn’t permit capitalist subjects to feel as if they no longer have any need to accumulate. According to the morality of capitalism, too much is never enough.2

The first volume of Capital is an exploration of the dynamics of a system in which everyone tries to obey the imperative to accumulate. Though Marx is critical of this imperative, he doesn’t articulate an alternative. In this sense, he remains proximate to the defenders of capitalism. For the defenders of capitalism, accumulation is the first and last word. There is no other motivation for our action than accumulation or the advancement of self-interest. The structure of the capitalist economy itself seems to reveal the accuracy of this claim: it rewards those who try to accumulate and punishes those who refuse to engage in this activity.

But accumulation is only what capitalism and its defenders claim moves the system. It is **not the real engine driving capitalism**. It functions ideologically to ~~blind~~ us to the role that satisfaction has in structuring our subjectivity. Even when we are fully bent on accumulating, it is satisfaction that provides the basis for our accumulation. Capitalism survives because we find **our accumulation satisfying**, but our focus on accumulation at the expense of satisfaction short-circuits the recognition of this satisfaction. The political task today is to wrench **satisfaction from the hold of accumulation** by exposing the deception involved with accumulation.

The problem with the model of accumulation is that it hides its own manner of producing satisfaction. While the accumulating subject aims at obtaining the ultimate satisfaction in the future, this subject satisfies itself in the present through the sacrifices that it makes to obtain the object it seeks. Accumulation serves as a **cover for sacrifice**—the sacrifice of time, of energy, of resources, of freedom, and so on. In doing so, it obscures the role that loss plays in all satisfaction. We don’t find satisfaction in having or obtaining a privileged object through acts of accumulation but rather enjoy the object in its loss or absence. The sacrifice that accumulation demands provides satisfaction because it recreates our experience of loss, but no one who is bent on accumulation can recognize the role that loss plays.

Capitalism’s privileging of accumulation obscures the role that traumatic loss plays in our satisfaction. There is no satisfaction without loss. Or to put it in other terms, we are not subjects who might obtain a satisfying object but subjects who can find satisfaction only through the necessity of the object’s loss. Even when we are right next to someone we love, we enjoy what is **absent in the beloved**, not what is present: that part of the beloved that we can’t decipher. Capitalism’s success derives from shielding our psyches from this necessary loss and its intrinsic connection to our satisfaction. But we can recognize the disappointment that accompanies accumulation.

Whenever we accumulate enough to obtain what we desire, we inevitably find that this is not what we desire. This transformation of the object that occurs when we obtain it derives from the difference between the lost object that animates our desire and the actual objects of desire. No object of desire can ever be the lost object (which exists only insofar as it is lost), but we nonetheless inscribe this lost object within a series of empirical objects of desire that we pursue. Obtaining the object reveals the difference and thus produces disappointment and renewed pursuit of a new object of desire.

The functioning of capitalism depends on our mistaking the object of desire for the lost object. This inability to see the central role of the lost object in our desire creates subjects of accumulation who believe in the promises of the logic of accumulation. We invest ourselves psychically (and financially) in **new commodities** with the hope that they will provide the satisfaction that the previous commodity failed to provide, but no commodity can embody the lost object. Every object of desire and every commodity will fail. Capitalism **thrives on this failure**, and we can never escape its perpetual crises without recognizing this link. Only the turn from **the logic of accumulation to the logic of satisfaction**—with an acceptance of the lost status of the object—can move us **beyond the crisis of capitalism**.

Capitalism is not the worst economic system that the world has produced, and it is not the cause of all our woes. Its effects are not universally doleful. Capitalism has provided the economic background for a widespread easing in the struggle to survive, the creation of vast material wealth, the political emancipation of women, the elimination of serfdom, and so on. But its triumphs have exacted an incredible toll that we do not have to continue to pay.

The turn from accumulation to satisfaction portends the abolition of capitalism. Of course, the end of capitalism requires a political act, but **a change in the psyche must inform this act**. Satisfaction is traumatic, but the attempt to avoid this trauma merely results in its diffusion in the form of a crisis, not in its evasion. The attempt to bypass trauma inevitably leads back to it. The more we enrich ourselves in order to escape trauma, the more crises we produce.

This way of understanding the turn from accumulation to satisfaction finds support in an unexpected location, a place where Marx writes a single sentence that conveys the foundation of capitalism and the possibility for emancipation from it. In all of Marx’s writing on capitalism, there are innumerable insights into how capitalism plays on the psyche of those who fall under its spell. Marx hopes, of course, to break this spell, especially as it infects the proletariat. But Marx’s greatest insight into capitalism and its continued survival lies buried in an obscure part of his work, as if he wanted to enact formally the point he makes: it is through the **banality of the everyday**, not in the promised satisfaction of the future, that one discovers the sublime.

### Alt – Jokes!

#### The 1AC wasn’t funny, vote negative to joke over the 1AC’s desire

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 76-78, 1 July 2013, MG)

In contrast, economy in the drive results in an excess of enjoyment through the enjoyment of excess. When subjects eliminate the detours that sidetrack the death drive, they experience this enjoyment of excess. This is the kind of excess that one cannot find within the capitalist system. Capitalism uses excess in order to create thrift ; the economy of the drive uses thrift to unleash excess. This dialectical relationship between thrift and enjoyment becomes apparent in Freud’s analysis of the economy of the joke, an analysis that leads to the conclusion that **the ultimate problem with capitalism is that it isn’t funny**.

In Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious Freud makes clear that the satisfaction coming from a joke derives from an act of saving or economizing. Puns **exemplify** this saving process: the pun makes a direct connection between two disparate ideas, ideas that otherwise we would be able to connect only indirectly, through a circuitous path of related signifiers. By shortening the path, by eliminating the excessiveness of the detours leading from one idea to another, the pun creates an economical path between two ideas. This saving in turn manifests itself as an excess enjoyment in the response to the pun. If I say, for instance, that “Jerry Garcia is now among the dead,” I link two different senses of the word “dead” — not being alive and being a member of the band the Grateful Dead. We have the capacity for laughing at this type of pun (even if we don’t actually laugh) because the pun has economized through the connection it makes apparent.

Other jokes also work according to the logic of the pun, allowing us to connect what would otherwise be disparate or to grasp connections that we didn’t otherwise see. When Babe Ruth said that he had a better year than the president aft er being confronted with the fact that he earned more than the country’s leader, people laughed because the joke linked the presidency, an occupation that we typically consider above comparison, with another occupation, that of a baseball player, that we think of as insignificant in the larger scheme of things. It also made evident the underlying connections at work in the economic system itself, revealing how this system links everyone. Connections such as these are at the root of our ability to enjoy the joke as such. As Freud says, “Enjoyment is . . . to be attributed to economy in psychical expenditure.”34 Because it economizes the **unconscious connections in psyche**, the joke produces an **excess or remainder**, which is precisely what the subject enjoys.

Though Freud himself never did, we can translate Freud’s analysis of the joke back into the terms of the death drive. The joke functions to shorten the drive’s path: it allows us to **abandon the detours or side-cathexes** that interrupt the direct path of the drive. When we laugh at the joke, it is as if we are momentarily recognizing our satisfaction and escaping the sense of dissatisfaction that stems from these detours. But capitalism lacks a sense of humor and works at every turn to minimize joking — or at least the economic effect of the joke.

The joke is anathema to capitalism because its functioning depends on **severing connections** between ideas rather than facilitating them.35 For proper capitalist subjects, amoral behavior in the marketplace has nothing to do with private life at home; the products we buy have no relation to the labor that created them; and there is no link between economic hardship and politics. Of course, jokes proliferate within the capitalist system, and many capitalist subjects tell jokes constantly.36 But in its essence the **joke performs a function** — connecting ideas that appear quite different — that in general **subverts the functioning of the capitalist economy**. Capitalism demands thrift in matters of enjoyment, but it abhors the thrift that facilitates connections and clears the path of the drive. Only by insisting on this type of thrift can we escape the sense of dissatisfaction that hides the underlying satisfaction of the death drive.

Psychoanalytic thought can’t offer a precise prescription for a particular form of social organization beyond the capitalist one. But it can reveal the importance of embracing the **economics of the joke**. By doing so, one economizes in order to enjoy rather than economizing in order to accumulate (and enjoy in the future). The economic model of the psyche that psychoanalysis develops points toward the possibility of **enjoying our excess instead of profiting from it.** A society in which we enjoyed excess would not be the Promised Land, but it would be a place where enjoyment occurred without so much trouble precisely because we recognized the trouble for what it was. Our trouble is what we enjoy.

### Alt – Genuine Fool

#### The alternative is to play the part of the Genuine Fool, the fool who defies the good and acts on its own enjoyment – it cannot be combined with any desire or identity, or else it will fail

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 136-139, 1 July 2013, MG)

By enjoying in a public way, the subject becomes what we might call a **fool**. The fool is a subject who **ceases to court the social authority’s approbation** and becomes immune to the seduction of social recognition or rewards. Recognition has a value for the subject only insofar as the subject believes in the substantial status of social authority — that is, insofar as the subject believes that the identities that society confers have a solid foundation. The fool grasps that no such foundation exists and that no identity has **any basis whatsoever**. The only possible foundation for the subject lies in the subject itself — in the fantasy that organizes the subject’s enjoyment. Such a subject becomes a fool because it constantly acts in ways that **make no sense to the social authority**. It acts out of the nonsense of its own enjoyment.

This does not mean that the fool acts at random. Nonsensical enjoyment is not arbitrary enjoyment but enjoyment irreducible to the symbolic world of signification. In fact, the fool, having embraced its own mode of enjoying, acts with considerable regularity. This type of subject clearly acts against its own self-interest and in **defiance of any good at all.** The paradigmatic instance of the fool is the subject pursuing the lost cause or the subject continuing to act when all hope has already been lost. The pursuit of the lost cause reveals that what motivates the subject is **not a potential reward** but purely the enjoyment of the pursuit itself. The authentic fool doesn’t pursue the lost cause with resignation but with the knowledge that **there is no other cause but the lost one**. Rather than ~~paralyzing~~ the subject, this recognition emboldens it, as the example of Hamlet demonstrates.

When Hamlet receives his charge from his father’s ghost and determines that he must kill Claudius in order to revenge his father’s murder, he believes in the possibility of justice. For Hamlet at the beginning of Shakespeare’s play, there is an order in the world that his act might restore, even though he laments that this burden has been placed on his shoulders. He tells us, “The time is out of joint. O cursed spite, / That ever I was born to set it right.”35 This couplet testifies to Hamlet’s belief in distributive justice, which tacitly presupposes a social authority with a solid foundation that could distribute justice. This attitude undergoes a radical transformation, however, when he see Ophelia’s grave. At this point in the play, Hamlet recognizes the **groundlessness of all authority** and the hopelessness of his own cause.

At Ophelia’s grave, Hamlet confronts the power of death to dissolve every symbolic bond. Justice and honor become meaningless in the face of an all-conquering death. He realizes that even if he revenges himself on Claudius, **nothing will be accomplished**: order will not be restored, and the time will remain out of joint. And yet, it is precisely at this moment that Hamlet devotes himself to the completion of his project. He realizes his fantasy — avenging his father’s death — when he grasps that it is its own end. Once his cause becomes a lost cause, Hamlet can act.

As long as Hamlet hopes that his act might accomplish something substantial, the **moment will never be right for** it. Once he ceases to believe in the possibility of restoring justice and understands the act only in terms of his own fantasmatic enjoyment, he frees himself from the search for the proper moment. Subjects who hope to make an impact on social authority never act because they **cannot calculate how the authority will respond to the act**. Such subjects, like Hamlet at the beginning of the play, spend their time **probing the authority’s desire** and waiting for the moment when the act will make the **proper impact on the other**. But that moment never comes. When one adopts the position of the fool, the moment for the act is always at hand because the fool’s act has nothing to do with the readiness of the social authority for it.

There is a danger in advocating the subjectivity of the fool, however. Many adopt the position of the fool as a **symbolic identity** that provides **meaning** for their lives. Such subjects perversely act out rather than accomplishing genuinely successful acts. The difference consists in how the subject relates to the position of the fool. The perverse fool acts in order to provoke the social authority into a response, while the genuine fool acts for the sake of its own enjoyment regardless of the authority’s response. The former derives a sense of identity from the position; the latter does not.

The difference between the perverse subject and the authentic fool is visible within the character of Hamlet. After he first hears of his father’s murder at the beginning of the play, Hamlet feigns madness; he literally plays the part of the fool. But he takes up this position in order to provoke authority, not in order to realize his own enjoyment. Hamlet uses his ~~madness~~ in an attempt to trigger a reaction in Claudius that will offer definitive proof of the latter’s guilt. But even when Claudius reacts in the way that Hamlet wants to the performance of the provocative play that Hamlet has produced, Hamlet still does not act but continues to act out.

It is only well after the play ends, after he has realized the absence of any order in the world or any guarantee for his action in social authority, that Hamlet is able to act. When he acts, he acts **not on the basis of laws** or justice but on the basis of his own fantasy frame. In act 5 he becomes the authentic fool, one no longer playing to the crowd but determined to follow his fantasy regardless of authority’s response. In so doing, he provides a model for successful subjectivity, for how the subject might act to change the world.36

Publicly insisting on one’s fantasy hardly seems like a prescription for changing the world in any substantive fashion. If this is the political attitude advanced by psychoanalysis, the indictment of psychoanalysis on political grounds appears to have a great deal of merit. But this would be to move too quickly. We might think of the relationship between **embracing one’s own fantasy** **and politics** as a twisted version of the line from the Talmud that characters repeat in Schindler’s List (Steven Spielberg, 1993): “**Whoever saves one life saves the world entire**.” Translated into our terms this would become: “Whoever publicly insists on her or his own fantasy opens this path for the world entire.” By doing this, the subject institutes a fundamental change in the structure of its symbolic world.

When one subject opts for the nonsense of its own enjoyment over the blandishments of recognition, this act exposes the groundlessness of social authority — the emptiness around which the social order is structured. A collective awareness of the groundlessness of social authority would produce a **different sort of social order**, one in which subjects would be unable to rely on authority and would have to assume responsibility themselves for the social order. They would lose the sense of authorization for their acts. The freedom inherent in social existence would become evident in light of authority’s evanescence.

### Alt – Specifics

#### Psychoanalysis is the only way to approach capitalism

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 183-184, 20 September 2016, MG)

Psychoanalysis owes its existence to **capitalist modernity**. It emerges in response to the sense of dissatisfaction that capitalism produces through its incessant focus on the object of desire. Whereas capitalism privileges the object of desire to the exclusion of the lost object, psychoanalysis **reverses this valuation** and identifies the lost object as the central force within the subject. Psychoanalysis doesn’t make existence fully satisfying for the subject by giving it a fully satisfying object. Instead, it turns the subject’s attention to the **integral role** that loss has in its satisfaction and reveals the inexistence of a fully satisfying object.

The psychoanalytic cure involves leading the subject to the point where it can embrace the partial satisfaction that the lost object provides. It is a satisfaction of **not having rather than having**—and thus radically opposed to capitalist productivity. The idea is not one of accepting the necessity of some dissatisfaction by acceding to the reality principle. Instead, the subject grasps that it already has the satisfaction that it seeks. The partial satisfaction of not having always trumps the illusory total satisfaction associated with having the object of desire. This is the lesson of psychoanalysis in a nutshell.

The combat that psychoanalysis wages against capitalism is **not a frontal assault**. Instead, it works to transform the **subject’s attitude toward loss and thus render the subject incapable of investing** itself in capitalist productivity and accumulation. Thus, if one leaves psychoanalysis and continues to struggle for enrichment or for accumulating additional commodities, the psychoanalysis has functioned as productive therapy rather than as psychoanalysis. This is the verdict that we can unequivocally render on the analysis that Tony Soprano (James Gandolfini) undergoes in the television series The Sopranos. Though it disturbs his ability to continue his accumulation (of money, of women, of power), it never seriously throws this project into question. This represents a perfect image of psychoanalytic failure. Instead of helping subjects like Tony Soprano to accumulate with a good conscience, psychoanalysis aims at creating a recognition that loss is inextricable from satisfaction.

The rarity of psychoanalytic practice actually working to reconcile subjects with the lost object as the source of satisfaction testifies to the triumph of the ideal of productivity within capitalist society **even at the site most diametrically opposed to this ideal**. By and large, nonproductive psychoanalysis—that is, psychoanalysis as such— becomes productive therapy. Practices that don’t accede to the productive ideal either die or quickly transform themselves. The fate of psychoanalysis in capitalist society bespeaks the near omnipotence of this ideal. Despite its emphasis on the nonproductivity of the lost object, psychoanalysis primarily functions as an ideological handmaiden to the productive ideal.

But the victory of the productive ideal is not, for all that, entirely secure. Its vulnerability does not only reside in workers who experience their labor devalued but also in subjects who become dissatisfied with the dissatisfaction necessarily created by the focus on ends. Attention to the means lurking within capitalist ends leads to the possibility of a **different economic system**. Capitalism depends on an investment in productive ends, but its dependence on means opens the door to the recognition of **satisfaction that it cannot tolerate**.

### Nuclear Reps K Alt---2NC

#### The alternative is a politics of the sublime – rather than attempt to calculate and describe nuclear war, understand it through its sublime aspects, as something the stands in a place outside the symbolic order, thus revealing its cracks and reconfiguring desire towards more productive ends.

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson, PhD is Associate Professor of Public Deliberation and Civic Life and the incoming Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh.; “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”; 2015; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/210598703.pdf]//eleanor

It is in this place of despair from which we should understand the politics of the sublime. Because it is an inevitable byproduct of discontinuous subjectivity, the death drive cannot be wished away. We will probably always desire continuity that we cannot have and the object from which we are rent by our separation from the world as a whole. What the sublime offers is a reconfiguration of desire. We defer enjoyment questing after objects and ignore sacrifices in the meantime, whether it is global poverty tolerated for the sake of a middle-class material comfort or radioactive contamination for the sake of peace-through-strength. Todd McGowan argues that a recognition of the death drive might not remake the material structure of society—at least not immediately—but that it could have a profound effect on the way we understand enjoyment. Instead of seeking to overcome every limit as an obstacle to enjoyment (as I have argued we do with the limits of language in the Real), we have to enjoy the limits themselves as obstacles to the movement of the drive. Desire may be inevitable, but we can change the way we orient ourselves towards the frustrations and repetitions of the drive, learning to enjoy the partial challenges of our limits instead of deferring enjoyment for the achievement of some utopian state that we will never reach (McGowan, conclusion). Some of this enjoyment can already be identified in survivalism, for example, when preppers camp in the wilderness, practice skills they imagine using, or grow their own food. The problem is essentially temporal. What makes survivalism coalesce around violence is the understanding that the world needs to end for society to be remade. Suddenly prepping becomes just work, utility in Bataille’s sense, means to an end. Although there is obviously enjoyment in the sense of affective investment in the practices and tropes of survival, it remains organized around the “big payoff” of a world-shattering disaster, and thus enjoyment is mostly deferred and attachment forms to the disaster itself, fabulously textual as it may be. What ruins the game of fort-da is the same thing that ruins other rule-bound games. As Roger Caillois argues, the assumption that games must then result in something else, some “real world” benefit, turns them into work. To avoid the “corruption” of games, play must be an end in itself, something useless in the sense of Bataille’s sovereign poetry (Caillois 44). The sublime is a language suited for this change. The sense of being in the presence of silence, an active force that exceeds language, breeds both terror and fascination, but what results from this desire might be otherwise. Instead of deferring enjoyment for the eventual mastery of all contingent experience in mediation, the sublime draws a limit to the value of language used for productive work. That limit can be a source of enjoyment instead of (solely) frustration. Realizing that the Real cannot be mediated into the Symbolic does not have to mean that our attempts to do so have failed. Bataille’s distinction between poetry and other language revolves around the basic observation that poetry, in his sense, does not aim to do anything by organizing the world differently. It is expression without utility (“Hegel, Death, and Sacrifice” 25). The sublime is not a sufficient principle for any politics. It is useful instead to reveal the investments that cause political solutions to fail and repeat themselves serially. Ned O’Gorman’s argument that the sublime can have no politics because it cannot make practical differentiations is correct if one understands politics to be about the allocation of scarce resources and rhetoric to be about this conception of politics (“Political Sublime” 889). As Bataille defines it, politics is concerned with the handling of excess, not scarcity (Accursed Share 24-26). The teratology of rhetoric I suggest as a supplement is directed towards excess rather than scarcity. Nuclear war is a problem of excess in a double sense: the excess of reality that is the Real, and the excess of energy that thermonuclear processes provide for warfare. Concern for the sublime should lead us to seek the places where the excess of the general economy tears through the scarcity of the particular economy. Doing so, and observing the distortions that appear in the Symbolic, is a step towards tracking the motions of desire that stitch together the tropes of nuclear myth. Sublime language will not help much in figuring out the details of nuclear arms verification measures—or which Russian ICBM fields to target, for that matter. Instead, it should help us to accept the limits of our ability to map the world and reincorporate its breakdowns, and to appreciate these inevitable failures for what they are. An often overlooked theme in Longinus’s On the Sublime is the futility of accumulation for its own sake. Longinus decried what he saw as the decline of rhetoric into something meant to achieve specific goals rather than be admired for its own sake. The pursuit of wealth, power, and pleasure are not the only goals of rhetoric, and cannot be its only aim. We must enjoy sublime language for its own sake, not only for what it can get us. This is not desire without restriction, for “surely if our selfish desires were altogether freed from prison, as I were, and let loose upon our neighbors, they would scorch the earth with their evils,” because we perpetually desire something more beyond our grasp and thus cannot be satisfied (58). Words—mediation in general, we might now say—must be something to be enjoyed as artifice because “they are in truth the mind’s peculiar light” (41). The sublime’s most dangerous manifestations occur in attempts to control contingency with rational order and calculate the incalculable. The political implication of teratology is that we should sometimes resist this violent recuperation and leave some mysteries alone. To change our relationship towards the death drive means to accept that artifice can be enjoyed for its own sake, not just as a promissory note for the absent Real. There may be no ultimate, objective value for the human species that we can discover in the Real, but this does not need to be a council of despair. Instead of inventing reasons that the species must survive, we should admit that we have no good reason at all to do so. We don’t need one. If all values are arbitrary, then there is no reason not to live, assuming that we want to do so. To live without a reason is precisely the kind of sovereignty Bataille seeks through poetry, a sovereign life rather than a commitment to individual survival as a means to a perpetually deferred end. Learning to accept limits, even enjoy their impediment to the drive, is perhaps necessary but not sufficient to change our orientation towards nuclear warfare and the imagination of human extinction. To require rational answers to the ultimate questions raised by the Bomb is to play the wrong kind of game.

#### The silence of Trinity was the ultimate triumph of the real – nuclear war can only be understood through metaphor, futile attempts to calculate the gap in the symbolic order – trying to make nuclear war present through language sustains investment in those very myths and tropes in the first place .

Matheson 15 [Calum Matheson, PhD is Associate Professor of Public Deliberation and Civic Life and the incoming Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Pittsburgh.; “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”; 2015; https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/210598703.pdf]//eleanor

I would like to conclude by outlining the implications that I see in this project for communication studies and the politics of anti-nuclear activism. The significance of the Real suggests that omissions, breakdowns, and silence are important objects of study. We should not think of the inability to capture and translate something just as the failure of mediation but also the triumph of excess. The former centers the Symbolic order of human mediation as the key agent. The latter acknowledges that the universe outside our ken sometimes evades our grasp. The silence of Trinity was not just an absence of speech. It was the triumph of the Real, silence as its own revelation—an affirmative force. It is not necessary to ascribe agency to the Real to recognize that it is more than the space left outside of language. Neither should we ignore it because it is beyond our ability to translate. Its deformations alter the Symbolic, giving us outlines for speculation, even if we can never truly see what is behind the curtain. A theory of communication thus should at least speculate about what exceeds mediation. The word theory itself presents an opportunity. Nicolas of Cusa claimed that the word derived from theoro, “I see,” which is also the origin of Theos, “God” (213). God “looks on all things,” and thus does theory (Nicolas 237).” Theoria is the gaze that lights 182 the shadows to reveal the world. This understanding of theory is Bataille’s Sun of reason and truth, that rational source of enlightenment figurative and literal. But the Sun is also rotten, a harbinger of mania for those who stare at it too intensely (Bataille, Visions of Excess 57-8). It can be supplemented with another tradition, one derived from téras and later therion, the Greek origins of our word “monster.” Monster, related to “demonstrate” was once a disruption, a revelation, an apocalypse in its original sense of unveiling. Theory should not only trace the order of the world. It should be a teratology of the Real, an acknowledgment that the monstrous world “bites back.” Teratology was once the “account of marvels” (“Teratology”). It was once pejorative: “when bold writers, fond of the sublime, intermix something great and prodigious in everything they write,” not altogether a positive thing (Bailey). The word evokes the sublime in a rhetorical sense, linked with “prodigious monsters” of thought and desire (Shipley 197). The importance of the Real establishes the significance of the death drive for theories of communication. While the drive has generally been considered an aspect of the Symbolic order—the subject, formed through the alienation of the mirror phase, is driven to invest in objects (signifiers) that stand in for something lost that could make it whole. The formulation of the death drive here is somewhat different, drawing also from Bataille’s concept of continuity. The subject’s initial formation marks it as discrete from everything else, which is the necessary condition for death, since a change in state of a part of the whole does not destroy said whole. Eros, exemplified in copulation, momentarily merges the self with another, as does Thanatos more permanently in the state of death. The Symbolic is necessarily always mediated, and the Real is not. The emergence of the Real hints at a world beyond mediation, and thus towards continuity. Since the Real cannot be adequately captured, subjects cathect to whatever seems to represent it, and thus the drive does operate in the Symbolic, which is often misrecognized as real. Identifying the death drive as a desire to move beyond mediation shows the necessity of a broad view of communication. The connections that form between sites of investment for Lacan either proliferate meaning by referencing outwards (metonymy) or condense meaning by establishing a particularly saturated connection defines the sites involved by this strong relation (metaphor). These rhetorical tropes are typically used to analyze language, but they can be reframed to apply to mediation more generally, including the material aspect of individual media. This is not to say that everything is a text. Instead, it is a call to explore how concepts developed for language might be adapted to other media, and also how they must be changed to do so. In their canonical book Remediation, Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin identify a seeming paradox in media. There are “contradictory imperatives for immediacy and hypermediacy…a double logic of remediation. Our culture wants both to multiply its media and to erase all traces of mediation: ideally, it wants to erase its media in the very act of multiplying them” (Bolter and Grusin 5, emphasis in original). Both immediacy and hypermediacy have a long history—the first in the evolution of Western European painting, for example, and the second in illuminated medieval manuscripts (Bolter and Grusin 11-12). The death drive enriches this observation by underpinning it with a theoretical explanation: we desire the Real (immediacy), but are frustrated in achieving it, as detailed in Chapter 1. Instead, we enjoy our seeming ability to control presence and absence, latching on to our own subjectivity and misrecognizing the Symbolic for the Real—hence the enjoyment of hypermediacy. These imperatives are contradictory in a sense, but they follow from one another according to the logic of the death drive. Recall that Lacan’s argument for the primacy of the death drive is partly that all drives seek their own extinction. In the desire for immediacy, media also seek their own extinction. In its failure, it is redirected back on itself in hypermediacy. Bolter and Grusin define a medium as “that which remediates. It is that which appropriates the techniques, forms, and social significance of other media and attempts to rival or refashion them in the name of the real” (65-66). This definition essentially makes various media metaphors for one another, containers that reference other containers. If metaphor is remembered as metapherein, then this process can be thought of as material metaphor. To say that remediation is the defining aspect of media as Bolter and Grusin do is consistent with metaphor as the “archetrope” of language, as Miller names it. The common element is mediation itself. Remediation is metaphor, in which significance is transferred from one container to another, as in Lacan’s pots, with the relationship of the two configuring the importance of the connection. Metaphor is also a kind of remediation. The importance of the vehicle is transferred to the tenor and vice versa, and both use language to stand in for something else—a concept, an object, a person, place. The dynamic of the death drive should suggest a different, more porous, theory of metaphor. One term does not replace another and simply suppress it. Rather, it allows its users to enjoy the absent term which is always still present in the metaphor. The vehicle “countervalue,” for example, stands in for the tenor “nuclear attack against civilians.” This sense is not lost, but displaced. Metaphor is a dynamic process rather than a one-way substitution. One aspect is the replacement of one term by another, but this is not the end: the point of metaphor is that there is an cathectic investment in the relationship between two terms, the trait that enthymematically connects them. Concealment is one part of the process, but making the principle that connects the concealed tenor to the expressed vehicle present is another, a fort-da dynamic. It is the mediation between terms which serves to anchor enjoyment. The sublime aspect of metaphor is the charge of the Real which makes a particular connection so bright as to conceal others. At the same time, a broad understanding of mediation has implications for metaphor and metonymy. The trope is stunted when it is confined to language: not only does language stand in for other things, but different media create different conditions for investment. The simulated globe of First Strike stands in for the conglomeration of matter that constitutes the Earth itself, but the media of choice that videogames allow permits a different kind of investment. For a subject to read about the radioactive wasteland of a post-nuclear Earth is one thing, but for that subject to simulate its creation is quite another. Metonymy, the proliferation of meaning that gestures from one trope out towards others, is mediated in different ways by changing technology. As the example of survivalist online communities shows, some of the labor of connection is now done by automated systems based on aggregated data. An Amazon review of Farnham’s Freehold leads to a reviewer profile that leads to One Second After, where targeted ads lead to survival equipment, where reviews lead to message boards and message boards spin out across the Internet. Some of these selections are made by readers, while others are automatically generated, smoothing the paths between one thing and another. Communities form in part around these shared spaces, connected not directly but by their shared relationship to a message board, a particular electronic text, or a lifestyle. Users of Survivalist Singles are connected in part by electronic means. The electronic connections of the Internet make possible an itinerary that begins with Farnham’s Freehold and ends with a marriage proposal made in a bunker. The death drive as a desire for the Real also implicates anti-nuclear politics. As detailed in the Introduction, much anti-nuclear scholarship adopts the “concealment thesis,” the assumption that the nuclear weapons complex persists as it does because there is insufficient public deliberation. Deliberation is constrained in part because the language of nuclear war conceals its “reality,” the horror of destruction. Thus Jonathan Schell graphically imagined destruction in Fate of the Earth, Hilgartner et al. decry “nukespeak,” and what Carol Cohn calls “technostrategic discourse” is the subject of thorough critique for its use of euphemism and mind-numbing arcane terminology. If the terms were changed, if “God terms” were replaced with “devil terms,” as Brummett suggests, then unimpeded debate might occur, and as Schippa argues, nuclear forces might be constrained. However, anti-nuclear scholarship in this vein has an uncanny resonance with the sublime discourse of the Bomb. It too seeks an appointment with the Real and makes nuclear imagination a site of enjoyment. Bataille argues that a taboo is necessary in language only because we desire to cross it in the first place, and the existence of the taboo is in itself enjoyable because it creates the possibility of forbidden, exciting transgression. This helps to explain the link between sex and death in strategic terminology, which is the subject of Cohn’s work on the language of defense intellectuals. Many nuclear euphemisms have a sexual connotation—“deep penetration,” “spasm war,” “hardening,” and “bang for the buck” (Cohn 693). These terms certainly reflect a particular exercise of violent masculinity. What they also share with terms like “countervalue” is the attraction to a forbidden Real, the continuity represented by both sex and death. A concept of the death drive as the desire for unmediated experience suggests that changing the language of expression for this taboo—perhaps even changing the patriarchal terms through which taboo and desire were expressed in the nuclear age—would not automatically change the investments that pin together nuclear warfare as a cultural technology. Instead, critique aimed at making the reality of nuclear war present in language contributes to the movement of desire that sustains our investment in the myths and tropes of nuclear war in the first place. Metaphor operates like the cycle of fort-da, where changing one signifier to make the signified term absent can itself be a source of enjoyment, a sense of power over presence and absence. We like to have our yellowcake and eat it too. The danger of seeking the Real of nuclear warfare in language is that the inevitable failures of this project have already proven to have uncanny consequences. The fear of human extinction that struck George Kistiakowsky at Trinity and was developed by Schell’s “infinite risk” formulation was a message inverted several times. All sacrifices are made acceptable by it. Survivalists took the supreme value of human life as an injunction to live at all costs, and communities formed around the fruits of this (affective) labor. The Real of nuclear warfare became a challenge and the promise of a new frontier, a strangely mediated means of escaping an overly mediated society. The themes of EMP novels show a prominent trend of anti-state sentiment in right-wing survivalism. Rather than inspiring revulsion, the imagination of nuclear horror has been met with anticipation and no small amount of enthusiasm. Instead of democratic engagement, it has resulted in a turn towards libertarian self-reliance, hostility to outgroups, and a refusal to engage in the fallen politics of a demos fated to burn when Armageddon comes. Even when the horror of nuclear war inspires political engagement, there is no guarantee that anti-nuclear initiatives result. That Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative was justified on these grounds should be a warning, according to Jan Nolan, because “the public’s concern about nuclear weapons can be readily turned to fear. And this kind of public sentiment helped spawn the industry of nuclear deceit…Calls to public activism with unspecific objectives may thus not be the best approach. Frightened Americans looking for solace are a great constituency for clever political strategists” (283). Project Plowshare and its more contemporary echoes suggest that fear can also be transformed easily into a promise of salvation. The valence of the Bomb switches easily for those beholden to its power; our reverence for it does not.

## Psycho vs K Affs

### Thesis – Race as Fantasy

#### This is a debate first and foremost about desire – race as social structure exists not as an absolute truth but rather as a product of fantasy, of the unconscious construction of a racialized other as the barrier to the subject’s enjoyment. We must challenge race as a signifier on the level of the unconscious or we do not challenge it at all.

McGowan 22 (Todd McGowan, Professor of English at the University of Vermont, USA, “The Bedlam of the Lynch Mob: Racism and Enjoying Through the Other,” Lacan and Race: Racism, Identity, and Psychoanalytic Theory, pgs. 22-25)//JRD

The structure of the fantasy The racist fantasy is a structure that operates **regardless of the actual identity of those occupying the various positions within the fantasy.** It is a shared social structure rather than the product of a certain individuals. Although individuals are necessary to sustain the fantasy, it is a part of the basic social structure that forms individual existence within the society. In this sense, **while it is possible for individuals to opt out of or reject the racist fantasy, these individual victories are insignificant as long as the fantasy remains foundational for the society.** **To say that a society is racist is to say that a racist fantasy underlies its social order.** Fantasy provides a structure through which subjects can envision a path to obtaining the fantasy object, whatever that object is. The fantasy object might be a particular commodity, a lifestyle, or even a type of social status. But whatever it is, it promises unrestrained enjoyment for the subject. For the fantasizing subject, the object appears to have the utmost importance. It seems as if it is the nodal point of the fantasy. But despite this belief, the actual fantasy object can be anything at all. The specific object is insignificant. What is important is the position that this object has in the fantasy, not what the object is. In order to be a fantasy object, the object need only be unattainable. **The unattainability of the object is the source of its value.** Because it is unattainable, the fantasy object appears to hold within it the secret of a perfect enjoyment. **If one could attain it, one would quickly recognize that it is an object like any other and cannot provide the enjoyment that it promises insofar as it remains unattainable.** It is with the object that the fantasy performs its magic for the subject’s prospects of enjoyment. Fantasy has the effect of rendering an inherently unattainable object attainable and thereby making an unrestrained enjoyment seem possible. Even if the fantasy shows the subject deprived of the object, it nonetheless depicts the object as possible. Outside the fantasy structure, the subject simply confronts the traumatic impossibility of its desire.10 Fantasy doesn’t just make the impossible possible. It does so, ironically, by placing a barrier between the subject and its object. **The fantasy object is possible only insofar as something blocks the subject’s access to it.** By prohibiting the impossible object, fantasy creates the illusion that the object is attainable but for the prohibition. This barrier enables the subject to avoid encountering the disappointment of actually obtaining the object and thus plays the pivotal role in the fantasy. As the fantasy stages it, if the subject were to attain this object, it would achieve an enjoyment without any restriction. As a result, the fantasy must place an obstacle in the way of the object. The obstacle, not the object, is the crucial ingredient. The fundamental task of fantasy is to transform an impossible satisfaction that no one could attain into a prohibited satisfaction that becomes unattainable due to the fantasized obstacle that prevents the subject from having its object. **There is no such thing as complete satisfaction. But complete satisfaction comes to appear possible through the erection of an obstacle to it.** This operation enables subjects to believe that if they eliminate the obstacle they can attain the impossible and overcome their status as lacking subjects. **Fantasy allows one to imagine an enjoyment without lack, but it does so only by creating an obstacle who bears responsibility for the failure to attain this enjoyment.** In the racist fantasy, as in any fantasy, the object is unimportant. The only significance that the object of the racist fantasy has is that it is unattainable. The object can be any unattainable object. But what characterizes the racist fantasy and differentiates it from other forms of fantasy is that the obstacle to the object—what bars the subject’s access to unrestrained enjoyment—is the racial other. The fantasy’s key player is the racial other because this figure makes the object unattainable. **As the obstacle to complete enjoyment, the racial other is responsible for all the subject’s—and the society’s—failures.**11 This figure gives the racist fantasy its racist hue. The fantasy defines the subject through the racial other that threatens it, which gives the subject a wholly secondary and insignificant status within the structure. The racial other bars the subject from enjoying the object by monopolizing the object for itself. The illegitimate enjoyment of the racial other occurs at the expense of the fantasy’s subject. This other enjoys in the subject’s stead, triggering resentment for the racial other. The racist fantasy produces a different and privileged relationship to enjoyment in the racial other that provides the basis for what we see as racial difference. It is not that racial difference first exists and then brings with it different relationships to enjoyment. Instead, **we establish racial difference on the basis of how we distribute the relationships to enjoyment.**12 In Trauma and Race, Sheldon George notes the primacy that enjoyment or jouissance has in establishing racial difference. He claims, “it is ultimately jouissance that grounds difference, establishing this difference through its circumscription of the fantasy object.”13 **The fantasy always depicts the racial other’s enjoyment as illegitimate, as a violation of the law, of morality, or of social mores.** The racial other becomes enshrined as racial as a result of the position of obstacle that this figure has in the racist fantasy. In the American version of the racist fantasy, the racial other is often a black man who enjoys white women at the expense of white men. The black man’s superior sexual prowess renders him more able to please white women. The fantasy produces this figure of blackness, as Frantz Fanon has theorized in Black Skin, White Masks. 14 Against such a challenger, the white man has no chance to measure up. In this sense, the racist fantasy does not clearly and simply establish the white man’s superiority in all domains. As a sexual being, the black man, the racial other, thoroughly dominates the white man, which is why he is an unsurmountable obstacle to the white man’s complete enjoyment of white women. The fantasy is racist insofar as it grants the black man an inherent sexual superiority that leads to the victory over white men with white women. **The racist fantasy attributes absolute enjoyment to the racial other in order to give the subject an obstacle that makes its own full satisfaction seem hindered rather than impossible.** The white man’s failures with women thus become the fault of the black man, not the white man. The racial other, not the very structure of subjectivity, is the bar preventing the subject from enjoying the way it imagines it might. **The racial other always has an enjoyment advantage deriving from its fantasized racial inheritance**. It is a genetic gift, like athletic ability or intelligence. But what makes possible its victory over the subject in the fantasy is not just this inheritance but also the other’s willingness to bypass the Symbolic restrictions that the subject observes. In other words, on the terrain of sex, the racial other cheats. **The figure does not obey the constraints of civilized society that the subject abides by.** The racial other uses seduction and ultimately has recourse to violence in order to enjoy the object in a way that the subject cannot. According to the fantasy, he is savage and unrestrained by civilization in the way that the white man is not. This fantasy produces the belief in black criminality in the American cultural imagination. The association of blackness with illicit sexual enjoyment provides the lens through which black men appear as inherently criminal. This criminality then helps to explain how the black man bests the white man in the competition for white women. Without resorting to his inherent criminality, the black man would not be able to beat out the white man on the terrain of sexual competition. In the fantasy, sexual prowess alone is usually not enough. Criminality often comes in support.15 **The inherent criminality of the racial other points to an additional figure in the fantasy.** The third party in the fantasy is the figure of authority that the racial other dupes in order to enjoy the object. The racial other gets around the barrier that the authority poses in a way that the subject cannot by breaking the law or using subterfuge to evade the constraints that govern everyone else. The ability of the racial other to evade the restrictions of the law has a direct link to this figure’s lack of morality. Even though the fantasy portrays the racial other as lacking the intelligence of the subject, this figure nonetheless has superior skills in manipulation. Within the fantasy, the fecklessness of legal authority against the racial other’s stratagems require extraordinary measures. **This is the justification in American society for the intervention of an extralegal force to contain the racial other.** Entities such as the Ku Klux Klan arise directly from this fantasy formation as a response to the image of a black evasion of traditional social authority. The bungling white sheriff cannot prevent the black man from surreptitiously absconding with white women. The Klan sees itself as a necessary expedient for disciplining black enjoyment that the white legal structure cannot succeed in disciplining. Law is never enough for the excess that black enjoyment represents. **Within the American version of the racist fantasy, legitimate authority cannot successfully police illicit black enjoyment.**16 Only the supplemental army of whites that come together as the Ku Klux Klan can bring this excess back into the confines of the social order through their disciplining mechanisms, including the extraordinary measure of lynching. **The Klan is a supplementary police force that targets unrestrained black enjoyment.** The inadequacy of the traditional authority figures speaks to the vast difference that separates white and black in the racist fantasy. Traditional authority effectively contains white enjoyment because it operates within the socially defined limits, but the extreme sexuality and criminality of blackness places it beyond the reach of the normal functioning of this authority. The extraordinary status of a group like the Klan testifies to the extraordinary nature of black enjoyment. But this enjoyment exists only within a racist fantasy that posits its existence. **Without this underlying racist fantasy and the outsized part that it grants to black enjoyment, the Klan would be unimaginable.** The aim of the fantasy is the production of enjoyment, which it accomplishes through its vision of the racial other. The racist fantasy locates enjoyment in the figure of the racial other that both accesses the fantasy object and blocks the subject’s path to this object. Thus, **despite reviling this racial other, the racist subject must unconsciously identify with this figure in order to access the enjoyment that it hoards for itself.** The supreme irony of racism is that the only enjoyment available to the racist subject derives from the racial other whom this subject reviles. The racist enjoys through the target of the racism, an action that is only possible through the mechanism of fantasy. The primacy of the fantasy in relation to the legal and social forms of racism becomes apparent when we take stock of the effectiveness of trying to ameliorate racism by changing the legal apparatus. The emancipation of slaves in the United States at the end of the American Civil War didn’t lead to the gradual elimination of racism but paved the way for the racist separatism of Jim Crow laws that lasted until the 1960s. The Civil Rights laws of the 1960s finally did away with the legal discrimination of Jim Crow but left the racist fantasy fully intact. Despite these measures and those that followed after the 1960s, racism remained ensconced in social practices, workplace opportunities, policing methods, housing allotments, and overall cultural attitudes. The waning of legalized racism had the effect of sustaining or even exacerbating racism in these extralegal channels. **The persistence of racism depends on an intractable underlying fantasy.** Racism endures because the fantasy endures, not because we have failed to come up with the proper legal remedy or the most enlightened educational methods. **The racist fantasy remains the same while the legal and social structure changes.** Even proposals like slave reparations, which seem like a radical remedy to racism, do not threaten the fantasy and actually risk strengthening it by solidifying the image of the racial other who illegitimately enjoys in the stead of the nonracial subject. **The fight against racism must target the enjoyment that racism provides by disrupting the racist fantasy structure. As long as the fantasy endures, racism will remain insoluble. Responding to racism requires first understanding how the fantasy relates to desire and enjoyment.**

### Thesis – Anti-Anti-Oedipus

#### Subjectivity has only ever been defined by the ontological crack between the representational and the machinic, self-awareness and the neural wiring of the brain. In contrast to their machinic ontology of “becoming,” “deterritorialization,” and “quantum flux,” we adopt an ontology of the Lack, one that forefronts the inevitable linguistic split at the heart of the subject. Despite their affective calls to militarize subjectivity, their politics of differential ontology can only ever blow apart the rift in subjectivity, leaving behind a desubjectified humanity in the wake of becoming. Only a politics that begins from the position of the void can ever hope to provide freedom for the subject.

Weatherill 17 (Rob Weatherill, master’s degree in psychotherapy from St. Vincents Univesity Hospital as well as the European Certificate in Psychotherapy, “THE ANTI-OEDIPUS COMPLEX: Lacan, Critical Theory, and Postmodernism,” pgs. 91-96)//JRD

The reduction of the postmodern subject from the high Renaissance estimation of man at the pinnacle of creation is almost complete: through Copernicus, Darwin, Freud, Marx and Nietzsche, to the emergence of the subject as pure immaterial void. Notwithstanding the turn towards appearances with phenomenology (albeit without substantial realities “behind” them), notions such as autopoeisis, the “emerging properties” of systems, events e-venting themselves, self-organising phenomena, quantum phenomena and the autonomy of pure flux events, the ontology of pure becoming – these are all part and parcel of the de-substantialised “reality,” which barely recovers some last flickers of subjectivity as the not-quitenothing of contemporary theory. The brain–machine interface implies devices that can realise Orwellian thought control, surveillance, communication, and so on, the prospect of post-human “undead” virtual entities, the blurring of the distinction between hardware (brain) and software (mind), with the latter being able to detach from the former completely and enter the virtual. Of particular fascination is the parallax between brain chemistry and consciousness. Everything experienced has neurophysiological correlates. For instance, brain processes accompany intense religious experiences. However, the question of causality remains unresolved. Taking an ecstasy pill creates in the user a feeling of ecstatic love towards the other. How does this short-cut compare to a religious training and spiritual devotion over a lifetime that might produce “naturally” similar experiences? Consider, for instance, the dour father, melancholic most of his life, who, on his deathbed is given morphine to relieve pain and seems cheerful, good-humoured and loving, for the first time in his life! Does the morphine neurophysiologically transform the father on his deathbed into this “loving” man, or does it merely facilitate a very moving loving last gesture (“choice”) at the final moment, that was always buried within this depressed man? Žižek cites Taylor’s “skating” analogy of consciousness.20 Taylor understands consciousness as a relational phenomenon where past memories, representations, emotions are used to fill in and inform present sensory imputs. This triggers a host of related activities endowing the mental process with substantiality, which, at some critical point, “lifts” the original input into a new arena, like the skater who having launched himself onto the ice glides off effortlessly. Thus, consciousness emerges released from the “friction” of the processing stages. Consciousness floats free when a threshold is crossed. Therefore, there is no consciousness without selfconsciousness. The “I” emerges as the self-relating interaction between present input and past. The “self” is this escape into the fluid field of awareness and de-centring, creating the impossibility of the I’s immediate self-presence. Consciousness spins off from the substrate that created it. ‘A new quasi-object thus emerges’ (213), the final states of which involve “attractor nets” which attract initial activity to become similar to their own, but remain insubstantial as they were created, posited and generated by the very substrates which react and interact to them in endless feedback loops. So subject and object (attractor) are almost one. The all-important minimal “gap” is also the programmed space for freedom. Thus, there is no subject prior to neural activity; no top-down, only bottom-up effects. Žižek emphasises, ‘cognitive scientists repeat again and again how our mind does not possess a centralised control structure which runs top-down … it is rather a bricolage of multiple agents who collaborate bottom-up’ (241). The self is its own self-ing, unaware21 of the steps towards its own emerging, for good evolutionary reasons to do with the necessity of rapid autopoietic information processing. So when Žižek concludes that ‘as true Freudians, we should reject the notion of “Me” as a substantial background of the ego’ (217), he is following Lacan and indeed Winnicott, whose understanding of “aliveness” is a similar process of emergence via relating and “primary illusionment.”22  This is thinking the unthinkable to Western minds – a self-less world, living as being no one – forgetting that for two and a half millennia, Buddhist enlightenment has been practising the assumption of non-being. How do we get from passive primary illusionment, or the assumption of “non-being,” to something more active to do with subjectivity? Or how does self-consciousness arise amidst and minimally separate from being potentially overwhelmed by billions of neural data? The answer seems to be by some process of negation or by some malfunction or fault in the nature of the smooth running of the system, otherwise we would be no more than passive processing machines. Maybe self-consciousness is stumbled upon through an “ontological crack” (242) in “reality” itself, which enables one to say: YES, I AM HERE, over and against being a passive (unconscious) recipient of neuronal impulses. Žižek dramatises this crack by reference to a traumatic excess, through an “error” that creates a measure of freedom. The Cartesian consciousness of pure reflection that gets caught up in emotion is the price the mind has to pay for being lumbered with a body. Consciousness emerges through the disturbance of the organism’s homeostasis. Consciousness is the activity of dealing with disturbances. For Damasio, for instance, ‘the core you is only born as the story is told, within the very story itself … You are the music while the music lasts’.23 In Lacanian terms, the subject is the ‘answer of the Real’ (225). The subject has the possibility of answering for the Real. Žižek recalls the joke about the patient in a large hospital ward who complains to the doctor about constant noise and crying from the other patients. The doctor replies that nothing can be done to prevent these suffering people from expressing their despair, since they know they are dying. The patient then asks why they cannot be put in a separate room for the dying. And the doctor replies that this is the separate room for the dying. However, Žižek believes that Damasio leaves out of consideration the ‘proper empty core of subjectivity’, radically exposed as it is, not to mere life experience, but also to affects such as anxiety and horror; ‘anxiety as correlative to confronting the Void that forms the core of the subject; horror as the experience of disgusting life at its purest, “undead” life’ (227). Here again, Žižek is asserting the Lacanian void. Not life experience as it teems forth with Deleuze and Guattari to blow apart the constraining Symbolic, but more like Badiou’s ‘from nothing to nothing’, the awareness of the raw flesh and blood body. When the subject is violently attacked, for instance, the emotional response is such that the cortical areas of the brain focus on the stimulus and inhibit interest in sex and food. Such stressors over evolutionary time have acted to accelerate the development of our cognitive and behavioural capacities, not least our acquisition of language, “placed” as it is between these higher capacities and our emotional sub-systems. Žižek emphasises this all-important structural “gap” in connectivity between cognitive systems and language on the one hand, and emotional abilities on the other. This gap, or point of “failure,” where emotions lag behind cognition, defines our humanity. In the absence of the gap humans would be machines. To be specific and crucial for our argument, human emotions (like anxiety) arise when the human animal loses its footing in biological functioning, requiring this loss to be supplemented inadequately ‘by the symbolically regulated emotions qua man’s “second nature”’ (228). Or to put it another way: imagine that our emotions and cognitive abilities precisely coincided, with no lag or gap: was this not our central concern with the desiring machines in their machinic-ness? Rather than being human, representational and failing, they seemed inhuman, presentational – perfectly functioning monstrosities, incapable of anxiety and concern, because the subject was reduced to a vestigial parasite of no consequence. In addition, animals themselves are not machines, because of a similar but narrower gap between their biological instincts and cognitive abilities. The gap indeed may be a measure of our evolutionary ascendancy, with lowly insects, for instance, being more or less indistinguishable from machines, with their robotic creepy-crawliness capable, for that reason, of inspiring fear and anxiety. This gives a new significance to the gaps or lacks of the analytic session, the space to speak, the creation of silence, punctuation and so on, in order to lessen the machinic automaticity of alienated speech/action, and to increase “human” qualities for reflection which can occur only in the division of the subject. It is no exaggeration to say that Freud’s invention of the psychoanalytic space therefore is linked to civilisation itself. Without this reflective-gap-pause between the drives and manifest behaviour, there is no civility. As Damasio says, ‘Memory, language, and intelligence make the difference, not emotion’.24 This subject, Descartes’ cogito, Kant’s transcendental subject, is exposed to the drive per se; to affects – potentially, raw anxiety, panic and horror. As suggested, all “human” suffering rests in this void of the pure subject. In this gap between the pre-Symbolic Real of the biological machinery of emotion and the Symbolised feelings of the autobiographical self lie everything that must be defended in this work: the sense of the tragic, the melancholic, the human – pity, empathy and compassion, followed by the critical necessity for the elaboration of language (the treasure house of signifiers) qua containing and subjectivising of affect, the telling of dreams, stories, narratives, etc. All the contemporary trends, as we have stressed, point in the reverse direction towards the inhuman – core unmediated machinic “experience” – paroxysms of sex, convulsions of violence, pitilessness, autism, jouissance and the death drive.

### L – Anticapitalism

#### Their vision can’t take down capitalism because it begins with a vision for justice not freedom – they’ll result in unfreedom of subjects

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 80-82, 1 July 2013, MG)

In contrast to Marxism and left -wing theories, which take justice as the point of departure in arguing against class society, psychoanalysis begins with freedom — or, more precisely, with the **lack of freedom** that exists under capitalism. In other words, psychoanalysis shares with Marxism a critical attitude toward capitalism (though this is predominantly implicit in the former), but psychoanalytic thought sees the problems that capitalism engenders in other terms than Marxism does. It poses a different critique, and, as a result, it implies a **different response**, a response that insists on freedom as the fundamental value rather than equality. Political philosophers constantly wrestle with the seemingly opposed poles of freedom and justice. Isaiah Berlin famously characterizes freedom and justice as positions that must constantly be measured against each other in order to construct a good society. He claims: “The extent of a man’s, or a people’s, liberty to choose to live as he or they desire must be weighed against the claims of many other values, of which equality, or justice, or happiness, or security, or public order are perhaps the most obvious examples. For this reason, it cannot be unlimited.”4 Most political philosophers who stress freedom ( John Locke, Thomas Jefferson, Friedrich Hayek, and so on) are implicitly or explicitly **procapitalist**, or at least antisocialist, because socialism demands a restriction on individual liberty.

The thinkers who reject capitalism in the name of freedom, like Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger, most often do so from the **right** rather than the left ; they yearn for freedom from the leveling tendencies of capitalist reification that produce an equality of spirit if not of material wealth. They advocate for aristocratic figures who transcend merely mercantile relations and achieve self-overcoming or authentic being-toward-death, states of being that the relative equality of capitalism works to prevent. According to our usual way of thinking, to stress freedom rather than justice is to **acquiesce to at least some degree of class division**.5 This becomes especially true if the freedom that one espouses is individual freedom, as seems to be the case with psychoanalysis. In short, because psychoanalysis places itself on the side of individual freedom, it would appear also to be de facto on the side of the kind of laissez-faire thinking we see in proponents of capitalism or the aristocratic thinking visible in its right-wing opponents.

But what we encounter with psychoanalysis is something wholly different: rather than insisting that individual freedom **requires** class division, psychoanalysis demonstrates how class society itself **deprives** subjects of freedom. Its criticism of class society is founded on its criticism of capitalism’s restriction of freedom. One’s class status is the badge of one’s unfreedom. In order to distinguish oneself in terms of class, one must sacrifice freedom. This holds not just within capitalist relations of production but for the aristocratic ideal promulgated by Nietzsche and Heidegger as well. In a certain sense, on a theoretical level the entire psychoanalytic project targets the problems generated by a class structure in society, and the implicit ideal guiding psychoanalytic treatment is that of a classless society.6 We can even see this opposition to class society inherent in the genesis of psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalysis emerges as such at the conjunction of the success and the failure of the Enlightenment project. The fundamental impulse of the Enlightenment is the insistence on subjects breaking from reliance on authority and becoming free. As Kant puts it in his essay “What Is Enlightenment?,” “The motto of enlightenment is therefore: Sapere aude! Have courage to use your own understanding!”7 On the one hand, psychoanalysis represents the continuation and extension of this project to the unconscious. In order to be authentically free, the subject must confront not just its conscious subjection to authority but its unconscious subjection as well. Insofar as it promotes this aim, psychoanalysis is of a piece with the Enlightenment project as Kant describes it. On the other hand, however, the emergence of psychoanalysis stems from the failure to put this project into action.

Despite the Enlightenment’s rejection of external authority and its insistence on the subject’s freedom, the dominance of this authority and the absence of freedom persist in the post-Enlightenment epoch. Authority continues to hold sway over the subject, but at the same time, the enlightened subject comes to believe in its own freedom from such authority. In its foundation, psychoanalysis addresses itself to the persistence of unfreedom in a time when freedom appears readily achievable. It is this contradiction that gives birth to psychoanalysis, which is an effort to solve it, to help the subject gain the freedom that the Enlightenment promises.

Social authority continues to restrict the subject in the wake of the Enlightenment precisely because post-Enlightenment society never achieved the Enlightenment ideal of equality. The continued existence of class division and of the inequality of class society **sustains the unfreedom of subjects**. While Marxism shows the economic and social costs of class exploitation for the exploited classes, psychoanalysis emphasizes the psychic costs of capitalism for the whole society, including those that most directly benefit from the capitalist system, the upper and middle classes. Its concern is not the suffering that **social or environmental conditions** explain but the suffering that appears inexplicable, the suffering endured by those who, when one regards their situation from the outside, should be happy. Psychoanalysis arises in response to the psychic costs demanded by capitalist, class-based society.8 Ironically, upper-class subjects pay these costs disproportionately and thus suffer in their own way from the inequities of the capitalist mode of production. Of course, no one wants to lament the misfortune of the poor little rich kid or try to generate sympathy for the suffering of Bill Gates. The point is rather to emphasize the **unfreedom** and lack of enjoyment that haunt the beneficiaries of capitalism and all class society. **Even those who win in the capitalist game lose**, and this provides what is perhaps the ultimate indictment of the capitalist system. It is in this sense that we should revisit the status of the analysands that psychoanalysis treats.

#### Investing energy in radical revolutionary hope is a double-turn – it buys into the same capitalist fantasy it critiques and gets coopted by the system

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 23-26, 20 September 2016, MG)

\*edited for ableist language

The fundamental gesture of capitalism is the **promise**, and the promise functions as the basis for capitalist ideology. One invests money with the promise of future returns; one starts a job with the promise of a higher salary; one takes a cruise with the promise of untold pleasure in the tropics; one buys the newest piece of electronics with the promise of easier access to what one wants. In every case the future embodies a type of satisfaction foreclosed to the present and dependent on **one’s investment in the capitalist system**. The promise ensures a sense of dissatisfaction with the present in relation to the future.

One of the constant complaints from critics of capitalism is that the capitalist system has the ability to incorporate **every attack by integrating the attack into the system**. The accuracy of this truism is readily apparent in the way that commodification works. Capitalism seizes apparently revolutionary practices or figures and transforms them into commodities. An acquaintance with a Che Guevara T-shirt or a Karl Marx coffee mug, let alone the sight of sex toys in a shopping mall or eco-friendly cars at the neighborhood dealership, seems to bespeak its truth. But the secret of capitalism’s integration of critique lies not in the process of commodification, no matter how self-evident it appears. The secret is in the promise. If one inv**ests oneself in the promise of the future**, through this gesture one accepts the basic rules of the capitalist game.

The promise of the better future is the foundation of the capitalist structure, the basis for all three economic areas—production, distribution, and consumption. If we examine only the field of consumption, universal commodification seems to hold the key, whereas if we confine ourselves to the field of production, the imperative to accumulate appears foundational. In the field of distribution, it is the idea of speed: one must move commodities to market in the least amount of time possible. If we look at what these three fields have in common, however, the answer is the promise of the future. One buys the commodity to discover a potentially satisfying pleasure, one accumulates more capital to some day have enough, and one speeds up the distribution process to increase one’s future profit.15 Any sense of satisfaction with one’s present condition would have a ~~paralyzing~~ [**stopping] effect** on each of these regions of the capitalist economy.

This is the problem with the insistence **on revolutionary** **hope**: it partakes of the logic that it tries to contest. Revolutionary hope represents an investment in the structure of the promise that defines capitalism. As a result, it is **never as revolutionary** as it believes itself to be. Though obviously the act of promising precedes the onset of a capitalist economy, once this economy emerges, the promise enters completely into the capitalist logic. To take solace in the promise of tomorrow is to accept the sense of dissatisfaction that capitalism sells more vehemently than it sells any commodity. As long as one remains invested in the promise as such, one has **already succumbed to the fundamental logic of capitalism**.

From the early Charles Fourier and Robert Owen to Fredric Jameson and Antonio Negri, the idea of a better future has driven the Left in its critique of capitalism. In his discussion of Marx, Jacques Derrida exemplifies this type of investment, as he emphasizes the emancipatory promise at the heart of his deconstructive politics. He notes, “Whether the promise promises this or that, whether it be fulfilled or not, or whether it be unfulfillable, there is necessarily some promise and therefore some historicity as future-to-come.”16 While every other concept is subject to deconstruction, this promise of “justice-to-come” functions as the condition of possibility for deconstruction and thus cannot be deconstructed. Deconstruction does not encapsulate the entirety of anticapitalist politics today in any sense, but Derrida’s investment in the promise is representative. But it is just this investment in the promise that must be abandoned, along with the sense of dissatisfaction inherent in it. As long as radical politics operates with the belief that revolution will remove some of the prevailing repression, it **accepts the ruling idea of capitalism** and buys into the **fundamental capitalist fantasy**. No revolution can transform dissatisfaction into satisfaction, but this is how revolution has been conceived throughout the entirety of the capitalist epoch. The revolutionary act has to be thought differently. The revolutionary act is simply the recognition that capitalism already produces the satisfaction that it promises.

And yet, this revolutionary act is far more difficult than storming the Bastille or the Winter Palace. In the latter instances, all that is required is sufficient political force. But the break from the promise of a better future seems **theoretically untenable** alongside a position of critique. Critique appears to imply a future ideal from which one launches the attack on the capitalist present. The task is thus that of freeing critique from the promise of a better future. Why would one be critical at all without such a promise? What could be the possible ground for the critique?

This work attempts to answer these questions by situating the future not as a possibility on the horizon but as the implicit structure of the present. There is, in other words, no future to realize except to accede to the exigencies that are already written into the ruling capitalist system. The point of critique is not promissory, not futural, but wholly immanent.

#### Prefer a psychic NOT material revolution – their politics are born of monstrous excess and move towards eternal dissatisfaction

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 235-237, 20 September 2016, MG)

The recoil from abundance is **not** just a result of capitalist ideology or the demands of the capitalist system. It is rather the **inherent response of the subject,** whose desire depends on the inaccessibility of the object. The subject will engage in acts of selfsabotage at the moment when it approaches too closely its lost object. This self-sabotage derives from an unconscious recognition of the necessity of sustaining the object as absent.

The subject’s satisfaction depends on **sustaining a relation to loss**. This satisfaction functions on the basis of the object’s absence. When we obtain the object—when we achieve abundance—the emptiness of the object manifests itself, and we must confront the traumatic connection between loss and satisfaction, as well as the impossibility of ever obtaining satisfaction without loss or complete satisfaction. It is impossible to obtain the object, and the subject satisfies itself through this impossibility. The prominence of loss in our subjectivity becomes apparent with abundance, which enables us to see that we can never have the object. The trauma of abundance is at once the trauma of subjectivity itself. For this reason, scarcity is not traumatic psychically for the subject in the way that abundance is. We retreat into scarcity to avoid the recognition that we require the object to be lost in order to enjoy it.

But capitalism plays on appeal of scarcity and sustains the scarcity that it requires through the subject’s response to abundance. The unconscious investment individual capitalist subjects have in scarcity **props up the capitalist system**, which cannot survive with the image of an abundance of resources. Abundance would undermine all justifications for capitalist relations of production, and yet capitalism itself has brought the world to the brink of this abundance.28 By bringing up to the edge of abundance, capitalism paves the way for its own overthrow.

THE NEW GRAVEDIGGERS

The idea that capitalism would produce its own self-destruction is as old as Marx. Marx identifies the proletariat as the gravediggers of capitalism, and he sees them as a product of the capitalist system. Capitalism produced the class that would inaugurate its downfall. But it turned out that the proletariat was ultimately **unable, as a class, to overthrow capitalism.** Though capitalism creates the conditions of its own overcoming, it also creates a **psychic investment in its survival** among the working class and all others. We greet the possibility of abundance with flight rather than with open arms. Capitalism has paved the way for abundance, but in order for us to access it, **a psychic revolution is necessary**.

The proletarian revolution didn’t fail because of a lack of class consciousness or because of capitalism’s ideological victory over the proletariat or even because of its capacity for integrating subversive challenges to the system into the system. No revolution successfully displaced capitalism due primarily to the **capitalist economy’s ability to keep the trauma of abundance at bay**. Though capitalism promises abundance for those invested in it, this is always a dream deferred. It delivers scarcity in lieu of abundance, and this scarcity is satisfying for us as subjects. It protects us from the trauma of abundance.

Critics of capitalism often point out that its productive capacity has developed to such an extent that it could now easily provide basic necessities for the entire population of the world. The barrier to this possibility is not inadequate distribution or the callousness of the wealthy. It is instead the horror that abundance arouses in the capitalist subject. The producer looks at abundance and sees the disappearance of demand and thus the elimination of profit. Restaurants prefer to throw away their excess stock rather than give it to homeless shelters because the latter activity has the effect of suppressing demand. If one hears of the possibility of obtaining French fries for free, one becomes instantly reluctant to pay for them. The capitalist thinks, along the lines of sexist parents advising their daughter to refrain from sexual activity, that “if they can get the milk for free, then they won’t buy the cow.” And in this line of thought, the capitalist (unlike sexist parents) is not incorrect: charitable acts like donating excess food to homeless shelters do potentially erode the value of the commodity and make subjects reluctant to pay for it.

The horror of abundance stems from the radical break that **we sustain between it and scarcity**. In psychoanalytic thought, lack and excess both have a central role, but they cannot be clearly divided from each other. The subject’s lack is correlative to an excessive satisfaction that defines it. Because the subject lacks, it cannot find satisfaction in the way that other living beings do. Instead, it enjoys too much, and its every act is marked by this excessive satisfaction. As a result of the damage done by the signifier to the human animal, it becomes a **figure of monstrous excess**.29

Both capitalism and socialism as traditionally conceived insist on the radical separation of scarcity and abundance. We exist now in a state of scarcity, and if we adopt the proper politics, we will **accede to a state of abundance**. This separation derives from the structure of fantasy, which presents abundance as a fully satisfying solution to the problem of scarcity. But the satisfaction that abundance provides is not removed from the lack associated with scarcity. We can enjoy having too much because we experience it through the mediation of loss.

The point is not simply that we will remember our former state of scarcity when we arrive at abundance but that any future abundance must include scarcity within it. Even when we have enough for everyone, lack will **continue to structure our subjectivity**. We will still experience ourselves as lacking subjects in an abundant world because no amount of abundance will provide the missing lost object. Abundance would make the psychic necessity of scarcity abundantly clear.

Even in abundance we will not lose scarcity. The mediation of loss will continue to inform our existence. But we will lose the image of a future enjoyment associated with abundance. That is to say, real abundance will take from us the illusion of future abundance, which is why we are constantly subverting the possibility of creating a society of abundance or postscarcity. Giving up this illusion is a political act in a world of enforced scarcity; giving it up entails **abandoning the capitalist ground under our feet.** A path toward this political act is illuminated by the landmarks of modernist literature.

### L – Anticapitalist Enjoyment

#### Their anticapitalist politics are exactly what good little capitalists strive to enjoy.

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan, Professor of English at the University of Vermont, USA, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis,” pgs. 64-70)//JRD

It follows from this that the primary line of social critique launched against capitalist society would focus on society’s failure to live up to its ideology. It is a truism of Marxist analysis — especially aft er the Frankfurt School — to suggest that capitalist ideology uses the image of successful accumulation in order to hide the lack of accumulation that most subjects endure and thereby produce docility. According to this position, images of enjoyment, such as Hollywood f lms, create a false or illusory pleasure that helps to satisfy otherwise dissatisfied subjects. While entranced by the romantic bond between Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman or between Ashton Kutcher and Natalie Portman, **capitalist subjects do not think about their position within the capitalist order of things.** **These subjects invest themselves in the image of enjoyment rather than in the real thing.** This is why Theodor Adorno claims that “all mass culture is fundamentally adaptation.”23 The promulgation of the image of enjoyment, for Adorno and the Frankfurt School, becomes capitalist ideology’s way of creating subjects who believe that they are enjoying themselves while existing within the intractable dissatisfaction of capitalism. In the face of capitalist ideology’s proliferation of such images, the task for the critical thinker becomes one of tearing them apart, exposing the lack of enjoyment at the heart of them and showing how, as Adorno and Max Horkheimer make clear in their Dialectic of Enlightenment, capitalism and its ideological handmaiden, the culture industry, never really deliver.24 According to this view, capitalist subjects aren’t really enjoying themselves despite feeling that they are. Such subjects actually exist in a state of perpetual dissatisfaction, and Adorno and Horkheimer hope to expose this dissatisfaction for what it is in order to create a revolutionary consciousness akin to their own. For Marxist thinkers like those of the Frankfurt School, the chief problem with capitalism is that it promises an enjoyment without ever delivering on that promise (even to those who seem taken care of by the capitalist system). But there is a further problem that this critique doesn’t touch — the alignment of accumulation and enjoyment. Few Marxist thinkers have questioned this link. In fact, the primary aim of the Marxist project seems to be expanding or equalizing accumulation while retaining it as the source of enjoyment. This attitude stems in large part from Marx’s own privileging of production and his vision of the Communist revolution as an unleashing of the means of production. In contrast to capitalism, in which the restricted relations of production erect a barrier to the expansion of the unrestricted means of production, Communism would lift all such restrictions and allow for excess production without restraint — and thus enjoyment without limit. The ideal of enjoyment without limit is visible in the politics articulated by many recent and contemporary thinkers influenced by Marx. One can see it in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s call for decoded flows, Alain Badiou’s plea for more development of technology, and Paolo Virno’s embrace of dissolved boundaries.25 These visions of the future involve accepting the fundamental premise of capitalist ideology — its privileging of accumulation — but there is a countervailing movement within Marx’s own thought that hints at a more radical critique of the capitalist system. By examining this other dimension of Marx’s thought, we can see the relationship between enjoyment and pleasure as it operates within capitalist society and observe how a politics of the death drive would intervene in this relationship Finding Our Lost Enjoyment At times, Marx indicates how the capitalist mode of production transforms the driving force of human activity, and he implicitly envisions Communism as a corrective to this transformation. The drive to accumulate, in this view, ceases to be a drive inherent in human subjectivity itself, and an alternative becomes visible. In the second volume of Capital, Marx almost articulates the position of psychoanalytic emancipatory politics directly when he says, “For capitalism is already essentially abolished once we assume that it is enjoyment that is the driving motive and not enrichment itself.”26 Here, the distinction between enjoyment and enrichment as motives for action divides capitalism from other unmentioned economic systems. The alternative to accumulation is satisfaction — or, more specifically, the recognition of our satisfaction. the fundamental problem with capitalism is this: it doesn’t allow us to recognize our enjoyment or even to grasp enjoyment as what drives us. It’s not that capitalism deprives us of the satisfaction involved with thinking, loving, theorizing, singing, painting, and fencing (to use Marx’s examples cited above) but that it doesn’t allow us to view satisfaction as a possible motive for our acts. We can think of the drive for enjoyment or a drive centered around enjoyment as a possibility existing outside of the capitalist system. T is drive — the death drive — would have no purpose other than enjoyment, which is to say that it would operate in contrast to the accumulative logic of the capitalist drive. The capitalist drive to accumulate represents a distortion of the death drive, a rewriting of it that changes its structure. But the capitalist drive to accumulate does not simply do away with enjoyment. As a rewriting of the death drive, it continues to provide the enjoyment that this drive does, though this drive to accumulate makes it more diffi cult for subjects to identify the site where they enjoy. Our investment in capitalism doesn’t occur through a complete neglect of our enjoyment but depends in a fundamental way on its ability to deliver enjoyment. **If capitalist subjects weren’t actually enjoying themselves at all, they would not continue to be capitalist subjects.** We really do enjoy ourselves within the capitalist universe — the death drive continues to function — but we don’t enjoy in the way that capitalist ideology tries to convince us that we do. Political struggle is not simply a struggle over the right to enjoy certain goods and the distribution of this right. It is also — even predominantly — a struggle over how we identify and locate our enjoyment. Capitalist ideology is triumphant today because it has won this struggle. As capitalist subjects, we must define enjoyment in terms of accumulation: one enjoys insofar as one accumulates objects of desire. This definition has become ubiquitous: according to the prevailing logic today, even the enjoyment that derives from romance comes from acquiring one’s object of desire. But this is not the only way of figuring enjoyment. One of the most important political tasks for emancipatory politics today consists in transforming our way of thinking about enjoyment — breaking the link that capitalist ideology has forged between accumulation and enjoyment. At every turn, capitalist ideology works to persuade subjects that their enjoyment derives from acquiring and having objects of desire. As a result, popular fantasies place most of their focus on the moments when subjects obtain these objects. Rather than emphasizing the points at which a couple struggles through the quotidian aspects of their relationship, the typical Hollywood romance stresses the moment of the couple’s union. The entirety of Sleepless in Seattle (Nora Ephron, 1993) builds to the climactic embrace of the long-separated couple, and this embrace, according to the logic of the film, provides us as spectators with the ultimate enjoyment. The final embrace is the high point (the point at which each lover has the love object), and we leave the theater convinced that this embrace, this union, is the source of our enjoyment. In this way, the very structure of popular fantasies today underlines the link between acquisition and enjoyment. The problem with this stress on the enjoyment of accumulation is not simply that it tends to produce a destructive society with egoistic subjects (though it certainly does) but that it doesn’t really work. When we watch a film like Sleepless in Seattle, our enjoyment — if we have any at all — does not in fact derive from the moment when the lovers obtain their love objects. To understand where to locate our enjoyment of the film, we must observe the rigid distinction between enjoyment and pleasure. Pleasure occurs, for Freud, with a release of excitation, when we are able to overcome the barriers in the way of realizing our desire for this release. While pleasure provides a good feeling and a sense of well-being, enjoyment uproots us and disturbs our well-being. We have pleasures, but enjoyment, in some sense, has us. Though the proper spectator clearly experiences pleasure at the conclusion of Sleepless in Seattle, she or he does not enjoy at this point. Instead, this marks the moment at which our enjoyment dissipates. We enjoy the events leading up to the denouement — the struggles of each character with the absence of the object — not the acquisition of the object itself. the moment of acquiring the object represents the end, not the beginning, of our enjoyment, though it does mark the point at which we experience the most pleasure. There is a link between Freud’s conception of the pleasure principle as the motivating force of human activity and the capitalist drive to accumulate. In both cases, the focus is on the end point — either the psyche ridding itself of stimulation and achieving pleasure or the subject obtaining capital and commodities in order to have things to enjoy without worry. But what distinguishes them is their diff erent ways of envisioning the end point: according to the logic of the pleasure principle, the subject works to eliminate excitation, and according to that of the capitalist drive, the subject tries to increase excitation through the acquisition of more and more commodities. We might reconcile the two positions by thinking of acquisition as a way of calming psychic excitation while enhancing the possibilities for physical excitation. If one has enough capital, one might avoid disturbing thoughts about losing it. But sustaining the homology between the psychoanalytic conception of motivation and the drive to accumulate becomes impossible when we turn from the pleasure principle to the death drive as the fundamental psychoanalytic category. Before 1920 Freud identifies enjoyment and pleasure; he sees enjoyment as the product of the activity of the pleasure principle. As he puts it in “Instincts and Their Vicissitudes” in 1915, “The aim [Zeil] of an instinct is in every instance satisfaction, which can only be obtained by removing the state of stimulation at the source of the instinct.”27 Satisfaction or enjoyment results from eliminating stimulation, which is precisely what the pleasure principle demands. After writing Beyond the Pleasure Principle, however, Freud ceases to credit the pleasure principle with being the primary explanatory category for human activity.28 He retains pleasure as a category, but the death drive dislodges it from its foundational place. Rather than explaining human activity itself, the pleasure principle begins to function as a supplement to the death drive as an explanatory category. Pleasure supplements the death drive by providing a lure for consciousness. The subject actively takes up the path of the death drive — a drive that uses the subject and produces enjoyment at the cost of the subject’s well-being or self-interest — because moments of pleasure render it bearable and even attractive. But this pleasure can only be imaginary: it is more the image of a future pleasure to be obtained than an actual pleasure experienced. This is the fundamental problem with the logic of accumulation and the would-be pleasure that derives from enrichment. Every capitalist subject has experienced the dissatisfaction that inevitably results from actually obtaining the desired commodity. As an absent object, the object of desire appears to embody incredible pleasure, but when this object becomes present, it devolves into an ordinary object. In the act of obtaining the object of desire, we deprive this object of its very desirability. The pleasure embodied in the object exists only insofar as it remains out of reach for the subject. Because we desire the object as absent, actually obtaining the object provokes disappointment rather than pleasure. No matt er how pleasurable the presence of the object is, this presence never offers us what we desired in the object. The great lie of capitalist ideology is its insistence that one can enjoy the act of accumulation itself. This act inevitably produces disappointment in the subject who buys into it, and this disappointment is never more acute than just after what promised to be the most satisfying acquisition. For capitalist subjects, the disappointment that follows acquisition of a treasured commodity is not a reason to abandon the process of accumulation. In fact, it suggests to such subjects that they simply haven’t taken accumulation far enough, that they need more. In this way, capitalist ideology feeds off the disappointment that it produces. If it actually produced the ultimate enjoyment for subjects that it promised them, they would no longer feel compelled to enter into the process of accumulation. After a little accumulation, subjects would become satisfied and thereby cease to be capitalist subjects, properly speaking. Capitalism needs dissatisfied subjects, but it also needs subjects who believe that the ultimate satisfaction is possible. This is accomplished by locating the ultimate satisfaction in the act of accumulation. Subjects invest themselves in capitalist ideology because they accept its map of enjoyment. The key to combating this ideology lies not in undermining the fantasies that it proffers but in revealing where our enjoyment is located, in proffering a different map. Rather than enjoying the process of accumulation, we enjoy the experience of loss — the loss of the privileged object. Accumulation allows us to have objects, but it doesn’t allow us to have the object in its absence. This is why accumulation always leads not to satisfaction with what one has but to the desire to accumulate more and more. Loss, in contrast, permits us to experience the object as such. Th rough the act of losing the privileged object, we in effect cause this privileged object to emerge. Th ere is no privileged object prior to its loss. Understood in this way, loss becomes a creative act. the loss of the object is the foundation of our enjoyment because this act elevates an object above the rest of the world and embodies that object with the power to satisfy us

### L – BwO – Deleuze

#### Do no place your bets on a losing hand – the Body without Organs will fail. Instead bet on Organs without a Body. Their moralism is nothing more than the reduction of bodies to a machinic nightmare, the regression to the human, all too human idealisms of “good” and “evil.”

Weatherill 17 (Rob Weatherill, master’s degree in psychotherapy from St. Vincents Univesity Hospital as well as the European Certificate in Psychotherapy, “THE ANTI-OEDIPUS COMPLEX: Lacan, Critical Theory, and Postmodernism,” pgs. 91-96)//JRD

Žižek believes that the genius of Deleuze resides in his “transcendental empiricism,” where the impersonal machinic flow of pure becoming teems infinitely more richly than the dullness of perceived being. The genius of the real philosopher is that his thinking enlivens ordinary reality. You can see the stratifications and segmentations of political opinion that resist any deterritorialisations: people remain in their defensive molar aggregations, locking in intensities, repelling with their paranoid machines. You can trace the molecular developments of youthful enquiry, the lines of flight, the singularities, before they are bounced off the solid wall of language and reabsorbed into the existing sediments. You can sense the spinning in the black hole of the empty BwO of the addict. Deleuze “sees” the quantum level before the collapse of wave forms. He imagines the infinite possibilities of fluid open multiplicities, before they precipitate out as concrete actualities. Deleuze’s ultimate reference, following Nietzsche, is “pure becoming,” against the dull opacity of Being. The assertion of continuous movement, flight, break-flows, escapes, fluxes, etc., is the pure hidden potential of the virtual, not to be misunderstood as the “before” and “after” of any historicism, but pure becoming – no stratigraphy or evolution, no development or progress, no context, no reference to real events. Deleuze was the key interpreter of Nietzsche in France. Nietzsche pointed out that nothing important is ever free from a “nonhistorical cloud.” This leads to the paradox that something really new can only emerge via repetition out of the cloud, the repetition of the past “failure” to realise itself properly. Žižek cites Walter Benjamin’s example of the October Revolution’s repetition of the French Revolution, “redeeming” the latter’s alleged failure. What is repeated is the transcendental-non-historical-cloud that was betrayed, missed, not fully realised at the time. The Spirit (Becoming) has been betrayed by the Letter (Being). It is tempting to add that schizoanalysis, as the true Spirit of human freedom, has been betrayed by the (repressive) Letter of psychoanalysis. Schizoanalysis might redeem the failure of psychoanalysis: the “betrayal” by the later Freud of the originality of the early Freud. Schizoanalysis is more (early) Freudian, closer to the Freudian spirit, than all the subsequent Freudians – more Freud than Freud himself! Stick to the Letter and you betray the Spirit – always becoming – fluid-multiplemolecular-singular. Schizoanalysis is the truly new version of psychoanalysis, redeeming its potential vitality, its failure to aspire to full liberation. This is the lesson to be learnt from our authors. Against the thrust of the previous chapter, Žižek asserts that, ‘What Deleuze calls “desiring machines” concerns something wholly different from the mechanical’.1 Against dull machinic repetition of the same, what emerges is the miraculous new, on the lines of Chesterton’s Christian ontology.2 For instance, there is nothing “mechanical” in the sun’s rising every morning; on the contrary, it reveals the miracle of God’s creativity! Therefore, our negative assertion, that “machinic” refers to an inhuman banality, emphasising not the miraculously new but quite the reverse, the totally repetitive – the emerging post-human, the ticking atomic clock, should not be conceded here but held in suspense.3 While the schizo[schizoanalysis] may celebrate this miraculous “becoming machine” of everything, the neurotic[psychoanalysis] fears the increasing reductionism and automation of human experience, the translation of the most sublime experiences into pure “functioning” and the inherent violence of such thinking. The more human capacities are handed over to prosthetics, the more we emerge as de-substantialised (parasitic) subjects controlled by the machanosphere and artificial intelligence.4 The proximity of miraculating machines can terrify. After he had settled, a man described his ordeal on the main thoroughfare of the capital city. He had had a sudden real-isation. Reality had decomposed. He heard the grinding mechanics, gears, bearings, pistons, explosions in the engines of passing lorries and buses without any mediation or imaginary filter, as in a nightmare, and he had collapsed in shock. A woman described the horror she felt when she saw the bony skeletal articulations of people and the skulls like an X-ray machine. Anorexics can describe in minute detail the machinations of food in their digestive machines. A man says he will only sleep in a room that contains hundreds of ticking alarm clocks all timed to go off at the same hour. Another says, all I can tell you is that we are fluid luminous beings made of contracting and relaxing fibres. Another man says, ‘I am a block of ice’. In this, he has all the frozen smoothness of a BwO. The schizos and our authors “see” machinic assemblages everywhere and these monstrosities approach the Real in the Lacanian sense, or Hegel’s “Objective Spirit.” Žižek points to a crack in the edifice of the simple opposition between molar and molecular, between being and becoming, the Symbolic and the Real. These opposed registers are not equal and opposite. Representation (Symbolic) cannot be opposed to production (Real). With Deleuze, ‘The virtual field is (re)interpreted as that of generative, productive forces, opposed to the space of representations’. And for Žižek, the proper site of production cannot be the virtual space as such, which is the “empty” Lacanian Real, but, rather, the passage from it to constituted representational reality. Žižek therefore questions the duality of Deleuzian thinking – becoming versus being; the nomadic versus the State; the molecular versus the molar; the schizo versus the paranoiac. He concludes, ‘This duality is ultimately over-determined as “the Good versus the Bad”’.5 To pursue Žižek’s ontological “crack,” the first step is to question this simple duality with similar duality, that of Badiou’s Being and Event, emphasising their ultimate incompatibility. Event(s) cannot be simply mapped onto the field of becoming which generates the order of being. Event(s) are only be posited retrospectively. Only later can we “believe” that this was indeed “an Event,” standing out from the multitude – an Event to which to remain politically faithful in a militant way, as opposed to the ephemeral indiscriminate spontaneous way of the “anarcho-désirants.” Žižek suggests that our authors are doing no more than re-heating the old humanist-ideal: regressing from the “reified” and reduced result in the world, to its abundant productive becoming. It is the old story of vitalism, the elevation of life to a new “becoming.” Whereas, Žižek believes that Badiou’s “mathematics” is the only adequate ontology: ‘the meaningless Real of the pure multitude, the vast infinite coldness of the Void’; i.e. the indifference of truth to the chaotic flow of the world. While Deleuze asserts life in its multiple singularities, for Badiou there is only the Hegelian from ‘nothing to nothing’.6 Žižek creates another reversal. Against the notion of BwO and its high-intensity prolonged pleasure/joy, the pure body of immanent desire, he pits “organs without a body” (OwB). The latter might be, for instance, the lonely masochist staging his sterile rituals for futile pleasure – maybe one of those failed, empty or cancerous BwOs. Žižek complains that **Anti-Oedipus is the worst book Deleuze ever wrote,** citing the political ideological “bad influence” of Guattari. He concludes that our authors, despite protestations to the contrary, end up as ‘the ideologist[s] of late capitalism’. For Éric Alliez, however, Deleuze and Badiou typify the polarity of French philosophy. For Badiou, Deleuze’s work and politics lacks coherent theoretical autonomy, being imbued with Romantic mystical pretensions. Badiou sees mercantile possibilities in communities demanding their singular recognitions – women, gays, transsexuals, ethnic groups, etc., although clearly not what our authors had in mind with their revolutionary explosive field of immanence. As Alliez says, The BwO is to be considered as the very body of desire, as its purest expression, so absolutely coincident inseparate from what it can do that it relates back to an unliveable power, a power which is as such the pre-condition of every real experience of desire, driven by the necessity of [machinic] constructions that cut [striate] the BwO in itself’.7 Thus, Anti-Oedipus confronts structuralism head-on by establishing beyond any doubt the biopolitical primacy of desire. In other words, the deterritorialising lines of flight, etc., come first and are therefore not reactive to established biopolitical structures. The schizo is not a revolutionary subject (or indeed a “subject” at all), but merely the site of interruption, mutation, rupture, the potential for revolution, schizzing effects – undercutting state, party and even utopian communitarian projects. Inevitably, desire becomes exile, the unconscious is orphan. What Alliez concludes is that we should not oppose the Badiou–Žižek–Lacanian–structuralist axis with a shallow post-structural, ‘making room for a spontaneous democracy of desire and its pop-philosophical flights of fancy’, but oppose it much more vibrantly, ‘with a Biopolitics of Multitudes whose socially constitutive character is the ontological fact that sustains the constructivism of desire’.8

### L—Black Community

**Despite their efforts, the aff cannot redeem race of the psychic violence such a concept necessitates—the idea of a “black body politic” is and always will be a fantasy that recreates the trauma of enslavement**

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 30-36)//guyB

It may be argued that central to the discursive efforts of African Americans, from ex-slaves to later social activists and scholars, is an attempt to establish firmly a shaming gaze that does not merely wince at the spectacles of white transgressions. But given the continued power of the master signifier whiteness to define the discursive field of race and restrict the agency of African Americans, not just racism but also **the concept of race itself carries over into the present a signifying chain**, founded in the past, that **enables both an assault on African Americans’ fantasies of being and a possible confrontation with lack**. Here we may conjoin the signifiers of race with the scars of the slave master’s whip in the formation of what Spillers terms a “phenomenon of marking and branding [that] actually ‘transfers’ from one generation to another, finding its various symbolic substitutions in an efficacy of meanings that repeat the initiating moments.”89 Lacan speaks of “the glory of the mark,” the “mark on the skin” inscribed through such acts as “flagellation”; he points to this mark as producing the subject’s body as **an “object of jouissance**.”90 This flagellation is tied to what Spillers describes as **a translation of “the captive body” into a “potential for pornotroping**,” a process of objectification that we see in the actions of the slave master described by the ex-slaves.91 Lacan states that it is “irrefutable” that this objectification is “one of the ways in which the Other enters one’s world,” functioning as an apparatus of jouissance in the manners we have already described.92 But what is suggested most radically in Lacan’s work is also a process by which this objectification may become the grounds of identity for the abjected subject. Lacan’s theory helps us identify the markings of the master’s whip and the jouissance they produce as a very source of African American identity. Lacan associates jouissance with excess, not just an excess of pleasure but also an excess that turns to “displeasure,” an excess that leaves one in a state of “suffering.”93 Particularly in his reading of the fort-da game played by Freud’s grandson, however, Lacan emphasizes that it is only through the suffering of jouissance that the kind of narcissism found in the mirror stage’s conflation of mother and child is replaced by **an independent subjectivity built on lack**. Lacan reads the toy reel that the child of the fort-da game throws over the edge of his crib when the mother leaves the room not just as a signifier but as the object a, that which, in signifying an unsignifiable loss, allows the subject to jump the “ditch,” the central lack that the mother’s disappearance creates “on the frontier of his domain.”94 This object a, Lacan says, is “a small part of the subject that detaches itself from him” to symbolize some act of “self-mutilation” or other cruel loss through which the subject finds the means to his or her own self-designation.95 This object a, this symbol of the lost part of the self, Lacan says, is “what in the end gives the specular image of the apparatus of the ego its real support, its consistency, . . . sustained within by this lost object.”96 Lacan states that it is through this object that “jouissance is introduced into the dimension of the subject’s being.”97 This lost object is the means through which the subject’s self-identification compulsively masks and concurrently establishes resonance with the unsymbolized trauma of the Real. Race, I propose, is **an object a established around lack as much for African Americans as it is for whites.** The function of the object a Lacan outlines in his reading of the fort-da is not only to signify loss but also **to displace it through acts of repetition,** to reassociate traumatic entrance into the Symbolic with a temporally and qualitatively distinct moment of trauma later experienced in the Symbolic. In place of the subject’s traumatic division in language, the mother’s departure from the room becomes temporally defined as the cause of the split or “Spaltung in the subject,” which is then repetitively represented as the true source of loss that is also “overcome by the alternating game, fort-da.”98 I read slavery as serving the function of repetition for African Americans that Lacan here assigns to the mother’s departure, as the Symbolic and temporal signifier of a traumatic loss that is more deeply psychic. Slavery comes to serve this function because **it eruptively displays psychic lack**. Lacan defines repetition as “the commemoration of an irruption of jouissance.”99 Where this irruption designates a breach inward and a splitting of the subject, I identify in slavery **a simultaneous eruption or outpouring of jouissance that finds its Symbolic representatives across distances of time through the signifiers of race**. I suggest that both these residual signifiers (even when redefined by African Americans) and the acts of racism that may grow out of them are repetitions that function in relation to the jouissance of this past that both displaces and displays psychic lack. Slavery’s exhibition of the slave’s lack and its insistence upon the master’s exultant and autonomous being produced within the Symbolic a certain excess or surplus of jouissance, enabling discursive and power structures through which access to jouissance became unusually open to manipulation. Slavery thus marks a traumatic moment in which jouissance as both lack and excess is localized. This eruption of jouissance thereby positions **slavery as a temporal representative of the lack** that is the Lacanian Real. It is the signifiers of race that help to both localize this lack temporally and bind it to the identity of those subjects who come to be called African Americans. The concept of race came to center African American identity because it not only augmented the signifier’s essential function of striking being from the subject, actively restricting the slave’s access to fantasies of self, but also presented itself as an object of contention that promised to re-establish the illusory existence of this being. As is true in the case of the child of the fort-da, the signifier, as designator of the object a, is ever a protective source of identity, and so **race is often exceedingly empowering for African Americans**. In slavery and beyond, it offers subjects a sense of direction, belonging, and self-worth. But **race alone could guarantee neither community nor being for enslaved blacks**. To truly understand the notion of being that slaves were able to construct for themselves and to appreciate the jouissance of suffering to which this being yet binds contemporary African Americans, we must look to the function of religion in slavery. Because efforts during slavery to resignify race were especially open to contention, enslaved blacks were slow to embrace race truly as a source of being. And so, in truth, the nascent African American identity that began to cohere in times of slavery more often employed religion both to contend against and to positively resignify race in an effort to constitute this being, thus setting the stage for an emphasis on religion in African American culture that is yet present today. What we find in slavery is that the unity developed by enslaved blacks emerged not primarily because of a sense of their “racial” commonality but because blacks were bound together by a common circumstance that both accentuated existing similarities across the group and demanded this unification as a source of resistance and a means of survival.100 More likely to recognize differences within the racial group than the masters who asserted the power to define the group, **individual slaves formed alliances and group affiliations that were more nuanced than any allowed by the category of race**. The slave narrative of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, who spends much of his enslavement on a merchant ship before landing in New York City, supports this point, displaying the internal differences among slaves that prevented their easy unification around race as a source of being. Gronniosaw’s inability to identify with the other slaves in his new master’s household not only leads to his conviction that the “servants were all jealous, and envied [him] the regard, and favour, shewn [him] by [his] master” but also facilitates his construction of a narrative that asserts God will not save Gronniosaw’s fellow blacks or “those born under every outward Disadvantage, and in Regions of the grossest Darkness and Ignorance” if they lack “knowledge of the [biblical] Truth.”101 Written after he is freed and no longer has even the common circumstance of a mutual enslavement to link him to the larger slave community, Gronniosaw’s narrative seeks support not for members of this community but for his own starving family in dire need of money. Gronniosaw’s narrative maintains that through the bondage under which members of his race still exist, the “Lord undertook to bring” Gronniosaw “out of Darkness into His marvelous light.”102 What Gronniosaw’s religious rhetoric shows is that race by itself could not unify slaves or fully promise them being; functioning at times in direct opposition to race, within and beyond slave communities, it was primarily religion that made this promise. Such a focus by slaves like Gronniosaw on religion as the source of the object a that grounded being must be read within the context of a broader slaveholding society that celebrated the Christian view of God as the Supreme Being, a view expressed in the biblical statement “I am the one who is,” by which, Lacan notes, “God asserts his identity with Being.”103 The object a, Lacan shows, is that which presents itself as not just a semblance of being but also being’s “remainder.”104 From this Lacanian perspective, we may read the a as the source of the soul that, for the Christians to whom Gronniosaw addresses his narrative, links mankind to the true Supreme Being; this a functions as the divine remnant at the core of man, the spiritual essence, shaped by God’s own hands, that transcends man’s earthly existence. Both within man and external to man, this extimate core as object a is what sets man on the path of a true love of his neighbor as the self. It is the source of a kind of love that Lacan calls “soul loving,” whereby subjects “love each other as the same in the Other,” aiming this love at the extimate object a that is both absent from the self and illusorily present in the other.105 Where Gronniosaw wishes to establish the similarity of his soul to that of his white reader’s through use of his religious rhetoric, he struggles against a racism that functions to define his core self as blackened by the absence of God’s light, as devoid of the soul’s divine spark. This struggle emerges because the soul loving he beseeches of the white other is equally, I would argue, the root of race love, whereby individuals of the same race come to love each other as mirrored images of the self, finding in each other the same object the self pursues, the object belonging to the self that is absent from the self. This absence fuels a desire for racial unification and solidarity that stands at odds with the universalism ostensibly glorified by religious soul loving of the neighbor. I will show in chapters 2 and 3 how race comes to supplant religion as a source of this core object a that offers African Americans a semblance of being, but what we find in Gronniosaw’s narrative is race as an impediment to any loving of the neighbor’s soul. Within slavery, **race both obstructed cross-racial unity and impaired creation of an extimate object a capable of unifying blacks intersubjectively** into a group identity. Because race was the root of slavery’s assertion of the nonbeing of the slave, race had to be redefined and buttressed by religion for it to function as a source of being. Not only religion but also communal activities like group worship or singing and working together all helped to create the unified group to which this being could be assigned.106 Establishing unity through communal activity, religion and spiritual slave songs were especially important to both the reformation of slave identity and the gradual development of notions of race as possible sources of being. Emblematic of this fact is Lawrence Levine’s observation that “the single most persistent image of the slave songs is that of [African Americans as] the chosen people.”107 Through attempting to supplant the authority of the slave master with that of God, slaves sought to recast the veil of fantasy over the psychic place of lack uncovered by the institution of slavery. Religion became the source of a fantasy grounded more in the patriarchs of the Old Testament than in race, allowing for identification with heroes like Moses, Joshua, Jonah, and Noah, who were delivered from their own suffering and that of the world around them. Through such fantasies, the slave’s suffering could be contextualized as proof of a unique access to being, as proof of one’s divine selection for salvation. This is precisely what we see in Gronniosaw, who asserts, “I am willing, and even desirous of being counted as nothing,” for “I know that . . . every trial and trouble that I’ve met with . . . [has] been sanctified to me.”108 Gronniosaw takes the concept of the chosen to its extreme, articulating his worthiness of financial aid from others through a demonstration of his position of distinction from all sinners, white and black. Seeking to constitute himself as a chosen one by rhetorically severing this religiously sanctified self from established notions of race, Gronniosaw simultaneously distances himself particularly from other blacks because he realizes that as race augments the notion itself of a group identity it also implicitly contests the fantasies religion allows. Though these revivifying religious fantasies of being often promised salvation in this world, and not just the next, the limits of the agency they covenanted were displayed in the ability of slave masters to themselves bind race to religion in order to justify notions of white supremacy. Such biblical events as Noah’s cursing of the descendants of his son Ham to forever become the servants of all other men were significant to this process. Through this story, whites could not only promote the association of blacks with Ham, whose name “is a vulgarization of Cham,” or ch’m, the Hebrew word for black, but also present black skin as the sign of a servitude and cursed suffering that was divinely sanctioned.109 This suffering, bound to race, is merely the obverse of that constructed in the rhetoric of Gronniosaw. What we see through such contention over race and suffering is that **African Americans encounter continuous obstacles in the construction of their fantasy of being through reliance upon the apparatus of race**. Because race as object a today still remains discursively tied to the trauma it attempted to compensate for in slavery, African American identity ever circles this traumatic past, defined by a suffering that the concept of racial identity alternately attempts to alleviate and traumatically unfurls. As Lacan notes, “There is nothing more difficult than separating a word from discourse. . . . As soon as you begin at this level, the whole discourse comes running after you.”110 Still able to function as a stigma for African Americans, what the word “race” marks is a fantasy difference that not only discursively justified the master’s brutal and traumatic scarring of the slave’s flesh and psyche but also still today repeats its long historical function of signifying the lack of some quality needed to make African Americans the equals of whites. It is therefore no surprise that the process initiated by slaves of forming for blacks a protective group identity demanded the unifying function of music and communal activities like religious worship, and **could not rely solely upon the efforts to resignify race** that we see praised by African American academics like Gates and Baker. As scholars such as Ron Eyerman have demonstrated, African American racial identity could only be truly solidified as a discursive concept after slavery ended, at the moment post-Reconstruction when an emerging black middle class and intelligentsia had finally attained sufficient levels of agency over discourse to employ race in calls for political unity.111 While most African American scholarship repeats endlessly this early attempt by the intelligentsia and the slaves themselves to resignify and politically redeploy race, Trauma and Race suggests a need finally to advance beyond mere resignification. What resignification today entails is an ambivalent scholarly desire to maintain race that is actively facilitated by conceptualizations of agency and identity as discursive, a desire to uphold race while also depriving it of a lethal essentialism that is often the core of racism. This ambivalence suggests race’s position not only as a fantasy object, or object a, but also as a Symbolic remnant, as **a link**— often willfully preserved by scholars—**to the traumatic Real of slavery’s jouissance**. By contrast, Trauma and Race seeks to articulate a notion of agency and identity that distances itself from both race and the traumatic past it incorporates

### L—Black Experience/History

**Their adherence to race as a historical analytic makes psychic crackdown against black joy inevitable—only an embrace of the multiplicity of the self solves by divesting from the project of creating an identity politic**

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 8-12)//guyB

While jouissance may be pinned to the black body as confirmation of an opposing racial whiteness that is productive of both a sense of superiority and fears of losing ground for numbers of white Americans, African Americans often experience through a racial identity bound to the body an inability to separate from the excesses of a racial past. These excesses, from the standpoint of African Americans, are tied to practices of exclusion and violence that traumatically breach the salubrious limits of both the body and the psyche. Here **the white subject’s jouissance becomes the instrument of African Americans’ confrontation with trauma**. Beyond the trauma to the body that may present itself in a particular racist act, however, jouissance, as a pleasure produced (in this case) through race, functions to link African Americans to a trauma of slavery, repeating through racism a primordial challenge to African Americans’ sense of being. Dunn disregards his role in violently instituting such a challenge, but his conception of the possibilities opened to him in so doing allows us to recognize the striking, divergent psychic relation that is held by many African Americans to both the racial past and the future. Dunn, even while imprisoned and awaiting trial, focuses on the future, “looking forward to moving out of the south and away from the scourge [or the blacks] of this country.”27 His rather elaborate plan for after he is set free is to hire a “slimy civil-law lawyer and sue” the county of Jacksonville for “reverse-discrimination,”28 use “the settlement” to invest in his company, and use the business profits ensured by a “rebounding economy” to “buy or build [his] dream house on the river,” a “2-story house constructed in a manner where [he, a licensed pilot,] can cessary legal impartiality as “the head of the executive branch,” is interpellated into identification equally with a racial identity and a racial past traced in a lineage of African American suffering.32 In this tracing, we see a shift from past notions of racial essentialism, such that **racial identity is determined by commonalities in experience**, by similarities in the discursive relation to being that is established by a racism that questions one’s subjective value. This shift, like the move to culture described above, defines racial similarity through jouissance, through a relation to modes of enjoyment and experiences of suffering that repeat across time. After the verdict on the case was issued, Obama spoke a second time about Trayvon Martin, identifying directly with Martin’s experience. He explains, “another way of saying” Trayvon Martin “could have been my son” is to say “Trayvon Martin could have been me 35 years ago.”33 In an age when race as an inherited essence is questioned and multiraciality is abundantly visible, even in Obama himself, Obama models a shift in American culture whereby increasingly race is determined through relation to a historical past, the replication of which through racism simultaneously solidifies African American racial identity and curtails those fantasies of wholeness that define for the African American subject a sense of access to the jouissance of being. Obama himself notes that the restrictions placed upon African Americans, the limitations in the space allotted to them in the American social sphere by such factors as “disparities in the application of our criminal laws,” reinforce a sense of exclusion that helps constitute a group perspective.34 Noting that, after the Zimmerman acquittal, “there’s a lot of pain” for members of “the African American community,” Obama ties this pain to the fact that the community “is looking at this issue through a set of experiences and a history that doesn’t go away.”35 Despite the ability of a figure like Michael Dunn to leave this past behind—questioning, “Where is all of this hostility coming from?”—the past continues to beckon African Americans toward deep associations with racialized identity.36 Though many had heralded the age of Obama as occasioning the birth of a new postracial America, these cases of violence against African Americans suggest an unchanging same in the American social sphere, a repetitive, traumatic confrontation with the legacies of the racial past. Echoing Obama, Attorney General Eric Holder relates in the aftermath of the Zimmerman verdict that “some of these same issues [raised by the killing of Trayvon Martin] drove my father to sit down with me to have a conversation . . . about how, as a young black man, I should interact with the police . . . if I was ever stopped or confronted in a way that I thought was unwarranted.”37 Though Holder is convinced that his position as the first African American attorney general, serving under the first African American president, is sign that “our country has indeed changed,” Holder reveals, “Trayvon’s death last spring caused me to sit down to have a conversation with my own 15-year-old son, like my dad did with me.”38 **It is the recursiveness of these experiences of discrimination that becomes the source of both racial identity and trauma in contemporary America**. The ascension to primacy of African Americans like Obama and Holder has not signaled an end to racism but instead has led to what Colin Powell, secretary of state under the George W. Bush administration, has identified as a “significant shift to the right” in contemporary American politics, a politics that Powell maintains is run through with a “dark vein of intolerance.”39 Pointing to a governor who publically referred to President Obama as lazy after his poor performance in his first presidential debate with Mitt Romney and to another governor who described Obama as “shuckin’ and jivin’” in his discussion of attacks in Benghazi, Libya, that led to the death of four Americans, Powell conveys that the latter description is “a racial era slave term.”40 Elaborating on the significance of the two governors’ word choices, Powell states, “It may not mean anything to most Americans but to those of us who are African Americans, the second word [after lazy] is shiftless and then there’s a third word that goes along with it, Birther, the whole Birther movement.”41 What Powell hints at is the way this focus on laziness recursively brings us to a focus on what I would describe as the slave’s projected mode of enjoyment. Here, binding Obama’s “laziness” to the slave’s “shiftless” enjoyment produces a **racial lineage that becomes a means of emphasizing Obama’s otherness** and grounding the Birthers’ assertion of his un-Americanness. Though racial difference is never directly addressed in the governors’ comments, Powell’s observations help show how within language itself is buried the history that unravels to reproduce ready-made structures of jouissance that ground a racism emerging from the past to shape the present. It is this focus on a jouissance bound to both language and the history of slavery that will guide much of Trauma and Race. Through a Lacanian understanding of the function of the signifier in language, I will present slavery as a traumatic past that, by means of the signifiers of race, comes to repeat itself in the present to organize both racial relations and personal identity around a fantasy relation to being. Where this fantasy relation articulates itself through mediation of structures of jouissance that emanate from slavery, I read racial identity and racism as efforts to manage and manipulate the jouissance of being that emerges from the trauma of this past. The paradox of race as an apparatus of jouissance, however, is that it binds African Americans to a past in which race was used to decimate the enabling fantasies of being that enslaved blacks sought to establish for themselves. It is this paradox that centers the analysis of this book. Critiquing the allegiance to race that many African Americans maintain today, Trauma and Race argues that by embracing the concept of race contemporary **African Americans become psychically bound to the traumatic past of slavery**. While articulating the psychic and political limitations of race in chapters 1 and 2, the book argues for a freeing up of identity that goes some way toward relieving the self from a determinative relation to the past. Using the literature of Toni Morrison and Ralph Ellison in chapters 3 and 4, I not only suggest the pathological extremes to which race urges subjects both white and African American—extremes that extend even to the point of what Lacan terms perversion and neurosis—but also present through these works models of how **a traumatic relation to the past may be altered**. Throughout, I suggest the urgency especially for “African Americans” to embrace **a more expansive conception of the self, one that recognizes and celebrates the self as more than racial.** Arguing that it is the intensity of one’s adherence to racial identity that opens one up to a reliance upon the identity structures of the past that produce for African Americans a traumatic relation to being, I advocate for an identity politics that makes room for full expression of the psychic lives of those individuals who would call themselves African Americans. Where the pursuit of both racial whiteness and African American fantasies of being seek after an impossible unity meant to mask the fragmentation inherent to the psyche, what I promote is **a relation to being that embraces the multiplicity of the self**. It is beyond these racial fantasies of the whole self, I will suggest, that both white Americans and African Americans must come to establish a truly salutary psychic relation to the being that is stricken from all our subjectivities

### L—Black Identity

**The 1AC’s attachment to black identity creates a recursive form of psychic violence and revels in the traumatic violence of slavery—their failure to define race proves its lack of potency as a political analytic—only the Lack can explain their fixation on it**

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 42-48)//guyB

We can better understand how the automaton of the racial signifiers impacts efforts to conserve the trauma of slavery if we turn more directly to an analysis of Du Bois himself and of Du Bois’ ambivalent attachment to the concept of race. It is clear that Du Bois employs race for its political value. We see his efforts to tie race to politics when he, for example, urges his contemporaries in the Harlem Renaissance to be strategic in their artistic depictions of Negroes, asserting quite famously that “all Art is propaganda and ever must be.”24 But beyond his political reliance upon race, **it is the trauma of slavery that I suggest inspires Du Bois’ allegiance to this concept**. Where I define the trauma of slavery as an attack upon psychic fantasies of being, at issue in Du Bois’ work is the effort to establish stable, irrefutable ground for his own sense of being, a process that entails for Du Bois a redefining of the race itself. Yet, I argue, it is as Du Bois comes most fully to embrace his racial identity that he is most directly pinned to the trauma of slavery. Recognizing in America a society that “only lets” an African American “see himself through the revelation of the other world,” Du Bois reluctantly embraces the racial identity granted him by the Other.25 Where this identity links Du Bois to a traumatic past, both the external insistence upon race and, more significantly, Du Bois’ own embrace of this concept prevent his easy dissociation from the trauma of the past. To the extent that Du  Bois comes to resist understanding his identity as other than racial, Du Bois confronts the automaton of the racial signifiers both as that which binds him to this trauma and as his sole protection against it. Du Bois’ most pronounced traumatic confrontation with lack emerges when **race produces for him an identity so fully entrenched in the past that there is no room to imagine other avenues of access to being** than the one directly contested by this same racial past. Urged to accept an identity so exclusively grounded by his membership in a race already uniquely pinned to notions of inferiority, what Du Bois seeks is to maintain his fantasies of being by fending against the unveiling of a lack presented as the exclusive possession of his race. This lack, however, is constitutive of each subject, emerging with the onset of subjectivity, which is defined by a splitting of the psyche into its component registers of the Imaginary, Symbolic, and Real. Lack articulates itself around such fantasies as race and racial inferiority to establish the subject’s position in relation to being, the illusory sense of psychic unity and autonomy that may be established through domination of one’s external environment and others who occupy it. These fantasies mask the fact of each subject’s mutual submission to the forced choice that Lacan calls the “vel of alienation.”26 This vel is defined as a compulsory, “lethal” choice between meaning and being, a choice that produces the “aphanisis,” or “ fading of the subject,” who is ever forced to attain subjectivity via the dominating signifiers of the Other.27 Subjectivity emerges with entrance into the Symbolic, the world of language and meaning that organizes thought for the subject but alienates the subject from the jouissance of being he or she desires. It is this alienation that fantasies of race both mask in those who are able to position themselves in a hierarchal place of dominance and highlight in those who are dominated by the signifiers of the other. Rethinking Hegel, Lacan illustrates the “essence of the alienating vel, the fatal factor” that defines it, through reference to the choice offered the slave: “**your freedom or your life**.”28 This fatal choice, he explains, is between two elements such that one element “has as its consequence a neither one, nor the other”: if the slave “chooses life [or meaning], he has life deprived of freedom [or being],” but “if he chooses freedom, he loses both” his life and his freedom immediately.29 Lacan calls this vel “the primary alienation, that by which man enters into the way of slavery.”30 Expanding on Lacan, I define slavery as not that which alienates the slave, but that which reveals the fact of **the slave’s deeper subjective alienation in language**. Where the typical subject of the Symbolic finds support in the signifier for the fantasies of being that underpin his or her psyche, **the slave’s confrontation with and lack of control over the signifiers of the Other prevent the easy construction of such fantasies**. Lacan describes these fantasies through his critique of the Cartesian “I of the cogito,” which he designates the “homunculus,” the illusory “presence, inside man” who “governs him, who is the driver, the point of synthesis” for man’s subjectivity.31 This is the self that Lacan says “has not failed to occur in the history of what is called thought” as disguise for the fact of the subject’s alienation.32 The I is presented as the subject’s true self, as the self that accesses the external world through a manipulation of language and its signifiers. It is the integrity and very humanity of this self that Du Bois seeks to defend in coming to embrace propaganda as a means of manipulating the racist signifiers confronting African Americans in the Symbolic field of the Other. Elaborating on his position on art, Du Bois explains, “The point today is that until the art of the black folk compels recognition they will not be rated as human.”33 In this effort to prove his humanity and secure his fantasy access to being, Du Bois invokes race as a political and psychical tool in battle against a culture that, he notes, deems Negroes “inferior to the dirtiest white dog.”34 Through a continual rethinking of and then final reassertion of the validity of race at the end of his career, **Du Bois reveals his domination by the returning automaton of the signifiers of racial identity** that both links him to and defends him against the traumatic past that challenges his fantasies of being. This automaton, the continual return of race as the concept that African Americans like Du Bois both conserve and actively refute, is conditioned by race’s ability to operate through a relation to each of the three registers of the psyche. Where race is a social and discursive construct, I argue, one’s entrance into the social Symbolic, with the very onset of subjectivity, initiates one into the formations of racial identity. What we will see through Du Bois’ example is that, though racial difference is truly grounded not in biology but in discourse, the racial identity one obtains from the Symbolic of the Other has extra-Symbolic and extradiscursive effects on the subject; the images and discursive definitions of the racial self granted the subject are alternately embraced and resisted at levels both conscious and unconscious, registering themselves to varied degrees at the psychic level of the Imaginary so as to found an internal portraiture of the body that is central to the formation of the ego. The politics of race at the level of the Symbolic holds dire stakes particularly for African Americans because race enables the constitution of an Imaginary ego image that simultaneously challenges and asserts the unity of these racialized subjects. **Binding this ego’s self-image to racial identity through the illusion of race as biological fact**, the Symbolic actively **constitutes this identity through discourses of race that rhetorically link the racialized self to the history of slavery**. In the process, **race both masks and reveals personal lack** by conflating personal lack with the slave’s suffering and trauma. Through this displacement, race binds African Americans to the Real of a traumatic past they both own and disown as they negotiate through a relation to this past a fantasy of race articulated around the promise of being. Du Bois’ own negotiation of this past is emblematic of the ambivalent attachment most African Americans hold to race. This negotiation involves for Du Bois both what he calls his “recoil from the assumptions of the whites” and his development of “racial feeling[s]” as a “later learning and reaction” to racism.35 These feelings become especially significant as Du Bois looks back at his career and contemplates in his autobiography, Dusk of Dawn, what it is within himself that constitutes a “connection, psychical and spiritual, with Africa and the Negro race.”36 Contrary to the focus on logical reasoning one would expect from someone with Du  Bois’ distinguished academic training, Du Bois describes his racial “tie” to Negroes and Africa as something he “can feel better than [he] can explain,” rooting these feelings in race as not a logically defined “concept [but] rather . . . a group of contradictory forces, facts and tendencies” that have guided his actions throughout his career.37 In this battle between emotion and logic, Du Bois’ sense of his “psychical and spiritual” tie to Africa and the Negro race comes to overbalance both Du Bois’ conscious awareness of his mixed heritage—“my paternal great-grandfather  .  .  . was white”—and the deeper “culture patterns” he “absorbed” in childhood, which he explains “were not African so much as Dutch and New England.”38 While describing an allegiance to the Negro race that defies the full logic of his own reasoning, Du Bois reaffirms his racial identity most directly through consideration of his biological and historical link to a racial group that extends to Africa: On this vast [African] continent were born and lived a large portion of my direct ancestors going back a thousand years or more. The mark of their heritage is upon me in color and hair. These are obvious things, but of little meaning in themselves; only important as they stand for real and more subtle differences from other men. Whether they do or not, I do not know nor does science know today. But one thing is sure and that is the fact that since the fifteenth century these ancestors of mine and their descendants have had a common history; have suffered a common disaster and have one long memory. The actual ties of heritage between the individuals of these groups vary with the ancestors that they have in common with many others: Europeans and Semites, perhaps Mongolians, certainly American Indians. But the physical bond is least and the badge of color relatively unimportant save as a badge; **the real essence of this kinship is its heritage of slavery**; the discrimination and insult; and this heritage binds together not simply the children of Africa, but extends through yellow Asia and into the south Seas. It is this unity that draws me to Africa.39 Du Bois attempts to establish for himself and African Americans a racial identity that is not simply biological. Like most contemporary African Americans, Du Bois remains at least consciously skeptical of the notion of biological differences among races and grounds difference, instead, in ancestry and history. Thus, what unifies Du  Bois, African Americans, and Africans into a single racial group is not primarily biology but their one long memory of the historical disaster and insult that was slavery. As Appiah reveals, however, Du  Bois’ conception of his racial identity as historically grounded leads him to the affirmation of an illogical non sequitur. Du Bois maintains that the insult and discrimination of slavery “binds together not simply the children of Africa” but also the peoples of “yellow Asia and the south Seas,” who do not share the history of slavery. Appiah argues that “what Du Bois shares with the rest of the non-white world” and what binds him to it “**is not the insult but the badge of insult**,” the biological skin color that identifies Du Bois as black.40 Appiah shows that throughout Du Bois’ intellectual career the development of his sociohistorical argument is restricted by this illogical attachment to a “buried” biological conception of race.41 Appiah rightly suggests that a notion of phenotypic difference grounds both Du Bois’ sense of his historical lineage and Du Bois’ understanding of his relation to other groups. Because of his own insistence upon logic, however, Appiah cannot fully appreciate the function of this buried, illogical attachment to race in Du Bois’ narrative, an attachment that, I argue, must first be understood in relation not only to biology but also to the Symbolic and the Real. Appiah undervalues his own recognition that Du Bois’ bond “is based upon a hyperbolic reading of the facts” and rejects the obvious rhetorical (thus Symbolic) role slavery plays in defining identity for Du Bois.42 Du Bois’ willful selection of certain groups to which he claims “kinship” and common “heritage,” just like his dismissal of Dutch and other ancestors with whom he holds an acknowledged biological and cultural relation, displays a selection process in racial identity that is often both unreasoned and motivated. Defying logical reasoning, **race often functions at the emotional and psychic levels**. What structure these emotions and give shape to our “racial feelings” are the signifiers of language that themselves remain motivated in their articulation of subjective meaning and identity by a fundamental relation to lack. With the non sequitur, Du Bois establishes through the signifier not an empirical and logical understanding of race but a rhetorical and autobiographical one that both historicizes his identity and pins it to a lack positioned in the traumatic past and remanifested in the present through the continual “insults” of racism. Most broadly, it is this imposition of lack onto personal identity, a process to which other peoples of color are also subjected in varying degrees by racism, that urges Du Bois’ identification with these discriminated-against groups. But, most directly, this imposed lack is also what constitutes for Du Bois a link to African Americans as a racial group through his conscious embrace of the past of slavery. Focusing on this past, Du Bois presents us a narrative of the African American racial self that we may say, with Lacan, “condense[s] in relation” to “a nucleus,” to an organizing, hollow center that structures the signifiers of both Du Bois’ discourse and his identity.43 Lacan explains that “when the subject tells his story, something acts, in a latent way, that governs [his] syntax and makes it more and more condensed.”44 What governs Du Bois’ narrative is not a movement toward race as the core of the self but rather an identification of race as the signifying mark of a deeper injury and insult suffered by this self. Du Bois’ sense of the injuries to which the racialized African American subject is exposed because of race causes him to struggle against the concept of race, but Du Bois fails to discard this concept that both he and science question because he simultaneously finds **political value in the deployment of racial identity** and, more significantly, substitutes race for another signifier with which race holds a metonymical relation: **slavery**. These two signifiers, I suggest, are linked within a signifying chain that thus ensures Du Bois’ return to race. But the signifier slavery that Du  Bois chooses to emphasize does not only recuperate his racial identity; more importantly, it links this identity to slavery’s signifieds— insult, discrimination, disaster. As this source of insult and injury, slavery is the nucleus around which Du Bois’ narrative and identity condense. I say with Lacan that this “nucleus refers to something traumatic,” something beyond slavery itself that “must be designated as belonging to the real” of subjective lack; and I argue that Du Bois confronts this lack, as may contemporary African Americans, precisely because he begins by embracing a hyperbolic, historical relation to the signifiers of race and their injurious signifieds.

### L—Baudrillard/Bataille

#### The aff fails to create noncapitalist desire --- the affirmative is fundamentally a reactionary attempt to sacrifice productive expenditure, ignoring that contemporary society is literally a cornucopia of pleasure-seeking, from reality TV to the latest iphone. Capitalism captures the desire of its subjects precisely because it sells itself as seeking useless pleasure, which means the aff’s relationship to desire solves none of the impacts in the 1AC

**McGowan 16** [Todd McGowan, Associate Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Vermont, *Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Cost of Markets,* Columbia University Press: New York, NY, 2016, p. 110-113]

HIDDEN ENJOYMENT AND ITS VICISSITUDES

Bataille was also the first thinker to identify sacrifice with enjoyment. His critique of capitalism focuses on its turn away from sacrifice and thus from the possibility for a true satisfaction. In his riposte to the assumptions of political economists like Smith and Ricardo, Bataille locates satisfaction not in accumulation of goods but in their sacrifice. Since sacrifice functions as our basic mode of satisfying ourselves, capitalism represents an ontological retreat and an abandonment of our mode of enjoyment. Bataille notes, “The practice of sacrifice has today fallen into disuse and yet it has been, due to its universality, a human action more significant than any other. Independently of each other, different peoples invented different forms of sacrifice, with the goal of answering a need as inevitable as hunger. It is therefore not astonishing that the necessity of satisfying such a need, under the conditions of present-day life, leads an isolated man into disconnected and even stupid behavior.”

The problem with Bataille, however, is that his theory of sacrifice is grounded in an ontology of excess energy. We enjoy sacrifice because we are burdened with too much energy: there is enjoyment in the diminution of this burden. But Bataille never explains how this excess arises and how we obtain it. In this way, he misses the creative power of sacrifice, its capacity to form something out of nothing. We don’t begin with too much but with undifferentiated being, and sacrifice enables us to differentiate, to create a value where none otherwise exists. It is the creative power of sacrifice that generates its appeal.

In terms of his analysis of capitalism, Bataille’s emphasis on the impoverishment of sacrifice leads him astray. He mistakes the secularization of sacrifice for its evanescence, and this error leads him to underestimate capitalism’s appeal. If sacrifice was “a need as inevitable as hunger” as he says, capitalism could not endure while turning away from it. The invisibility of sacrifice is not its disuse but its multiplication. But Bataille nonetheless captures the experience of the capitalist subject reacting to the hiddenness of sacrifice in the capitalist world. His thought functions not so much as a critical analysis of capitalist society but as a phenomenology of capitalist life, a life that hides its dependence on sacrifice.

The hiddenness of sacrifice often produces outbursts of sacrifice that attempt to compensate for its apparent absence. The secularization of sacrifice creates the image of a world in which all objects are equal and thus one in which no object has any value. Where everything has a price, nothing is worth anything. Outbursts of sacrifice occur most prominently with contemporary terrorists. The true terrorist is the one who is not fighting for a particular ethnic or nationalist cause but rather struggling against capitalist modernity. This figure finds the absence of visible sacrifice in modernity suffocating. Modern subjects appear to exist without any sacrificial demands: they can display their bodies openly, watch obscene films, and even engage publicly in overtly sexualized behavior. They seem to enjoy in lieu of sacrificing, and the terrorist aims at reintroducing sacrifice into this abyss.

The terrorist always sacrifices others and often sacrifices herself or himself to create value in the monotony of the modern world. Though terrorism involves destruction, it is always also creation. The terrorist tries to gives existence a value that it seems to have lost. But this judgment on the part of the terrorist reflects a failure to recognize how the capitalist system actually functions.

It is true that the tedium of capitalist existence appears valueless. But this is just the result of the transmutation of sacrifice performed by capitalism, not its absence. Capitalism’s secularization of sacrifice actually multiplies its frequency in the social order. Though no one in capitalist society cuts out the beating heart of a sacrificial victim, nuclear warheads, elaborate churches, and slaughterhouses testify to the persistence of sacrifice. And unlike the Aztecs and the Mayans, modern subjects have lost the alibi of ignorance, which makes the presence of sacrifice within capitalism so instructive.

Because sacrifice becomes less explicit and more integrated into everyday life under capitalism, subjects often fail to see its presence and seek out more direct forms of sacrifice out of a sense of dissatisfaction with modernity. This is the dissatisfaction that produces terrorist attacks, fundamentalist revivals, and bungee jumpers. The reactionaries that take up these activities are the direct result of capitalism’s ideological commitment to utility. They sacrifice themselves in senseless activities to proclaim their disgust with utility and their adherence to something of value. But the hatred of capitalism’s universe of utility reflects a failure to diagnose that universe and its mobilization of sacrifice.

To hate capitalist modernity for the abandonment of sacrifice and the desecration of value is to accept capitalist ideology at face value. Though capitalist ideology professes that capitalism is the most efficient economic system because it is the most responsive to human needs and eliminates the unnecessary sacrifices of time and energy that haunt other economic systems, sacrifice remains the sine qua non of capitalism, just as it was for earlier economies. But responses like terrorism, fundamentalism, and bungee jumping themselves play a part in furthering this ideology as well. They work to convince us that capitalism does really eliminate sacrifice and simply gratify needs by implicitly criticizing it for doing so. Their failure to see capitalist sacrifice helps to render it more invisible. But the answer to these reactionary positions should be an analysis of capitalism’s structural similarity to them.

One must only look and see in order to become aware of the ubiquity of sacrifice in the capitalist economy. The moments of satisfaction that capitalism offers are themselves replete with sacrifice, but the system shields us from confronting it. As a result, we accept the capitalist myth that sacrifice belongs to a prior epoch, and either we accommodate ourselves to this world or violently revolt against it. But this violent revolt rests on a fundamental misunderstanding of how capitalism sustains itself. One need not turn to terrorism in order to rediscover the spirit of sacrifice. This spirit has never left. Every act that we perform in the capitalist system involves us in forms of sacrifice, even if the system renders them invisible. Instead of flying a plane into a building, all one need do to experience the most violent sacrifice is to buy a new iPhone.

### L – Consciousness Raising

#### The attempt to mobilize subjects on the basis of knowledge eschews enjoyment as the basis for action.

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan, Professor of English at the University of Vermont, USA, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis,” pgs. 172-176)//JRD

For emancipatory politics, the transformation of knowledge from a vehicle of liberation to an instrument of power has had devastating effects. Emancipatory politics has traditionally relied on knowledge in order to facilitate political change, and even today one of the primary operations of emancipatory politics is getting information out to citizens. In the minds of most people engaged in the project of emancipation, the fundamental task has been establishing class consciousness among the members of the working class. Class consciousness, according to this way of thinking, is the basis for substantive political change. As Georg Lukács puts it in History and Class Consciousness, “The fate of a class depends on its ability to elucidate and solve the problems with which history confronts it.”12 Political change depends, for someone like Lukács, on the knowledge that makes decisive action possible. As long as authority remains in the position of the traditional master, knowledge can have a revolutionary function. Historically, the primary problem for emancipatory politics involved access to education, which is why a key component of the communist program that Marx and Engels outline in The Communist Manifesto is universal access to public education. There are those on the side of emancipation who continue to insist that knowledge will be the source for political change. According to this position, people side with conservative policies against their own self-interest because they lack the proper information. They are the victims of propaganda, and emancipatory politics must respond by providing the missing knowledge. If not for big media’s control over knowledge, the thinking goes, subjects would cease to act against their self-interest and would begin to oppose contemporary capitalism in an active way. **For those who adopt this position, political activity consists in acts of informing, raising consciousness, and bringing issues to light.** But today the failures of consciousness-raising are evident everywhere. Such failures are the subject of Thomas Frank’s acclaimed analysis, What’s the Matter with Kansas? Frank highlights the proclivity of people in areas of the United States like Kansas to act politically in ways that sabotage their economic interests. He notes: “People getting their fundamental interests wrong is what American political life is all about.”13 The Right’s current success in the United States and around the world is not the sign that more people have become convinced that right-wing policies will benefit them. Instead, conservatism permits people a way of organizing their enjoyment in a way that today’s emancipatory politics does not. Emancipatory politics may offer a truer vision of the world, but the Right offers a superior way of enjoying. Traditionally, the primary advantage that emancipatory politics had in political struggle was its challenge to authority. When one took up the cause of emancipation, one took a stand against an entrenched regime of power and experienced enjoyment in this defiance. One can still see this form of enjoyment evinced in the revolutions of the Arab Spring in 2011. Though emancipatory activity always entailed a certain risk (even of death, to which the fate of innumerable revolutionaries attests), it nonetheless brought with it an enjoyment not found in everyday obedience and symbolic identity. In short, there was historically a strong libidinal component to emancipatory militancy that the risk it carried amplified rather than diminished. The liberating power of emancipatory activity is present in almost every political film. We see activists falling in love as they jointly embark on an emancipatory project or romance burgeoning as a fight for justice intensifies. This dynamic, attesting to the enjoyment inherent in militancy against the oppressive ruling order, manifests itself in Warren Beatty’s Reds (1981), Ken Loach’s Bread and Roses (2000), and Gillian Armstrong’s Charlotte Gray (2001), to name just a few of the many. In each case, the romance seems to spring out of the risk that militancy against an oppressive regime entails. The love that develops between Maya (Pilar Padilla) and Sam (Adrien Brody) in Bread and Roses sparks first at the moment when Maya helps Sam to elude corporate security agents at the office building where he is trying to help unionize the janitors. Maya risks losing her job as a janitor when she aids Sam, and this risk acts as the driving force for the eroticism between them. Conservatism has not traditionally provided much enjoyment of this type, but it has had its own appeal. It took the side of authority and stability. Whereas emancipatory politics could offer the enjoyment that comes from defiance of authority, conservatism could offer the enjoyment that comes from identification with it. This is the enjoyment that one feels when hearing one’s national anthem or saluting the flag. It resides in the fabric of the nation’s military uniform that makes the fingers touching it tingle. This eroticism is not that of emancipatory politics — and it is perhaps not as powerful — but it is nonetheless a form of eroticism. It produces a libidinal charge. The struggle between conservatism and emancipatory politics has historically been a struggle between two competing modes of organizing enjoyment with neither side having a monopoly. Despite the traditional emphasis that the forces of emancipation placed on knowledge, even in the past the struggle between emancipatory politics and conservatism centered on enjoyment rather than knowledge. In the political arena, knowledge is important only insofar as it relates to the way that subjects mobilize their enjoyment. If subjects see through ideological manipulation and have the proper knowledge, this does not necessarily inaugurate a political change. The knowledge that something is bad for us — a president or a Twinkie — **does not lessen the enjoyment that we receive from it. It is not that we have the ability to enjoy while disavowing our knowledge but more that the knowledge works to serve our enjoyment.** The enjoyment of a Twinkie does not derive from the physiological effect of sugar on the human metabolism but from the knowledge of the damage this substance does to the body. Knowing the harm that accompanies something actually facilitates our enjoyment of it, especially when we are capable of disavowing this knowledge. Enjoyment is distinct from bodily pleasures (which the Twinkie undoubtedly also provides); it depends on some degree of sacrifice that allows the subject to suffer its enjoyment. Sacrifice is essential to our capacity for enjoying ourselves. There is a fundamentally masochistic structure to enjoyment.14 It always comes in the form of an alien force that overcomes us from the outside. As Alenka Zupančič puts it, “It is not simply the mode of enjoyment of the neighbour, of the other, that is strange to me. The heart of the problem is that I experience my own enjoyment (which emerges along with the enjoyment of the other, and is even indissociable from it) as strange and hostile.”15 An initial experience of loss gives birth to the lost object around which we structure our enjoyment, and our subsequent enjoyment demands a return to the experience of loss. Through sacrifice and loss, we reconstitute the privileged object that exists only as an absence. This is why actually obtaining the privileged object necessarily disappoints: when the lost object becomes present, it loses its privileged status and becomes an ordinary empirical object. Knowledge thus helps us to enjoy not in the way that we might think — that is, by showing us what is good for our well-being — but by giving us something to sacrifice: if we know, for instance, that cigarettes are unhealthy and could kill us, this elevates the mundane fact of smoking into an act laced with enjoyment.16 With each puff, we repeat the act of sacrifice and return to the primordial experience of loss. The death that we bring on is not simply the price that we pay for smoking; it is the means through which we enjoy the act of smoking. In this sense, every cigarette is really killing the smoker. If it didn’t, the act would lose its ability to provide enjoyment (though it may still produce bodily pleasure).17 Under the rule of the traditional master, prohibition sustains the possibility for this type of enjoyment: we can enjoy an act because it transgresses a societal prohibition. As Lacan notes in Seminar VII, “Transgression in the direction of jouissance only takes place if it is supported by the oppositional principle, by the forms of the Law. If the paths to jouissance have something in them that dies out, that tends to make them impassable, prohibition, if I may say so, becomes its all-terrain vehicle.”18 Prohibition makes our enjoyment possible by offering us the possibility for sacrifice. We sacrifice the good and violate the prohibition. But prohibition no longer plays this role in contemporary society. No universal prohibition bars certain activities; instead, knowledge about the harm that activities cause begins to play the role that prohibition once played. We don’t avoid smoking simply because it is wrong but because we know the harm that it causes. We don’t refrain from extramarital sex because it is wrong but because we know the societal and physical dangers it entails. Even conservatives think and talk this way. When, for instance, conservatives argue for excluding information about condoms from sex education classrooms, they claim that we know condoms aren’t 100 percent safe in preventing the spread of hiv. In each case, the authority is knowledge, not law. The libidinal charge in politics involved with challenging the master has largely disappeared today, and now that libidinal charge has attached itself to challenging the experts, who represent the new agents of authority.

### L – Consciousness Raising – Race

#### They have missed the mark – racism is not a product of ignorance but one of enjoyment. Their politics can only ever re-entrench hierarchies of racialization as they represent racism as a caricature of epistemological formations rather than that of the unconscious. The truth of racial hierarchies lies not in the failure to know the horrors of racism but rather in the human, all too human horror of knowing in the first place.

McGowan 22 (Todd McGowan, Professor of English at the University of Vermont, USA, “The Bedlam of the Lynch Mob: Racism and Enjoying Through the Other,” Lacan and Race: Racism, Identity, and Psychoanalytic Theory, pgs. 19-21)//JRD

Where is the other? The contemporary proliferation of racism in spite of our knowledge about its wrongs suggests that we have an unconscious investment in racism that continues and multiplies. **Armed with education and a belief in racism’s fundamental immorality, people today should have no problem leaving racist ideas and practices behind.** But education and morality are not enough. **They are powerless in the face of an unconscious investment**, which provides the foundation for racism’s continuing appeal for those who indulge in it. The unconscious investment is the central pillar of racism’s intransigence. Unless one takes the unconscious as the starting point for making sense of racism’s appeal, the mystery of the enduring power of racism is almost impossible to decipher. Today, there is a proliferation of historical accounts of all the various manifestations of racism. These accounts make clear the extent of the problem, but they do not help us to resolve it because they never attack racism at the point where it has a hold over us. **The struggle against racism requires an engagement with the unconscious, but deciphering the unconscious appeal of racism places us on the difficult terrain of psychoanalytic interpretation**.1 When we look at the terminology deployed in the contemporary combat against racism, one might mistakenly assume that the combatants have already taken the unconscious into account. The predominance of the term unconscious bias specifically names this aspect of the psyche. But this apparent nod to psychoanalytic thought is ultimately misleading. Although the term unconscious bias has become a regular part of the anti-racist lexicon, the analysis of the unconscious has not. In fact, the proponents of the term often take pains to distinguish their thought from Freud’s. In Blindspot, their leading work on unconscious bias, Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald assure us that “an understanding of the unconscious workings of the mind has changed greatly in the century since Freud’s pathbreaking observations.”2 According to Banaji and Greenwald, Freud’s unscientific conception of the unconscious has given way to a scientifically verifiable one: we have now collectively moved beyond Freud’s failure to be scientific enough.3 But in the process of this shift, what has been lost is Freud’s insistence on the radical otherness of the unconscious in relation to consciousness. The problem manifests itself in the second part of the term unconscious bias. Bias suggests a distortion of knowing and suggests that the problem is confined to how we know. This term indicates the belief that racism represents a failure to know accurately. **But once one begins with the premise that the problem of racism is a problem of knowing, one necessarily misses the radicality of the problem.** Armed with this understanding, to correct our unconscious bias, we just need a little diversity training that teaches us that our biases are unfounded. All we need to do, in short, is to fill in the gaps of our knowledge. But **if racism is unconscious, this means that it is not simply a problem of knowing but a problem of enjoying.**4 We enjoy at odds with how we know. That is to say, we enjoy not in spite of knowing better but because we know better. Our unconscious investment in racism delivers an enjoyment that comes at the expense of what we know, when we transgress the norms that we know we should obey. **No matter how much we know better, this enjoyment will find a way to manifest itself. Instruction alone cannot alter how we enjoy.** The interchangeability of the term unconscious bias with implicit bias makes clear the problem. The reference to the unconscious is superficial and does not have anything to do with the unconscious that psychoanalysis theorizes. The type of theorizing about racism that sees it in terms of unconscious bias implicitly categorizes racism as an epistemological problem. Unconscious bias denotes racism that persons have without knowledge, not the part of racism that resists knowledge, which is the effect of the unconscious. **The unconscious isn’t simply a lack of knowledge. It is what one does without being able to know it prior to acting.** The unconscious acts ahead of our knowledge. Taking this understanding of the unconscious as our point of departure, we must reverse the relationship between racism and knowledge. **Racism is not the result of a bias in our knowing, but rather we have a bias in our knowing because of racism.** To find the root of racism we must look not at mistakes in knowing but at successes in enjoying. These successes occur through fantasy. An analysis of racism that focuses on the unconscious must take fantasy as its starting point.5 While not every society relies on a foundational racist fantasy, every society that has structural racism does. **Fantasy organizes enjoyment in a way that highlights threats to this enjoyment**, which is why it provides a foundation for obfuscating social inequalities.6 Racism manifests itself first and foremost not through an exclusionary legal or social apparatus that gives one race an elevated social position that it denies to others. The primary manifestation of racism is the racist fantasy. The racist fantasy serves as the foundation for the legal and social apparatus of discrimination that arises around it. It has primacy because it provides a way of organizing enjoyment for the members of a society that enables them to sustain the image of an unlimited and complete satisfaction. This fantasy becomes especially necessary in the capitalist universe. **Without the racist fantasy, people in capitalist society would lose faith in this image of total satisfaction.** Racism keeps the image of an unlimited satisfaction alive by erecting the racial other as a barrier to it. In order to confront racism, it is **not enough to make reference to what is not conscious, to our implicit biases.** We must recognize the unconscious fantasy that sustains racism and resists efforts at education or consciousness raising. **This fantasy remains despite the efforts at educating away the society’s racism.** Without broaching the fundamental role that the racist fantasy plays in the formation and perpetuation of racism, we will have no chance at addressing the racism that resists enlightenment and awareness. This combat has to involve itself in the enjoyment that the racist fantasy produces.7 Although there are purely individual fantasies, there are also collective ones that enable societies to cohere around them. The racist fantasy is the primary example of a collective fantasy.8 It establishes a bond between members of the society by separating those who belong from those who don’t belong through their mode of enjoying themselves. The irony is that the enjoyment of those who belong depends on their identification with the enjoyment of those who don’t. This identification occurs through the racist fantasy. The racist fantasy creates an avenue for members of the society to find enjoyment in a direction that doesn’t threaten the structure of the society but instead affirms it. The danger that enjoyment poses to the social order lessens when it occurs through the organizing principle of the racist fantasy, which channels it in socially innocuous ways. Even though we imagine that racism has deleterious effects on our bond with each other, that it harms the social order, the racist fantasy nonetheless can provide a social glue that holds a society together. Through the shared enjoyment that comes from a mutual investment in this fantasy, members of the society have a clear connection to each other. Those who don’t share in the fantasy, however, exist outside of the bond and are inherently suspect as members of the society. They are members of the society but don’t belong.**9 Although those invested in it have some conscious knowledge of the racist fantasy, the way that the fantasy organizes enjoyment is unconscious. It is thus impervious to knowledge.** The fact that the racist fantasy is responsible for much of the deployment of enjoyment in contemporary society means that **efforts at correcting our knowledge about racism will come to nothing.** The racist fantasy organizes the society’s enjoyment around racist resentment. We can learn about the wrongs of racism, but we need something more to undermine the racist fantasy that underwrites racism’s staying power. **Fantasies are resistant to greater knowledge because they concern how people enjoy rather than how they know.** **Racism is a fantasy problem, not a knowledge problem.** Racism sticks around in our era of increased knowledge about its wrongheadedness because we are psychically invested as a society in a fundamental racist fantasy. Although people may consciously want to put racism behind them, their unconscious desire clings to it as a source of enjoyment. **The path to this enjoyment runs through the underlying racist fantasy.**

### L – Communism

#### **Imagining a communist society is a thought experiment gone wrong that embraces the horror of the real, enables catastrophic dissatisfaction, and creates disaster**

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 197-199, 20 September 2016, MG)

Perhaps the most vexing question for those who challenge capitalist relations of production is the one that asks **what system will replace the capitalist one**. Communism has been discredited, and those who hold onto the idea of communism, like Alain Badiou and Slavoj Žižek, have no concrete account of what this idea would look like in practice. It is communism as an ideal, as Badiou readily admits, rather than as a concrete historical possibility. Their communism **informs their thinking and practice**, but it is not a system ready to be imposed. Other champions of communism, like Antonio **Negri and** Michael **Hardt**, also fall victim to this inability to envision the communist future in anything other than superficial and ambiguous terms. They are cautious not to invoke any concrete descriptions that might function as rallying cries for a political movement. Still others, like Simon Critchley or Judith Butler, champion resistance to capitalism as an end in itself and offer no sense of an alternative.26

Though the political position of unceasing resistance to capitalism and the state seems proximate to a focus on means, one should make an absolute distinction between them. Resistance conspicuously avoids the possibility of taking power. Privileging the means, on the other hand, represents an alternative organization of society, in which productivity and the final cause are no longer determinative. A politics that privileges the means has no problem determining the structure of the social order. In contrast with the proponents of resistance like Butler and Critchley, proponents of the means insist of seizing the reins, even if only indirectly in the manner of the people of Macondo in One Hundred Years of Solitude. The champions of the means don’t display the caution that proliferates among the partisans of resistance.

This caution is perhaps an effect of the **failed communist experiment** of the twentieth century. Even Badiou, who is not reluctant to embrace the signifier communism, understands that the revolutionary mindset of the twentieth century cannot serve the twenty-first. The revolutionaries of the twentieth century produced tragedies that the revolutionaries of the twenty-first century **must avoid**.27 The embrace of the **horror of the real leads straight to the gulag,** which is the effect of thought attempting to outstrip the act. The catastrophes of the twentieth century, as Badiou sees it, are the result of an effort to **think a new system into being** rather than to maintain fidelity to the material revolutionary event. The result in the twenty-first century is a philosophical caution, even among the most committed revolutionaries.

In one sense, this philosophical caution about advocating for a new socioeconomic system is warranted. It reflects, on this single issue, the victory of Hegel over Marx. For Marx, the only purpose of philosophical thought consists in its contribution to political practice. As the final thesis on Feuerbach has it, philosophy must forego interpretation in order to commit itself to political transformation. Hegel’s ambitions for philosophy are much more modest. He claims that any political ambitions are simply beyond philosophy’s province. As he puts it in the preface to Elements of the Philosophy of Right, “As far as the individual is concerned, each individual is in any case a child of his time; thus philosophy, too, is its own time comprehended in thoughts. It is just as foolish to imagine that any philosophy can transcend its contemporary world as that an individual can overleap his own time or leap over Rhodes.”28 According to Hegel, it would seem that philosophy can play **no role at all in politics** other than identifying the proper questions that our epoch poses and interpreting them. The philosopher cannot theorize a new future.

But even though the philosopher cannot anticipate the future socioeconomic system that might arise after capitalism, she or he can identify how another system **already exists implicitly** within the current system. This is possible with the category of the means. Though capitalism incessantly transforms means into ends, nothing necessitates this transformation, and in fact, it always occurs with many hiccups. The means are always present along with the end. Thus, privileging the means represents the alternative to capitalism waiting to be discovered. Its discovery depends on a philosophical act on our part.

Usually, theorists cannot take the lead in revolutionary upheavals. When they do, **disaster** almost **inevitably follows.** But they can forge an approach to the world that reveals the unsustainability of the capitalist system and thereby make the alternative readily apparent. This is what transpires when we abandon the final cause that underwrites capitalist productivity and insist on the means for its own sake and not for what it will produce. By doing so, we **do not magically leap** outside the constraints of our present situation; we do not “jump over Rhodes.” Instead, we show that there is no need to make this jump. The means is a future that is already present within capitalism, and the task of the theorist—or even the task of the revolutionary—consists not in creating a new system but in identifying the implicit presence of this new system within the existing one.

Privileging the means is an alternative system to capitalism existing within the capitalist framework. By bringing this system to light, we don’t unleash productive capacity in the way that Marx dreamed. Instead, we unleash our capacity to pursue means for their own sake, what Agamben calls means without end. We immerse ourselves in **the traumatic satisfaction of work** that matters more than its goal. The product becomes a by-product of the means, not the end that the means aims at accomplishing. It is only in such a system of pure means that we can **finally abandon the tyranny of the final cause**.

### L – Deleuze

#### Deleuze and Guattari are goofy – the system wants you to invest into desire which cements psychic dependence on capitalism

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 63-65, 20 September 2016, MG)

Capitalism has a **parasitic** relationship to signification. It mirrors the effects that language has on the speaking being, while cementing the **psychic dependence** that the speaking being has on the illusory desire of the Other that emerges through signification. Capitalism remolds the subject in its own image and protects the subject from confronting its own traumatic satisfaction. It is, of course, possible to break this hold, to which the bare fact of recognizing it attests. But doing so requires discovering the extent and power of its reach.

Many critics of capitalism have failed to see that desire itself— specifically, the belief that we might realize our desire—is the **problem** rather than the solution. In an oft-cited statement from AntiOedipus (their treatise attacking both psychoanalysis and capitalism as they function together), Gilles **Deleuze and** Félix **Guattari** claim, “Desire can never be deceived. Interests can be deceived, unrecognized, or betrayed, but not desire.”32 Though Deleuze and Guattari recognize how capitalism appropriates desire—for them, in a manner of speaking, it is nothing but the appropriation of desire— they do not see how desire, though it might not be deceived, can itself be a deception. Anti-Oedipus is a **panegyric to desire**. Capitalism may function through desire, but in the end, it puts the brakes on desire and doesn’t take desire far enough. What we need, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is more desire, more refusals of restrictions on desire.

Given the identification that I see at work between capitalism and the fantasy of unrestricted desire, what I am proposing here is an **anti-Anti-Oedipus**. Deleuze and Guattari attack capitalism and psychoanalysis for the obstacles they erect toward the expansion of desire. But the problem isn’t the obstacles capitalism creates; it is that capitalism’s contingent obstacles **obscure the necessity of the obstacle**. Capitalism’s deception consists in convincing us, as it convinces Deleuze and Guattari, that desire can transcend its failures and overcome all barriers. We don’t need more desire, but rather the recognition that **the barrier is what we desire.** It is this recognition that provides the key for divesting ourselves from the appeal of capitalism.

Even though capitalism’s incessant self-reproduction seems to mimic the structure of subjectivity—constant repetition for its own sake—this movement, as manifested in the capitalist system, always has a goal to realize. The capitalism system must promise a better and wealthier future. Neither individual capitalists nor the system as a whole can function without the goal of future enrichment, whereas the subject always operates without the possibility of a more satisfying future. What separates the apparently repetitive circulation of capital from the subject’s repetition is accumulation. **The subject seeks loss, not successful accumulation**, which means that any attempt to link capitalism to subjectivity involves a **category error.** The subject’s satisfaction does not require, and in fact disdains, the illusion of gain that sustains the capitalist system.

The capitalist subject oscillates between dissatisfaction and pleasure, between absence and presence, and it cannot recognize the satisfaction that underlies this oscillation. This subject remains, however, a subject animated by a lost object. As such, it derives its satisfaction from the series of failures to arrive at the pleasure it seeks. Late in Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Freud suggests what was for him at the time a disturbing hypothesis. He says tentatively, “The pleasure principle seems actually to serve the death instincts.”33 If we understand “death instincts” here as the subject’s attachment to loss, this brief sentence at the conclusion of Freud’s brief book provides the most thoroughgoing critique of capitalism that anyone has ever written. The recognition that we are not really pursuing pleasure frees us from the **chains of capitalism** more completely than **any other revolutionary gesture**.

#### Deleuze and Guattari can’t explain the denial of desire but we can – reject the goofballs

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 129-130, 20 September 2016, MG)

The brilliance of Ricardo’s formulation has stood the test of time, and we should have a proper appreciation for it. Prominent defenders of capitalism in the twentieth century, like F. A. Hayek and Milton Friedman, continued to reason like this in order to justify the ways of capitalism to humanity. Ricardo’s logic cannot be countered because it is perfectly circular: capitalism gratifies human desires, but it is only through the free market that we can know those desires. Ricardo never articulates the nature of human desires prior to their fulfillment, which renders his solution so elegant and utterly irrefutable. From this perspective, any attempt to argue for an alternative would ipso facto represent a **loss of touch** with desire as such. Though Ricardo’s argument is irrefutable, it does rest on the vitalist assumption that desire is natural, that it emerges out of life itself. According to this assumption, we simply cannot be made to desire what we don’t already desire.

This vitalism founds capitalist ideology, but it founders when it runs into the problem of sacrifice. According to vitalist thesis, sacrifice must be the result of some type of deception—either people being deceived or deceiving themselves. The vitalist analysis thus consists of denouncing those responsible for this deception, those who coerce others into accepting the negation of life. In A Thousand Plateaus, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari place the blame on the figure of the priest.37 Anyone who insists on the necessity of sacrifice and lack, like the psychoanalyst or the Hegelian philosopher, occupies, according to Deleuze and Guattari, the position of the priest and contributes to the denial of desire.

But what neither **Deleuze and Guattari** nor the defenders of capitalism can explain is how the **denial of desire emerges as a possibility**. If there is only life, and sacrifice comes as a monstrous deviation from life, the vitalist cannot explain what enables this deviation to occur. In other words, life must already **negate itself**— being must be self-negating—in order for subjects to have the capacity for sacrificing themselves. There must be a space within life for sacrifice in order for priests to come along and convince people to sacrifice themselves. The victims are either somewhat invested in their own victimization or completely ~~stupid~~, and even this ~~stupidity~~ would have to receive a philosophical reckoning.

Despite its conceptual beauty, Ricardo’s vision of a closed loop between capitalism and desire **must be rejected** for its failure to account for the origin of desire. The test of capitalism as an economic system is **not** that it meets all the needs that appear within it, since this is one it can’t fail. The test is rather whether or not capitalism can **permit the avowal of the satisfaction that it produces**. This is a test that capitalism does in fact fail. Capitalism relies on the violent sacrifice of workers, consumers, and even capitalists themselves, and it uses this sacrifice to produce satisfied subjects. But this sacrifice can play no part in capitalism’s ideological selfunderstanding. In response to this failure to make sacrifice explicit, reactionary alternatives to capitalism have proliferated. These alternatives seek a system in which they can rediscover the sacrifice that capitalism appears to deny to us. The first thinker to focus the critique of capitalism on its failure with regard to sacrifice was Georges Bataille, an anticapitalist apostle of sacrifice.

### L – Expertism

#### Reject their illusions of grandeur and dictum of expertise.

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan, Professor of English at the University of Vermont, USA, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis,” pgs. 170-172)//JRD

When experts become the voice of authority, the political landscape undergoes a dramatic change, the ramifications of which have become increasingly visible in the last few decades. The transformation of authority that began in the seventeenth century realized itself at the conclusion of the twentieth, and the result has been a reversal of traditional political alignments. This social revolution strips the forces of social change of their favorite weapon — knowledge — because use of this weapon has the effect of turning subjects against social change, despite the fact that that change is clearly in their best interests. In today’s world, expert knowledge necessarily confronts the subject as an external imperative laced with the power of prohibition. The rise of the expert corresponds to the increasing complexity and treacherousness of everyday life; contemporary existence seems to demand expert analysis to render it navigable. In his account of the emergence of what he calls a “risk society,” Ulrich Beck notices the politics of expert knowledge changing sides. He points out: “The non-acceptance of the scientific definition of risks is not something to be reproached as ‘irrationality’ in the population; but quite to the contrary, it indicates that the cultural premises of acceptability contained in scientific and technical statements on risks are wrong." The technical risk experts are mistaken in the empirical accuracy of their implicit value premises, specifically in their assumptions of what appears acceptable to the population.”9 Experts provide guidelines that allow subjects to navigate the contours of contemporary society, in which risk confronts us everywhere, but the experts perform this function with no proper sense of what the population desires. In this process, experts inevitably assume the role of authority figures. As Beck’s statement above indicates, from the perspective of the general population itself, the relationship between the expert and the population is adversarial. Through psychoanalytic thought, we can gain insight into the ramifications of the rise of the expert authority and the decline of the master. The emergence of the expert as the figure of authority fundamentally changes the political terrain, and our political thinking must adjust to this transformation. Psychoanalytic thought represents a privileged vehicle for making the adjustment. Combating the expert is much more difficult than combating the master: the knowledge that would subvert mastery becomes part of the power that the expert wields and thus loses its subversive power. A different political program — one that focuses on enjoyment rather than knowledge — becomes necessary because the master and the expert take up radically different positions relative to enjoyment. Unlike the master, the earlier form of social authority, the expert not only prohibits enjoyment but also appears to embody this enjoyment through the act of laying down regulations. The expert enjoys informing subjects about the dangers they face or the ways they should alter their behavior, and it is this enjoyment that subjects rebel against. The enjoyment that the expert derives from providing counsel is the explicit focus of Peter Segal’s Anger Management (2003), which finds comedy in the abuse that an anger management therapist heaps on his client. The film recounts the travails of a timid businessman, Dave Buznik (Adam Sandler), who is sentenced to anger management therapy aft er a misunderstanding occurs between a flight attendant and him while he is traveling. His therapist, Dr. Buddy Rydell ( Jack Nicholson), practices an aggressive treatment that involves intimidating Buznik, screaming at him, and even invading his personal life. At the end of the film, rather than helping Buznik, Rydell appears to have wooed Buznik’s girlfriend away from him and basically destroyed his life. Here we see all the ways that the expert enjoys deploying knowledge, and this enjoyment occurs at the expense of the subject receiving the advice. But in the last instance Anger Management remains fully ensconced in the regime of the expert, despite the comedy it tries to create at the expense of this regime. The film’s ending reveals that Rydell has set up the entire experience — including the incident with the flight attendant and the sentencing by the judge — in order to impel Buznik to express himself, especially to his girlfriend. Rather than a course in anger management, Rydell has actually been offering a course in self-expression. This denouement transforms the film’s (and the viewer’s) relationship to the expert: rather than impugning the rule of expertise and knowledge, the film becomes an affirmation of it. The ending of the film doesn’t simply spoil an otherwise trenchant critique of expert rule but infects the critique throughout the film. The critique — and the comedy, unfortunately — never go far enough because the idea that the expert really knows and really has the best interests of the client at heart informs the entirety of the film. The film’s investment in the expert that it appears to critique portends the film’s failure as both comedy and critique. The rule of the expert has such a degree of hegemony today that it is difficult to think of any films, novels, and other artworks that attempt to contest it or expose the expert’s enjoyment without ultimately partaking of it. On the other hand, the works that allow audiences to enjoy along with the expert multiply throughout the culture. Television shows such as csi: Crime Scene Investigations and House M.D. display this dynamic in its most open form: the shows present a problem that appears utterly unsolvable to the viewer, and then they reveal the expert’s genius at finding a solution. Expert knowledge — a knowledge not accessible to the ordinary subject — has all the answers and thus becomes the undisputable locus of authority. The popularity of these shows derives from their ability to allow audiences to share in the expert’s enjoyment, an enjoyment that typically is the site of trauma for the subject. Contact with expert authority has a traumatic effect on the subject because of the proximity of the expert. While the old master remained at a distance, the expert is always in the subject’s face, like Dr. Buddy Rydell in Anger Management, never allowing the subject room to breathe. As Anger Management shows, this proximity has the effect of stimulating the subject. Under the rule of the expert, subjects experience what Eric Santner calls “a sustained traumatization induced by exposure to, as it were, fathers who [know] too much about living human beings.”10 Exposure to this type of authority, to “this excess of knowledge,” produces “an intensification of the body [that] is first and foremost a sexualization.”11 Instead of emancipating the subject, knowledge traumatizes and plays the central role in the subjection of the subject to the order of social regulation.

### L—Liberatory Transgression

#### Their affirmation of transgressive violence enables a will to destruction that creates the conditions for brutal antiblack violence

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 27-30)//guyB

\*\*TW: intense depictions of violence

In his Ethics seminar, Lacan associates true jouissance precisely with transgression. Though arguing that fantasy, or what he calls the “entropy” of the signifier that must ever miss the mark of the Real, is “the sole regular point at which we have access to the nature of jouissance,” Lacan also identifies a “jouissance of transgression” that is “beyond the phallus” or fantasy object of pleasure, one that emerges from violation of the limits imposed by the Symbolic regularity of moralistic and judicial laws.71 Maintaining that prohibition is the “all-terrain vehicle” that drives the subject through what is “impassable” in the “paths to jouissance,” Lacan asserts that “without a transgression there is no access to jouissance.”72 Lacan’s thinking here returns to the Freudian notion that “**civilization is based upon renunciation of impulse gratification**” and to Freud’s conclusion that “wherever the community suspends its reproaches the suppression of evil desire also ceases.”73 I read slavery as involving just such a suspension or loosening of moral restrictions, and I argue that, most especially in the South, this allows with impunity transgression of the law and emergence of the evil desires that agitate around the internal emptiness characteristic of the subject. The slaves’ narratives themselves vividly display these evil desires and the cruelty they unleash. The **narratives of both Brown and Douglass depict the illicit murders of slaves subjected to the transgressive power of white masters and citizens**. Douglass describes the case of a slave named Demby who runs into a creek to escape a whipping by the overseer, who gives him to the count of three to come out of the water and then proceeds with “consummate coolness” and “savage barbarity” to shoot down his “standing victim” in front of a crowd of slaves.74 Douglass states that Demby’s “mangled body sank out of sight, and blood and brains marked the water where he stood.”75 Not only was this “horrid crime” never “submitted to judicial investigation,” since it was witnessed only by slaves, but in its wake, Douglass relates, its executer’s “fame as an overseer went abroad.”76 Here it is through the capacity granted whites by dictates of slavery to transgress the laws of the land that the overseer accesses a means of jouissance, solidifying his hierarchal fantasy relation to being while also breaching the legislated limits of Symbolic activity to express evil desires to kill and destroy that otherwise would be socially curtailed. In slavery, even the law itself promotes its own transgression. As Brown observes, “Where the slave is placed by law entirely under the control of a man who claims him, body and soul, as property, what else could be expected than the most depraved social practices?”77 The transgressions of the master depicted by ex-slaves point to slavery’s ability to unleash “the unconscious aggression” and the “frightening core of the destrudo” that Freud names the death drive.78 This death drive is always “for an Other-thing” than what is “registered in the signifying chain” of the Symbolic, and it is thus marked by a “**will to destruction**.”79 Aimed at the Real, the subject of the destrudo pursues an annihilating path that both decimates the other and unhinges the self from those Symbolic moorings through which subjective identity and meaning are grounded. Douglass describes most directly the birth of this destructive will in his discussion of his mistress Mrs. Auld, a “woman of the kindest heart and finest feelings,” whose exposure to “the fatal poison of irresponsible power” leads to the corruption of a gentle, balanced self-identity.80 Douglass notes, “That cheerful eye, under the influence of slavery, soon became red with rage, the voice, made all of sweet accord, changed to one of harsh and horrid discord, and that angelic face gave place to that of a demon.”81 Ultimately positioning jouissance beyond the Symbolic, Lacan argues that **jouissance “begins with a tickle and ends in a blaze of petrol.**”82 It is this consumption of his mistress by the hellish blaze of her transgressive jouissance that Douglass displays to be the result of her acquisition of power over slaves. What her slaves allow her is access to that central excluded core that is “at the heart” of the subject but “beyond” him or her, the “interior or emptiness” of which the subject does not know to whom it belongs, whether “to me or to nobody.”83 **Driven toward the other in pursuit of this emptiness beyond the Symbolic**, Douglass’ mistress travels a destructive path that leaves her only a few steps behind the lady Mrs. Hick, who Douglass relates murdered his “wife’s cousin” by “mangling her person in the most horrible manner, breaking her nose and breastbone with a stick, so that the poor girl expired in a few hours afterward. Narratives such as Douglass’ and Brown’s allow us to see slavery as involving the approach toward a “central emptiness” where, once reached, the other’s “body breaks into pieces.”85 In the subject’s approach to this lack, the racial other is reduced to the condition of what Lacan calls a “part object, . . . silhouetted there, separated from us and rising up . . . in the midst of a charnel house figure.”86 When the other is the route to the self, the other disappears, not only as a living being whose subjective existence one fails to acknowledge beyond this other’s relation to the fantasy object, but also as a source of the shaming gaze that tames one’s transgressive desires. Lacan presents **the gaze as the look from the other that “surprises” the subject** “in the function of voyeur, disturbs him” in the actions through which he pursues his transgressive desires, “overwhelms him and reduces him to a feeling of shame.”87 I read slavery as an attempt at eliding the gaze that may tame the master’s transgressive pursuit of the Real. What we see in Douglass’ description of the overseer is precisely the failure of the gaze of the slave community witnessing the murder to establish the limits produced by shame. This breach of the limit by the overseer allows for a Symbolic restructuring of his identity and a growth in his popularity. But what we see in Douglass’ Mrs. Auld is that **breaching the limit strays one from the psychic path of desire** and leads one not merely to a restructuring of identity but, more importantly, to **the dissolving of the subjective limits that grant identity Symbolic structure.** Where the gaze is “the object that presents each [subjective] desire with its universal rule, by materializing its cause, in binding to it the subject’s division,” slavery forestalls the shame that may materialize the fact of that subjective limitation that is castration.88 Not only is the slave’s potential position as holder of the shaming gaze jeopardized by slavery, but the return look of all Symbolic Others is deflected by the social sanctioning of transgression. Without such enabling restraints placed on jouissance, the subject, who is most properly a desiring subject founded upon lack, **devolves into a subject merely of the drive, advancing precipitously toward a destruction of both self and other.**

### L – Love

#### Their insistence on selling the ethic of love for the price of the ballot cements traumatic relations and forces subjects to experience dissatisfaction – an ethic of love is synonymous with an ethic of capitalism

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 200-204, 20 September 2016, MG)

LOVE FOR SALE

Love seems like a **capitalist plot**. The prospect of falling in love and the process associated with it form the lifeblood of many corporations—those dedicated to the sale of diamond rings, roses, chocolate truffles, flights to Paris, and so on. The ways of love that redound to benefit of capitalism are not visible only on February 14. It is difficult to look at the array of commodities available in today’s world and not see in almost every one some influence of the fantasy of falling in love. Gym memberships, diet soda, mascara, and leather jackets all hold within them the potential to render us worthy of love. Perhaps no one goes to the gym consciously trying to create a lovable body, but keeping oneself in proper shape has some relationship to acquiring and keeping a lover. Those who are fit tend to have much better prospects.1

Even if we are unfit and have long odds for acquiring an actual lover, capitalism provides almost **infinite opportunities for the fantasy of love.** The romance novelist sells love through an impossible fantasy scenario, and even the video game manufacturer promises the social outcast the possibility of heroism that would make this outcast worthy of love. Beer commercials promise love relations if we choose the proper beer, and jewelry advertisements assure us that our proposal will be accepted if we purchase the proper ring.2 There seems to be no terrain free of the fantasy of love within the capitalist universe. Though love emerges earlier in human history than capitalism, it appears as if capitalism **invented love ex nihilo**, given how useful it has become for fostering the subject’s investment in capitalist relations of production.

The commodity status of love becomes clearest in the case of dating services. The dating service is not simply a refuge for those who fail at falling in love on their own and therefore require assistance. Instead, it provides the paradigm for love in the capitalist system. Its structure is so significant that it is almost impossible to understand how love operates within capitalism without examining the structure of the dating service. One often turns to a dating service out of desperation, and it is this desperation that gives the dating service its revelatory power.

One pays the dating service for the possibility of falling in love. Unlike the gym or the jewelry store, it offers a direct path to love. I sign up in hopes of finding someone with whom I might fall in love without having to go to the trouble of sculpting my body or finding the perfect necklace that would render me worthy of love. The directness of the dating service is the source of the ignominy attached to it. But this direct route provided by the dating service lays bare the commodity status of love under capitalism even more clearly than the advertisements surrounding Valentine’s Day. This clarity stems from the way the dating service arranges compatible partners.

The dating service demands that clients list their favorable qualities. When I compile such a list, I portray myself as a desirable and potentially lovable commodity. I offer myself up to the dating service for others to examine, test-drive, and perhaps purchase. To do this, I must transform myself into a series of qualities and preferences that function as an advertisement for myself. The features that render me more appealing as a commodity are necessarily the ones that I emphasize, and I pass over in silence the features that would lessen my exchange value. I highlight my sense of humor and my doctorate in macroeconomics while making no mention of my baldness and chronic bad breath. Even my preferences become part of my commodity status. My love for the outdoors or for watching classic movies helps to render me more appealing. Preferences advertise me as much as qualities do. This mode of self-presentation reveals that one must transform oneself into a commodity when one embarks on the quest for love.

But the dating service doesn’t simply require that prospective lovers list their qualities and preferences. They must also choose what they want in their love object. After purchasing an account at the dating service, I must create a profile of my desires, and the service will attempt to match my desires with the appropriate object. For instance, I tell the service that I prefer men in their forties with brown eyes who like to read crime fiction and play chess. Just as I go into a grocery store with a shopping list for the items that I believe will realize my desire, I provide the dating service with a description of the characteristics that I find desirable in a romantic partner. But unlike at the grocery store, I go to the dating service in search of love, not just a carton of ice cream that would provide an inherently fleeting satisfaction for my desire.

The commodity that the dating service sells is much more valuable than those sold by the grocery store because it carries with it the illusion of a complete satisfaction. No one believes that eating a particular kind of ice cream will provide such a lasting satisfaction that I will never desire ice cream again, but many in capitalist society believe that finding one’s soul mate will permanently solve the problem of desire for a love object. This difference bespeaks the pivotal role love has within capitalism. It is not just one commodity among many but the central commodity. One might say that all other commodities are modeled on the love object rather than vice versa.3

But in addition to exposing the commodity structure of love in the capitalist universe, the dating service enables subjects to bypass **the inherently traumatic nature of the love encounter**. The list of desirable qualities that I provide the dating service is the key to the service’s ideological function. Such a list attempts to remove the trauma of love by eliminating its unforeseen power, its ability to attack the subject at the most inconvenient time and in the most unanticipated form. Though we may have a particular type that we find attractive, the beloved doesn’t necessarily fit this type. In fact, we can fall in love with someone because she or he isn’t the sort of object that usually appeals to us, not because she or he is. The dating service tries to mask the unexpectedness of love by making it thoroughly predictable. The dating service transforms love from a disruption into a stable structure for one’s life.4

The permanence attached to the love object is central to the role that **love plays within capitalism**. Though many people use dating services just to discover temporary sexual partners, the idea of finding a permanent relation looms large for the clients of these services. Even if marriage goes completely out of style, the idea of loving someone else “forever” probably will not. This idea is not purely ideological. It reflects the ability of **love to disrupt the course of everyday life** and to introduce the eternal into the temporal. But it also reflects the promise **inherent in every commodity**, the promise of a permanent fulfillment of one’s desire that the commodity will never keep.

Like the typical commodity, love always keeps the subject coming back for more. One seeks either to rekindle love with one’s partner or to find someone new. In terms of love’s connection to the commodity, there is no difference between renewing one’s vows, going on a second honeymoon, and leaving one’s spouse for a newer model. In each case, the subject **experiences the dissatisfaction** associated with having the commodity and seeks a new form of the commodity in order to ameliorate that dissatisfaction. Novelty is crucial to keeping love alive within capitalism, even if novelty involves varying relations with the same person. The logic of the commodity rules in the domain of love. One purchase is never enough, despite the claims that the salesperson at the dating service or the priest at the wedding makes.

The existence of the dating service in some form or another is not a recent phenomenon. Though no shadchan had an online presence until recently, the activity of this Jewish matchmaker appears very early in the recorded history of the Jews. But the dating service changes the nature of the office that the matchmaker performs, just as contemporary capitalism changes the nature of love. **The dating service is a synecdoche for capitalist society as such**. When I go to the dating service, I seek love as an object available for purchase, and this is the form in which love appears throughout the capitalist universe.

Love that one can purchase is no longer love, however. It is romance. Though capitalism appears to rely heavily on love, it necessitates a transformation from love to romance. This is capitalism’s ideological operation in the domain of love. By transforming love into romance and thus into a commodity, capitalism provides **respite from the trauma of love**. Capitalist society loves to talk about love, but even as it does so, it remakes love, which involves an object that we can’t have, into romance, which involves an object that we can.

#### Embracing an ethic of love is a narcissistic illusion that traumatizes the subject and forces others to change in dissatisfying ways

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 211-213, 20 September 2016, MG)

Throughout most of his seminars, Jacques Lacan attacks love as a **narcissistic illusion**. When the subject loves, it places the other in **exactly the same position that the ego occupies** in the narcissistic relation. Both narcissism and love enable the subject to **short-circuit the relationship** with social authority while still remaining within the domain of that authority. One feels free without having to endure the groundlessness of actual freedom. Though he does see the possibility of an exception, Lacan says in a statement representative of his overall attitude, “love is only accessible on the condition that it remains **always narrowly narcissistic**.”16 While in love with someone else, one loves **oneself through this other**. No one feels like a narcissist when she or he loves, but this is just the result of love’s deception. Nonetheless, narcissism is not the last word on love.

Even though love puts the other in the ego’s stead, the relation is always rockier than the narcissistic one. Narcissism is ultimately a **disappointing relation** that the subject cannot indefinitely sustain, but the love object **traumatizes the subject in a way the ego cannot**. The ego is just an image, an ideal that the subject has constructed for itself, but in love the image is **always incomplete**. The other has the capacity to **elicit the subject’s love** insofar as it remains irreducible to its image.

Initially, this irreducibility to the image provokes our desire. We desire what we can’t see in the image on the basis of what we can. That is to say, the beloved object does not just remain a desired object. Our desire evokes the desire of the object, and love involves the encounter of these overlapping desires. The encounter with the desire emanating from the beloved object transforms love into an experience different from desire. Desire enables the subject to remain at a distance that love **obliterates**. Herein lies the radicality of love in relation to desire.

The beloved object’s response gives love its disruptiveness. In love, what we can’t see reaches back toward us. This is a point that Lacan makes in his seminar devoted to the phenomenon of the transference (and a lengthy reading of Plato’s Symposium), which includes his most sustained discussion of love. He claims, “love is what passes in this object toward which we **hold out our hand** through our own desire, and which, at the moment when our desire makes its fire break out, allows for an instant this response to appear to us, this other hand that is held out toward us as the other’s desire.”17 Where desire encounters the illusion of an object at the point where it expected something substantial, love encounters what it **didn’t expect to encounter**. 18

The response from the beloved—“the hand held out toward us”— jolts the subject out of its everyday existence. One cannot predict this moment or work to bring it into being, and it thus appears as a secular miracle. In love the object does not stay in its proper position. The response to desire **forces the subject to change its life entirely** without any clear guidance as to how it should do so. Inasmuch as it strips away all possibility of an ordinary life, love **suffuses the subject with satisfaction**. Life no longer just goes on.

Love in an act of proximity. The lover refuses to remain at a safe distance and bombards the subject with its mode of satisfaction, a mode of satisfaction around which the subject must try to orient itself. This satisfaction is what we almost always recoil from, but in the act of love we embrace it. This is why lovers can accompany each other in the most private moments: they can tell each other their most revelatory dreams or allow the other into the bathroom with them. What would alienate or even repulse everyone else becomes integral to the love relation.

We know that someone is in love when the beloved’s most repellant qualities undergo a complete reversal of valence. A person’s unpleasant smell, slovenly attire, or obnoxious eating habits become appealing quirks rather than reasons for keeping a distance. The lover embraces the most unflattering characteristics of the beloved and treats them as sublime indexes of the beloved’s worth. The unpleasant odor resulting from a refusal to shower, for instance, would become an indication of the beloved object’s disdain for obsessive daily rituals with which others waste their time. There is no quality so **universally negative** that it could not undergo this transubstantiation in the act of love: fat can become cuddliness, emaciation can become fitness, bad attire can become idiosyncratic style, and so on. In contrast to desire, love depends on the embrace of what is undesirable in the object.19

### L – Knowledge Production

#### Formulating alternative systems of knowledge production is a ruse of progress and solely amplifies the power of the death drive, confronting bodies with a horror of knowing

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 17-19, 1 July 2013, MG)

But the inescapability of the idea of progress goes still further. It is not just the normative appeal that implies this idea; any system of thought, **even one that confines itself to pure descriptions**, inevitably points toward the **possibility of progress**. The act of articulating a system of thought implies the belief that a better world is possible and that the knowledge the system provides will assist in realizing this better world. If I didn’t believe in the possibility of improvement, I would never bother to articulate any system at all. The very act of enunciating **even the most pessimistic system** attests to a fundamental optimism and **hope for progress beyond the status quo**. This is true for an extreme pessimist like Arthur Schopenhauer as much as it is for an avowed utopian like Charles Fourier. The position from which one enunciates the pessimistic system is the position invested in the idea of progress, even when the enunciated content of the system completely denounces the idea. Though the good may be impossible to realize, it is also impossible to abandon entirely. The production of knowledge itself points, often despite itself, toward a better future.

This link between knowledge and progress is the controlling idea of the Enlightenment. In his essay “What Is Enlightenment?” Kant emphasizes that Enlightenment requires a situation where one is free to gain knowledge, where one has “freedom to make public use of one’s reason in all matters.”27 In the act of gaining knowledge through reasoning, subjects **facilitate progress** as they put this knowledge into use by restructuring society. Knowledge, for Kant and for all Enlightenment thinkers, has an inherently progressive leaning. It frees us from the tyranny of the past and from the drudgery of repetition. Progress is only possible because we have the ability to know the past and to learn from it.28 The Enlightenment’s belief in progress derives from its conception of the human subject as a subject of knowledge, a subject who fundamentally wants to know.

For psychoanalysis, the link between knowledge and progress **dooms the possibility of progress**. Rather than desiring to know, the subject desires not to know and organizes its existence around the **avoidance of knowledge**. In “Le séminaire XXI” Lacan states this straightforwardly: “There has been no desire for knowledge but . . . **a horror of knowing**.”29 The knowledge that we avoid is knowledge of the unconscious because this knowledge **confronts us with the power of the death drive** and the inescapability of repetition. What we don’t know — our particular form of ~~stupidity~~ — allows us to move forward, to view the future with hopefulness. Without this fundamental refusal to know, the subject simply could not continue.30

Freud’s great revolution in the history of thought stems from his conception of the subject as a subject of desire rather than as a subject of knowledge. Where thinkers from Plato to Kant consider an inherent striving to know as essential to subjectivity, not only does Freud envision a different essential drive, he contends that the subject wants not to know in order to continue to desire. The subject acts not on the basis of what it knows but on the basis of how it desires. We might imagine linking these two ideas of the subject if we could link the act of knowing and the act of desiring.

But knowledge and desire are at odds: the subject doesn’t want to know what it desires or how it enjoys. Its knowledge **remains necessarily incomplete,** and the gap within knowledge is the trigger for the subject’s desire and the point at which it enjoys. The unconscious emerges out of the subject’s incapacity for knowing its own enjoyment. Conscious knowledge is not simply unable to arrive at the knowledge of enjoyment and its traumatic origin; it actively functions as a barrier to this knowledge. Conscious knowledge thwarts access to the unconscious, and, as a result, the conscious effort to know **continually defeats itself**.

Psychoanalysis attempts to fill this fundamental lacuna in the project of knowledge by demanding that the subject abandon the project in its traditional manifestation. It constructs a space that brackets conscious knowledge in order that the subject might discover the unconscious. The fundamental rule of psychoanalysis — one must reveal not what one knows but the words that come to mind — aims at bringing to light what the subject doesn’t want to know. A gap exists between what the subject knows and what it says. In the **act of speaking**, the subject says more than it consciously knows, and this excess is the unconscious — a knowledge that the subject has without knowing it. The paradox of this knowledge is that one can access it only when not seeking it and that once one has it, one has lost it.

Adherence to the fundamental rule of psychoanalysis insofar as it is possible allows subjects to recognize what they don’t know when it surprises them. But it doesn’t thereby permit subjects to make progress through the acquisition of knowledge. The recognitions that one makes in psychoanalysis do not have the status of knowledge in the traditional sense of the term; instead, they mark an irreducible gap in the field of knowledge. One recognizes oneself in an unconscious desire that remains foreign, and one takes responsibility for it despite its foreignness. By doing so, one does not change or progress as a subject but becomes what one already was. One sees the death drive as the **truth of one’s subjectivity** rather than as an obstacle that one might try to progress beyond in order to reach the good.

### L – Mimesis

#### Their anti-oedipal politics are nothing more than a modality of mimesis – the aggressive distaste for the uncastrated subject in opposition to the self.

Weatherill 17 (Rob Weatherill, master’s degree in psychotherapy from St. Vincents Univesity Hospital as well as the European Certificate in Psychotherapy, “THE ANTI-OEDIPUS COMPLEX: Lacan, Critical Theory, and Postmodernism,” pgs. 52-54)//JRD

In the absence of landmarks – the Law, Oedipus, the Symbolic register and civilisation itself, there is nothing for it but to collapse backwards into imaginary rivalry and the escalating violence of the war machines.49 It is only the Law and the thin seam or stratum of civilisation that stands guard over and against the (violent) jouissance of the BwO, and all the desiccated and de-structured remains of the molecularised aborted institutions, the bricks on the ground, the bodies strewn about, the fires still burning. And for those who correctly point out that the Law itself is founded on violence and maintained by violence, let them compare this “violence of normality” with Mogadishu (1993), Sarajevo (1992), Rwanda (1994), Phnom Penh (17 April 1975), Srebrenica (1995), Grozny (1999–2000), Darfur (2003–), Baghdad (2003–11), Misrata (April 2011), Homs (2012), all in the hellish nonstriated grip of their various war machines which show no pity and that is in just the last quarter century. At this point, we will turn our attention to a theorist of war, René Girard. From his early work on literary theory and criticism, Girard turned his attention to anthropology and the primitive mythological origins of violence and the means of its cessation. In his key text, Violence and the Sacred, 50 written coincidentally in the same year as Anti-Oedipus, Girard underlines the ubiquity of violence in primitive societies, like our authors’ theorising of the nomadic war machines. Girard, however, draws attention specifically to the mimetic character of violence. Envy is the response to ontological lack; jealousy and resentment of what the other has. Girard is unnecessarily critical of psychoanalysis when much of his theorising amplifies both what Freud emphasised about the ubiquity of the death drive and Lacan’s Hegelian-Kojévian theory of desire. Girard’s explication sounds Lacanian: ‘he [the subject] desires being, something he himself lacks and which some other person seems to possess. The subject thus looks to that other person to inform him of what he should desire in order to acquire that being’ (155). We desire what the other desires because they desire it, not because we need it, but because they have it and we want it. Very quickly, many people will desire the same thing, because it seems desirable. Desire mimes the other’s desire; we want the same as the other. Two key points emerge: first, desire manifests as a social phenomenon, not just biologically rooted in the drive; and second, desire (as in the “mirror stage”) quickly becomes aggressive and rivalrous, in which case it becomes a fight for what the other possesses, with the potential for escalation. Girard likens this extremism to an infection or pollution, or the spilling of blood. Our perceiving evil in the other and the violent measures taken to combat it, inevitably converge sowing chaos and destruction. So-called “mimetic violence” will only be controlled, not by counterviolence, but by religion, i.e. by sacred rituals involving the killing of a scapegoat – an unimportant third party who can “safely” be sacrificed to defuse the crisis which is tearing apart the social fabric. The scapegoat must be foreign, an enemy or “other,” designated by the warring factions as sufficiently different so that his death does not lead to more killings within the society. The sacrifice is a sacred duty, a perfect cover for the violence of the act, the true logic of which must never be disclosed to the participants. **The so-called “bad” violence of the warring factions will be countered only by the “good” violence of a sacrifice that will end the chain reactions of violent reprisals.** As if taking his cue from psychoanalyst Matte Blanco, Girard demonstrates again and again how violence becomes symmetrical, reciprocal, eliminating difference as the combatants become mirror images of each other, “monstrous doubles,” with their tit-for-tat killings, spreading throughout the community. For instance, Oedipus, Creon, Laius, Tiresias, taking their cue from the oracle, each seek the other’s downfall. Each becomes similarly and symmetrically violent. Oedipus is selected as the sacrificial victim, because he alone is regarded as guilty of patricide and incest. He is the monstrous exception. Oedipus becomes the repository of all the community’s ills, to be done away with in order for peace to return.51 Likewise here, the anti-Oedipals unite in their hatred of Oedipus, who therefore must be sacrificed. Oedipus is scapegoated because he wasn’t sufficiently anti-Oedipal, thus remaining a tragic divided figure. The list of potential sacrificial victims is varied: prisoners of war, slaves, adolescents, children, the handicapped, anyone sufficiently different, sufficiently other from Pharmakós to King, might be selected for sacrifice. Twins are regarded as impure and demonic especially if identical. Other potential victims include a warrior steeped in blood, an incestuous couple, menstruating women, and so on. Recalling our argument, the erotic eliminates difference, celebrates confusion, because it allows for the “return of the repressed” and thus provokes counter-cathectic violence against such “evil.” This recalls Laplanche’s “sexual death drive” theory,52 and George Bataille’s erotic.53 As Girard says, ‘naked or pure sexuality is directly connected to violence. It is the final veil shielding violence from sight’ (122). Violence once started creates an orgy of destruction. Violence is con-fusion, difference is eliminated: between god and non-god; between man and woman; parent and child – ‘a hallucinatory state that is not a synthesis of elements, but a formless and grotesque mixture of things that are normally separate’ (169). This is anti-Oedipus, everything is reduced via mixing to the sameness of shit! Violence has this eviscerating effect. Our authors, averse to key Oedipal differentiations (mother, father. child, brother, sister, etc.), celebrate contagion. Differentiation, on the other hand, establishes culture, peace with the “violence of normality,” where the scapegoated “monsters” are marginalised and some stability is assured provided the paranoid machines continue to function in the background, with their counter-cathexes. However, ambiguities should not to be passed over too lightly. The so-called differentiations within civilised culture, from the exorcised, excluded, violated position of the scapegoat, are clearly stigmatised differences; differences that threaten the civilised repressive edifice. The apparent peace and stability of the civilised culture depends on these exclusions. In other words, the differentiating and thus civilising process is a violent process. Whereas the anti-Oedipal utopian vision is inclusive: the promiscuous and multiple “becomings” are multiply differentiated singularities, molecularities, apparently without any exceptions, antagonisms or rejected scapegoats.

### L – Personal Narratives

#### Starting dialogue from the position of a personal narrative is nothing more than a cover up for the chasm at the heart of subjectivity, a meager forwarding of narcissism and a self-absorbed empty speech act as a comedic parody of dialogue.

Hook 18 (Derek Hook, Associate Professor in Psychology at Duquesne University, “Six Moments in Lacan: Communication and identification in psychology and psychoanalysis,” pgs. 48-49)//JRD

We have all had the experience of watching **two people** talking, despite that both are effectively **really** **only** **talking** about – and listening to – **themselves**. Lacan confronts this problem of substance-less speech, the dead-end alley of selfproclaiming talk, with his notion of ‘**empty speech’**. It is not hard to guess why he would prioritize this issue: an obvious clinical imperative lies with avoiding such a situation, where talking too much leads us away from truth. Any number of colloquial terms evoke the type of talk I have in mind here, the idea for example that someone has ‘verbal diarrhoea’, that they are ceaselessly blathering, ‘gassing on’ or that they talking at me rather than to me. This **ego-led type** of **interpersonal** **communication** is well depicted in an episode of the US TV show The Sopranos. The lead character, Tony, is forced to take a hiatus from his therapy, and at first struggles to find a suitable listener to take her place. It quickly becomes apparent that her replacement, an old friend of Tony’s, is not up to the task: although he listens at first, he uses the pauses in Tony’s speech to insert stories and complaints of his own – in other words, he listens and responds with his ego. Their resulting conversation is like a **comedic** **parody** of a **dialogue**: their respective **narratives** **hardly** **connect**; they speak over one another, paying little if any attention to what the other is saying; any break in the other’s speech becomes the opportunity for their counterpart to rehearse something about themselves. We have the situation, in short, where two speakers, **seemingly involved in a dialogue**, are actually involved in two **self-enclosed monologues**, each using the other as a **communicative** **vehicle** for a story they are **telling themselves about themselves**. In his 1961–1962 seminar on Identification, Lacan coins a term for this tendency to reduce everything to the perspective of me: ‘**mihilism’**. In such exchanges each participant is locked into a narcissistic closed-circuit of ego speech in which the only thing that matters is how this **communicative content rebounds off their own imaginary sense of self.** The familiar phrase, that someone is ‘speaking shit’ comes to mind – not in the sense of flagrant dishonesty, but in the sense of speech that one **misleads oneself** with, attempting thereby to secure or comfort one’s self**, to reduce one’s anxiety, to make one’s self feel whole.** Import - antly, what I am attempting to invoke is not something that can be reduced to impoliteness or a banal form of self-centredness. As will become apparent as we continue, such an ego-centred or ‘imaginary’ dimension of communication is not merely an anomaly, an irritating aspect of everyday speech that **blocks true dialogue.** This empty speech should be viewed rather as a **constant** **tendency** within **communicative** **exchange** between people, an **impasse** of **dialogue** that is **inherent to inter-subjective dialogue itself.** This discussion of the problems underlying the imaginary register of communication sounds a note of caution regards the popularity of types of narrative analysis in psychology, particularly when such narrative analyses are deployed to ostensibly critical ends. Now while it is true that not all narrative forms can be limited to the function of empty speech, it is also the case that soliciting narratives from research subjects typically elicits the story an ego wants to tell about itself, which, in Lacanian terms, is for the most part a **defensive** and/or **idealized** **formation**, an index of the **ego’s fundamental imaginary alienation.** Hence Lacan’s description of empty speech as speech in which ‘the subject seems to be talking in vain about someone who, even if he were his dead ringer, can never become one with the assumption of his desire’ (2006, p. 211). **Personal narratives** often exemplify the **imaginary** **functioning** of empty speech: much narrative form typically **works to create wholeness, cohesion, to provide the continuity of a storyline**, the closure of a narrative arc (the resolution of crisis or challenge) along with the basis of a viable imaginary identification (a protagonist). Hence the priority in Lacanian psychoanalytic treatments afforded to disrupting ego-narratives, overturning the imaginary powers of self-narration, via free association, the abrupt halting of sessions and so on.1 To this discussion of empty speech we must make a vital qualification. The **imaginary dimension to speech** is not only a problem; it is also absolutely **necessary** to **communication**, it is a **precondition** **for** **dialogue** to occur at all. As Soler (1996) argues, empty speech affords a means of connecting with others, it calls out for the **recognition** that they can provide, it contains the prospects of a type of **imaginary** **mediation** – that one might be understood, loved – **but it is, in itself, insufficient for transformation, for symbolic forms of truth.**

### L—Post-Structuralism/Resignification

**Attempts to redefine what it means to be black fail—the problem isn’t how we talk about race, it’s how we figure identity as an object of desire**

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 13-19)//guyB

The traumatic past of slavery has rooted African American identity in contradiction. Where this identity is tasked with representing a people engaged in an ongoing struggle for social equality, the concept of race itself, which grounds this identity, **leaves open the African American subject to both the racism and the trauma that issues from this past**. What I would like to begin to articulate in this first chapter of Trauma and Race is the argument that **race has emerged as a precarious apparatus of being for African Americans**. The central charge of race in American culture is to mediate a relation to what we may view as a transhistorical jouissance of the past, a traumatic excess of pleasure and pain that emanates from slavery to organize both subjective identity and the broader American social sphere. This past of slavery has produced both race and racism as modes of jouissance, as methods of accessing being. Jouissance, I would suggest, is embedded in the very signifiers of race themselves, which enable remanifestation of structures of enjoyment that bind subjects equally to concepts of race and to practices of racism. It is therefore a focus on the function of the signifier that must contextualize this study. While I most specifically address the effects of the racial signifier upon contemporary African Americans in chapter 2, what I would like to delineate here, through reference to both the history of slavery and narratives by ex-slaves themselves, is a core relation among the signifier, jouissance, and the past of slavery that is missed by much of the contemporary scholarship on race. **The limitation of most African American scholarly investigations of race**, I argue, **is their allegiance to conceptions of discourse, race, and agency that are framed not by psychoanalysis but by poststructuralist criticism**. Jacques Derrida’s poststructuralist argument that “centers” of meaning have “no natural [or] fixed locus” but are secured instead by discourse provides for the scholarship on race an anxiously alluring appeal.1 The anxiety associated with this theory emerges because poststructuralism poses a challenge to the very concept of race itself, which for many African American scholars provides both a sense of identity and a route toward agency. As early as 1987 Barbara Christian, a pioneer of African American studies, articulated the rationale for resisting this theory, observing that poststructuralist critique of the center emerged “just when the literature of peoples of color . . . began to move to ‘the center.’ ”2 But, even when not explicitly employing poststructuralist theory, African American scholars nevertheless mirror its signature processes of decentering and discursively resignifying identity in their efforts to establish race as a “social construct.” We see this, for example, in the assertion of leading African American scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. that “precisely because ‘blackness’ is a socially constructed category, it must be learned through imitation,” and, most important for Gates, it is therefore also open to “repetition and revision.”3 This attempt to revise race discursively is essential to African American theoretical conceptions of agency; but, like poststructuralist models, it **is limited by its frequent failure to acknowledge and account for influences upon race and the racial subject that lie outside of the structure imposed by discourse**. While this focus upon discourse directs much of contemporary race theory toward analyses of what we may call after Jacques Lacan the social Symbolic, Trauma and Race is an attempt not only to articulate the impact of the discursive signifiers of race on the unconscious of African Americans but also to circumscribe **a traumatic Real that escapes and indeed structures the agency of the signifiers of the Symbolic**. Lacan speaks of the Real as the excluded center of the subject. Coining the term “extimate,” Lacan defines the Real as that which simultaneously is most intimate, or internal to the subject, and excluded from symbolization.4 This extimate Real, I suggest, is what a theoretical focus solely upon discourse misses. My work links this Real to slavery as an exclusion within the social Symbolic that yet shapes the discourse of race and indeed founds central aspects of African American and American identity. However, my interest is not so much in the history of slavery as in the ineffable experience of jouissance—or excessive, traumatizing pain and pleasure—that issues out of this Real past to fuel the psychic desires and fantasies of Americans. Tying this trauma to the fundamental trauma of subject formation, the traumatic elision of being that occurs with the onset of subjectivity, I read slavery as marking an upsurge of jouissance, such that slavery comes to signify a moment in time when the pleasures and pains associated with being are open to manipulation by white Americans. What enables such manipulation is the concept of race itself, thus constituted by slavery as an apparatus of jouissance that African Americans today still struggle to control and manipulate. But **this precarious source of jouissance and being remains for African Americans an illusory object of attachment that binds them to the unbearable past**. Through the function of the signifier, I argue, race enables a psychoanalytic process of repetition that once again produces for African Americans the psychic trauma of the Real. Maintaining, therefore, that slavery has produced a historical legacy that is both discursive and psychical, I turn to Jacques Lacan’s psychoanalytic theory because his fundamental assertion that the “unconscious is constituted by the effects of speech on the subject” offers a more expansive understanding of the workings of the signifier than is available in other theoretical models.5 Though indebted to Freud for his ideas on the unconscious, much of Lacan’s thinking on the signifier emerges from a rereading of the seminal work in linguistics and semiotics produced by Ferdinand de Saussure, a theorist whose thinking also influenced Derrida. However, **the divergences between Lacan’s and Derrida’s theories offer radical implications both for how we understand the effects of the past upon African Americans** and for how we conceptualize an African American agency meant to resist this past and its continuing legacy. Both Lacan and Derrida derive from Saussure the notion that signifiers have no inherent meaning but instead produce meaning by operating through what Lacan calls “themes of opposition” and “functions of contrast and similitude.”7 Derrida advances this Saussurian reading by reducing signification to “absolute chance” and the “genetic indetermination” of the signifier, arguing that meaning only ever accumulates as a “trace,” as the by-product of differential relations established between signifiers in their “movement [along] a chain.”8 Where Lacan differs from both Saussure and Derrida is in his understanding of the signifier as not arbitrary or indeterminate but contingent upon causation that is external to the Symbolic. The concept of contingency is what brings Lacan to a notion of trauma as structural to the functioning of the unconscious and conscious. Lacan explains this contingency by linking it to what he calls “cause,” which involves “impediment, failure, split.”9 Cause is the traumatic and eruptive core around which the signifiers of consciousness ever assemble themselves, if only in the defensive act of establishing for the subject a protective distance from this core. In tying cause to both failure and split, Lacan points to its extimate relation to the subject, its internal externality: cause, as trauma, may manifest itself in a movement outward, through the failures, slips, and stumbles of the subject as she or he unknowingly charts a repetitive path toward a traumatic past that remains internally salient, simultaneously enticing and terrifying; but cause manifests, finally, as an intrusion external to the system of signifiers that structure meaning for the subject, as an experience that splits the subject between meaning and nonmeaning. Emerging as that which traumatically defies meaning, **cause is always “something anti-conceptual**” and thus is inevitably bound to the Real as that register of the psyche that is removed from symbolization.10 The cause that Trauma and Race demarcates is what I call the jouissance of slavery, a psychic experience of trauma that emerges from the past and repeats itself in the present through the agency of the signifier. It is the signifier that establishes the link through which this traumatic cause, germane to the slave’s experience and not to that of ~~his or her~~ [their] descendant, intrusively establishes its place in the internal lives of African Americans. The signifier defines the category of race, allowing for a conscious association of African Americans with a chain of signifiers that links them to the brutal historical past. This linkage confronts African Americans not only with the terrible history itself but also with a traumatic lack that, I will argue, was made manifest by slavery. What **the signifiers of race** do, therefore, whether emanating from the racist other or whether willfully embraced as a source of identity, is **rearticulate the subject’s sense of self** around an unveiled lack once defined in the racist past. Thus, I maintain, **the discursive linking of African American identity to this past becomes the means through which the trauma of slavery is repeated** in the experiences of African Americans. The anticonceptual cause of which I speak, this more than historical jouissance of slavery, is precisely what is ignored by both Derridean poststructuralism and leading African American scholars like Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Houston Baker. At the heart of these scholars’ work is a focus on the Symbolic that actively limits African American agency and identity to what we may call after Judith Butler “**resignification**,” the effort “to **lay claim” to the terms that define us** “precisely because of the way these terms, as it were, lay their claim on us prior to our full knowledge.”11 Butler’s Derridean approach to agency and the challenges she recognizes in it are useful for shedding light on the mirroring route embraced by African American scholars. Working, like Butler, with a conceptualization of the Symbolic as a closed system in which existent signifiers can only be resignified and recirculated, these scholars confront a particular problematic that can be articulated as the prospect of “forging a future from resources inevitably impure.”12 Without a viable methodology by which newness can enter into the Symbolic, by which something alien to the system can either be introduced into it or act upon it, the challenge these scholars come to embrace is how to rearticulate the terms of race “that [once] signaled degradation” so that they can now “signify a new and affirmative set of meanings,” so that this “reversal” is not one that “retains and reiterates the abjected history of the term.”13 It is this **focus on resignification** that we see, for example, in Gates’ famous theory of “the signifying monkey,” which defines a discursive practice of resistance that is **grounded in a “formal revision**” that “turns on repetition of formal structures, and their difference.”14 Disregarding the psychoanalytic notion of repetition as tied to the unconscious and Real, Gates views African American culture as involved in continual efforts to produce a “chiasmus,” or what Gates articulates as a process of “repeating and simultaneously revising in one deft, discursive act.”15 Gates relies, ultimately, on a model of agency that Derrida calls after Levi-Strauss “bricolage”: the process of making use of “the instruments [one] finds at [one’s] disposition around [oneself], those which are already there,” in one’s attempt to, by “trial and error, adapt them” to a use for “which [they] had not been especially conceived.”16 Though Gates seeks to imagine a beyond of this bricolage and reach outside of the American Symbolic by asserting that African Americans must turn to their own “black vernacular tradition” itself in their efforts to “ ‘deconstruct,’ if you will, the ideas of difference inscribed in the trope of race,” **Gates limits agency to language**, arguing that we must “take discourse itself as our common subject.”17 Both **Gates and Baker bind African American political resistance to language and thus also to the Symbolic**, with Baker viewing the slave narrative and historical figures like Booker T. Washington as embracing a politics of “liberating manipulation” and “revolutionary renaming” that employs language as a “black defense against and revision of ancient terrors, mistaken identities, dread losses.”18 In the view of an African American theory of race shaped by the work of thinkers like Gates and Baker, this revisionary repetition has been and continues to be a means for blacks to alter the social structure of a racist Symbolic. This effort at resignification is laudable and indeed necessary. But the problem with a theoretical focus on the Symbolic is that **it does not acknowledge how what is extimate may impact upon the Symbolic** and the **discursive activities of the subject beyond his or her conscious volition**, and **neither does it offer a direct means to address the scars that may be left on the subject’s psyche** through the operations of racism within this Symbolic. Indeed, it may be argued that what is missed in such a focus on the Symbolic is the very psychoanalytic subject him- or herself. As Lacan states, “the subject is not the one who thinks” or speaks through discourse.19 Lacan’s work continually returns to a critique of what he calls “the I-cracy,” or “myth” of “the I that masters” discourse, the myth of the “speaker” that “is identical to itself.”20 Known for his focus on the split subject, Lacan counters the I-cracy by asserting that “the point” is “to know whether, when I speak of myself, I am the same as the self of whom I speak.”21 In opposition to the speaking subject of the I-cracy, Lacan “identifies the subject with that which is originally subverted by the system of the signifier.”22 What Lacan points to is “the function of barring, the striking out of another thing” that his theory establishes as inherent in the subject’s relation to the Other’s signifiers.23 It is this process by which something essential to the subject is stricken from him or her that I propose enables an understanding of the effects of slavery upon both the slave and contemporary African Americans. Lacanian theory shows that **all subjects are constituted through the Other’s signifiers**. More precisely, the subject, Lacan argues**, can only emerge as a signifier**. Lacan notes that because language “exists prior to each subject’s entry into it,” **the subject is “the slave of a discourse**” in which “~~his~~ [their] place is already inscribed at his birth.”24 Gaining subjectivity and meaning through those “themes of opposition” and “functions of contrast and similitude” that we have already seen are **essential to the operations of the signifier**, “this subject,” Lacan asserts, “which, was previously nothing if not a subject coming into being—solidifies into a signifier.”25 The function Lacan ascribes to the Symbolic and its signifiers is that of producing the aphanisis of the subject, her or his “fading” or “disappearance” under the signifier’s agency.26 Subjectivity not only restricts the subject to the Other’s preexistent universe of meaning; it also deprives the subject of access to those essential components of the self that cannot be circumscribed by signification, the unconscious and Real as the barred or stricken portions of the self that constitute the fundamental lack of subjectivity. Where Lacan’s work is particularly useful is in providing a comparative framework through which we may distinguish a heightened aphanisic effect of the signifier upon the slave, a barring that often is again manifested for African Americans as an internal lack when accosted by acts of racism. Lacan argues that what each “subject has to free himself of is th[is] aphanisic effect of the . . . signifier.”27 This ethical stance fundamental to Lacanian theory coincides with my own efforts in Trauma and Race to **imagine an agency beyond the Symbolic**.

### L—Racial Alliance

#### They place racial alliance as the object of desire which both incentivizes incentivizes authenticity testing and defines personal being via the trauma of slavery

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 48-53)//guyB

In his rhetorical construction of the self as racial, Du Bois subjects himself to a domination by the signifiers of race in ways that can be understood in relation to Lacan’s reading of the mechanisms of metaphor and metonymy as central to subjective activity. Lacan’s work “links metaphor to the question of being and metonymy to its lack.”46 Metonymy expresses what Lacan identifies as the “properly signifying function” of language, the root effort of language to compensate for lack by routing the subject’s desire along a signifying chain in which desire is “eternally extending toward the desire for something else.”47 This something else is the plenitude of being that the subject seeks continually to find through the metonymical movement of language, through both the “transfer of signification” from one word to another within a signifying chain and the transfer of desire from one object to another as value and meaning are cast upon them by the signifier.48 It is this metonymical revaluing of race so as to retain it as a means of compensating for lack that we see in Du Bois. Born in what he defines as “the century when the walls of race were clear and straight” and “there was no question of exact definition and understanding of the word,” Du Bois eventually comes to question “the concept of race” because it “has so changed and presented so much contradiction.”49 Insofar as Du Bois reaches toward race as that which promises to fill lack, he struggles with these contradictions, shifting metonymically from the biological to the sociohistorical and eventually coming full circle through the signifier slavery to ground his identity in this very contradiction. However, the nature of **this contradiction** is such that it **allows Du Bois a restrictive understanding of both his historical and his psychic self**. In pinning his identity to slavery, Du Bois moves from the operations of metonymy to a metaphorical process whereby slavery is substituted as the dominating signifier for his (racial) identity. Where metaphor involves the substitution of the signifier for that which it names, the function of metaphor is to remanifest being, to give presence, through language, to absence. Most notable through the subject’s self-representation in the signifier of his or her proper name, metaphor allows for the emergence of the lost being in the only form through which it may manifest itself, as what Lacan refers to as “the being of signifierness.”50 This lost being is thus the signified implied in the signifier of the subject’s proper name. But what we see in Du Bois is how **the signifier of slavery restructures his subjective relation to being**. In Du Bois’ narrative, slavery functions as a dominating master signifier that delineates the meaning of Du Bois’ racial identity. Not only does it substitute itself for Du Bois’ proper name as the signifier that will structure Symbolic representation of his (racial) being, but it also **conflates this being with the injury, insult, and discrimination both he and the nonwhite world suffer today** and have suffered in the past, thus bonding them in a common identity. This substitution of identity and conflation of feelings is explained by a Lacanian understanding of metaphor as that which brings to a halt the metonymical sliding of desire and meaning through manifestation of a more lasting substitution, a “conjunction of two signifiers” for which there is “the greatest disparity of the images signified.”51 Such disparity of the signified is what we see in Du Bois when **slavery, the new master signifier of his identity, structures Du Bois’ personal feelings and sense of** being, in what he calls a “later reaction” to racism, around racial feelings that belong to all nonwhites. Slavery is able to produce this disparity that organizes his sliding feelings because metaphor does not involve juxtaposition of two equally actualized signifiers but is instead a process in which one signifier has “replaced the other” in “the signifying chain.”52 In such juxtaposition, the substituting signifier of slavery suppresses other signifiers of identity, so that they remain present only “by virtue of [their] (metonymic) connection to the rest of the chain,” while it simultaneously delimits and occludes the signifieds that emerge as an expression of this identity’s psychic and emotional reality.53 In Du  Bois’ discussion of his feelings toward Negroes and Africa, these personal feelings are themselves the signifieds that will express and further elide his being, articulating this being around the substitute signifier slavery that displaces the multiple signifiers of Du Bois’ personal identity with its dominating historical context. As signifieds Du  Bois’ personal feelings begin as what Lacan calls after Saussure an “amorphous” and “sentimental mass of the current of discourse,” but **they become increasingly structured into “racial feelings” through the agency of the signifier slavery**.54 It is this sentimental mass of the signified that Du  Bois experiences as “contradictory forces, facts and tendencies” that shuttle him through the changing currents of the discourse on race. These currents lead Du  Bois to question skeptically “what is Africa to me,” while they simultaneously ensure his affections for Africa, despite his rational rejection of biologically inflected notions of Africa as the “motherland.”55 The flow of this discourse is so determinative of Du Bois’ objects of desire that, though aware of the mixture of his own racial heritage and cultural background, Du Bois is driven at one point by what he terms **an “ultra ‘race’ loyalty”** to give “up courtship with one ‘colored’ girl because she looked quite white” and because, guided by racial allegiance, **he “resented” the potential “inference on the street that [he] had married outside [his] race**.”56 Du Bois’ self-admitted subjection to surrounding discourses on race exemplifies the sentimental mass of the signified as a “continuum,” as what Lacan terms a “confused mass” ever open, through domination by the signifier, to the “immeasurable power of ideological warfare.”57 Du Bois’ subjective feelings, in their amorphous metonymic shifting from skepticism and love to allegiance and resentment, along with his individual identity itself, become the grounds upon which this **warfare is waged**. In such warfare, it is the dominating substitute signifier that coheres and grants structure to the sentimental mass of the signified. Slavery as signifier comes to **organize both desire and identity** for Du Bois because slavery “crystallizes” his feelings and sense of self in what Lacan calls a “dialectic that has as its centre a bad encounter.”58 In psychoanalysis, the bad encounter is a “traumatizing” confrontation in the life of the subject that assumes an “organizing function for development” because it produces an awareness of lack.59 In Du Bois’ case, however, the bad encounter of slavery that organizes his personal biography is external to his biographical experiences. Slavery allows for the historicizing and, thus, depersonalizing of both being and lack for Du  Bois. This historicizing becomes possible because the racism of slavery that attempted to elide the being of slaves by pinning subjective lack exclusively to them also produced slavery as a central historical representative of subjective lack for later generations of African Americans. Racial identity itself, whether imposed by racism or willfully embraced by contemporary African Americans as the historical context for self-understanding and being, not only crystallizes for African Americans **the indisputable link between slavery and the racism** they continue to suffer but also may **collapse their personal sense of being** with the historical lack emerging from slavery. Racism is key to this conflation. In repeating a process whereby the African American subject’s relation to being is again questioned, as it was in slavery, racism grounds the African American subject’s psychic sense of lack not in the split self but in the racial past. This crystallization of identity through the bad encounter of slavery is therefore what redefines Du Bois’ own desires by obfuscating lack. Du Bois models the process by which slavery and racial identity may displace African Americans’ relation to both lack and being. Lacan ties the subject’s loss of being to the exclusion from the Symbolic of those aspects of the subject that defy linguistic circumscription, the drives and desires of the subject that evade representation even in the very process of the subject’s articulation of his or her demands. The root of these core drives and desires is the libido as “an internal” tension, a “constant force” that registers what the “sexed being loses in sexuality” upon entrance into the Symbolic.60 Initially “polymorphous, aberrant,” the emerging subject is able to attain pleasure through multiple sources, but sexuality and the signifier both step in to define the regions of the body and the objects of the Symbolic through which the sexed subject may attain pleasure.61 As a result, the constant force of the libido achieves Symbolic expression only as “**partial drives**,” emerging with only “that part of sexuality that passes into the networks of the constitution of the subject, into the networks of the signifier.”62 As “the most profound lost object,” the libido, manifested as an aphanisis of being, fuels desire and sexuality such that it is through pursuit of a mate that the subject attempts typically **to compensate for lack**, seeking out in love the person who possesses the illusory lost object that will fulfill [them]~~him or her~~ and make [them]~~him or her~~, fantastically, **whole again**.63 However, African Americans like Du Bois, who ground their identity primarily in race, relate to this fantasy of wholeness on a grander scale. As we see above, when he reaches the point of “ultra ‘race’ loyalty,” what compensates for lack in Du Bois is not a connection with a mate but membership in a larger race. In this moment, desire is most directly grounded in the substitute signifier slavery that organizes the sentimental continuum away from personal lack and toward an external bad encounter that presents itself as a fixing manifestation of loss for all members of the race. Because slavery has so bound loss to race, **race itself becomes the illusory object upon “which the drive closes**” in its pursuit of wholeness.64 Beyond love of a mate, love of the race becomes the primary means of curing whatever ails the subject and fulfilling all of Du Bois’ desires as he begins to define all lack and all suffering as racial. Here we see how the amorphous continuum of an African American’s subjective feelings and desires may be reshaped by existent discourses of race and a privileging of one’s relation to the history of slavery. Lacan explains that the continuum of the signified is part of the “double flow of discourse,” in which the chain of the signified can be envisioned as positioned below the chain of the signifier so as to form “two planes” that are each “indefinitely subdivided within themselves.”65 This amorphous mass of feelings slides continually “under the signifier,” oscillating metonymically across the plane of the signified until through metaphor a “quilting point” is achieved, a knitting together of the tangential planes such that the signifier, in purporting to embody the signified, “stops the otherwise indefinite sliding of signification.”66 For Du  Bois, **slavery becomes the displacing metaphorical signifier of personal identity**, centering a reticulated network of signifiers in which what are substitutionally displaced are those signifiers that mark the self as nonracial, multiracial, or more than racial. On the second plane of discourse, slavery’s signifieds—insult, discrimination, disaster—grant linguistic and cognitive structure to the amorphous feelings of desire and lack Du Bois experiences, forming the “lines of force” that organize this plane of the signified in its convergence with the signifier slavery.67 The end result is a knitting together of the planes so that **self-identity is pinned to the master signifier slavery** as a linguistic quilting point that names Du Bois’ feelings as racial, defines the proper (i.e., racial) objects of his desire, and, finally, binds his being and his lack to the suffering of all nonwhites.

### L - Racial Identity

#### link – incivility/aggressiveness

McGowan 4 [Todd, Associate Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Vermont, *The End of Dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the Emerging Society of Enjoyment*, SUNY Press (Albany, NY): 2004, p. 189-90]

Such interpretations of contemporary aggressiveness and its attendant violence succumb to the thinking of the perpetrators—that is, to their belief in the transgressive nature of their activity—failing to see that they remain wholly within the orbit of authority. Rather than putting the symbolic identity of the subjects at risk—and thus moving beyond the confines of symbolic authority—these actions reaffirm that identity—and thus reaffirm that authority as well.21

Incivility and aggressiveness seem to us as if they are fundamentally antisocial behaviors. When we experience outbursts of incivility or aggressiveness, we feel as if the social fabric is in the process of collapsing, as if we are descending into anarchy. But the contemporary uncivil or aggressive subject evinces, in most cases, an allegiance to the fundamental commandment of the society of enjoyment—the command to enjoy. We must reinterpret the incivility we encounter in light of this prevailing commandment. Subjects have Explosions of Incivility, Aggressiveness, and Violence189 become increasingly uncivil not because they have divested themselves from authority figures and social rules but because they have invested themselves most enthusiastically.

Whatever the underlying causes behind them, incivility and aggressiveness seem to have an unambiguous—which is to say, unambiguously negative—status.

Of all the symptoms that characterize the society of commanded enjoyment, incivility and aggressiveness are clearly those that receive the most universal criticism. It is not only cultural critics that decry contemporary outbreaks of aggressiveness, but almost everyone living in this society. Whereas one might potentially see something appealing or liberatory in the transformation of paternal authority, the rise of the image, the shrinking of distance, or even the retreat into privacy, the same could not be said of incivility and aggressiveness. These symptoms seem to have no positive valence, and we cannot easily imagine someone who might celebrate their emergence.

Nonetheless, incivility and aggressiveness do have another side to them, a side that has remained largely unexplored. These symptoms are indicative of a subjective disposition within the society of enjoyment willing to challenge the dictates of symbolic authority. In this sense, contemporary incivility and aggressiveness hold out the possibility for producing radicalized subjects, subjects unwilling to accept injustice or a lack of freedom simply because symbolic power authorizes it. This dimension of subjectivity in the society of enjoyment manifests itself, for instance, in the protests that have met the recent meetings of the World Bank. Such protests stem from an ability to be uncivil and a refusal to accept enforced dissatisfaction that the turn to the society of enjoyment informs. The problem is, however, that we too often direct our incivility toward the wrong targets, not toward the figures of symbolic authority but toward the victims of it. The contemporary tendency toward incivility has the ability to assist us in contesting and freeing ourselves from symbolic authority, but only when we first recognize the extent of our allegiance to this authority today in the society of commanded enjoyment. Too often incivility is nothing more than the contemporary expression of complete docility.

### L – Recognition

#### Their politics of recognition play right into the hands of the social order – they’ll never be satisfied through their infinite struggle causing frustration, and will only be more subjected to the social authority

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 88-91, 1 July 2013, MG)

This is the limitation of pseudo-Hegelian political projects oriented around garnering recognition. They necessarily remain **within the confines of the order that they challenge**, and even success will **never provide the satisfaction that the project promises**. Full recognition would bring with it not the sense of finally penetrating into the secret enclave of the social authority but instead the **disappointment** of seeing that this secret does not exist. The widespread acceptance of gay marriage in the United States, for instance, would not provide a heretofore missing satisfaction, because the social authority that would provide the recognition is not a substantial entity fully consistent with itself. Even though institutional authority can grant a marriage certificate to gay couples and the majority of the population can recognize the validity of the marriage, there is no agency that can authorize such a marriage that is itself authorized. Social authority, in other words, is always unauthorized or groundless, and this is the ultimate reason why the pursuit of recognition leads to **frustration**.

Those who seek social recognition structure their lives around the **social authority’s demand**, and recognition is the reward that one receives for doing one’s social duty. For instance, in order to gain popularity, one must adhere to the social rules that lead to popularity. This involves wearing the proper clothes, hanging out with the right people, playing the approved sports, and talking in the correct fashion. Too much deviation from the standard dissolves one’s popularity. Even those who disdain popularity most often align themselves with some other source of recognition and thereby invest themselves in another form of it. The outsider who completely rejects the trappings of the popular crowd but slavishly obeys the demands of fellow outsiders remains within the orbit of social recognition. This devotion to social recognition is more apparent, though not more true, among the young; the adult universe employs strictures with a similar severity.18 Following the path of desire — going beyond the explicit demand of the social authority — has a cost in terms of social status.

Those who restrict themselves to the authority’s demand do not necessarily evince more obedience to actual laws than others do. In fact, the social authority’s demand often conflicts with laws because it demands love, not just obedience. Criminals who flaunt the law for the sake of accumulating vast amounts of money are among those most invested in this demand. There is **no inherent radicality** in criminal behavior, and most criminals tend to be politically conservative.19 The object of the demand is the subject’s complete sacrifice for the sake of the social authority, not simply adherence to a set of laws.

By imposing a demand that requires subjects to violate the law, the authority creates a bond of guilt among those who follow this demand. For instance, contemporary capitalist society demands the unrestricted accumulation of capital, even if this requires bypassing ethical or legal considerations at some point. Those who adhere to this demand to such an extent that they break the law or act against their own conscience **find themselves all the more subjected to the social authority** than if the demand didn’t include the dimension of transgression. The guilt that the demand engenders in them seals their allegiance. This is the logic of the hazing ritual, which always necessitates a violation of the law or common morality. The demand aims to redirect subjects away from their own enjoyment and toward social productivity. This turn is unimaginable without guilt, which is the fundamental social emotion.

Subjects who sacrifice enjoyment for the sake of recognition do so with the expectation that this sacrifice will pay offon the other side, that the rewards of recognition will surpass the enjoyment that they have given up. This wager seems to have all the empirical evidence on its side: every day, images of the most recognized subjects enjoying themselves bombard us. We see them driving in the nicest cars, eating in the finest restaurants, wearing the most fashionable clothes, and having sex with the most attractive people, among other things. On the other side, we rarely see the enjoyment of those who remain indifferent to the appeal of recognition. By definition, they enjoy in the shadows. What’s more, the apparent misery of those who do not receive recognition is readily visible among the social outcasts we silently pass every day. To all appearances, the sacrifice of enjoyment for the sake of recognition is a bargain, as long as one ends up among the most recognized.

The problem with this judgment stems from its emphasis on visibility; it mistakes the display of enjoyment for the real thing. Someone who was authentically enjoying would not need to parade this enjoyment. The authentically enjoying subject does not perform its enjoyment for the Other but remains indifferent to the Other. As Joan Copjec notes, “Jouissance flourishes only there where it is not validated by the Other.”20 Enjoyment consumes the subject and directs all of the subject’s attention away from the Other’s judgment, which is why one cannot perform it and why being a social outcast doesn’t bother the enjoying subject. One immerses oneself completely in enjoyment, and the enjoyment suffices for the subject. In contrast, recognition, though it offers its own form of satisfaction, ultimately leaves the subject **eager for something else.** No matter what level of recognition subjects receive, they **always find it insufficient and seek more**. Unlike enjoyment, recognition is an **infinite struggle**.

But no one can make a direct choice of enjoyment instead of recognition. The initial loss of enjoyment, the initial sacrifice, is inevitable. As I have insisted in earlier chapters, this enjoyment only exists insofar as it is lost: there is no way for the subject to avoid altogether the loss of enjoyment for the sake of recognition. But what the subject might avoid is the perpetuation of this abandonment of enjoyment through the embrace of recognition. One can’t initially reject recognition, but one can subsequently revisit the original acceptance of the social demand and refuse it by becoming indifferent to recognition’s appeal.

Everything in society works against this indifference. The social order receives the energy for its functioning from the enjoyment that subjects sacrifice for the sake of recognition. It continues to operate thanks to a constant influx of enjoyment from those subjected to it. When subjects embrace their own enjoyment rather than readily sacrificing it, they do not contribute to the process of production or reproduction in the social order. Enjoyment has no use value for society, though it organizes and sustains the subject’s existence. (Th e subject who can no longer enjoy loses the will to live altogether.) The goal of the social order as such and the goal of capitalism in particular is the harnessing of the uselessness of the subject’s enjoyment and rendering it useful. In order to tighten the social bond and perpetuate the ruling order, society attempts to redirect **enjoyment into productivity**, but in order to do so, it must convince subjects to sacrifice their enjoyment, to offer it as a tribute for social recognition, which functions as a kind of **social cement**.

#### Recognition does not create empathy, happiness, or ethical relations – it only cements submission to authority and foregoes connections with the Other – only we can solve

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 99-101, 1 July 2013, MG)

\*note – any rehighlight/recut of the top part of the card is a strawpersonning, the 2nd half of the card explains why the top is wrong

Though recognition leaves the subject dependent on social authority and bereft of enjoyment, it nonetheless serves as the means through which subjects **invest themselves in the social bond**. When the subject seeks the recognition of others, this action bespeaks the rejection of the psychotic alternative, which involves the **foreclosure of the social bond** and the refusal of the binding restrictions that other subjects accept. In this sense, we might consider recognition a good. Perhaps the pursuit of recognition, despite its unseemliness and despite the sacrifice it involves, has an ethical dimension. It allows subjects to transcend merely private enjoyment and concern themselves with the well-being of others in the society.

Subjects seeking recognition are constantly trying to improve their social status, but they are also trying to find ways to please others. Though their motivations are not pure, they do bring others some degree of happiness. For instance, when a student compliments a professor on his sense of fashion, the professor knows on some level that the student’s comment has its genesis in the quest for recognition, but it still has the ability to make the professor feel some amount of pleasure.1 By emphasizing the cost of recognition for the subject seeking it, psychoanalysis seems to overlook its positive effect. Recognition involves submission to the symbolic authority, and this submission **forges a connection**.

There is a certain reading of Hegel that aligns his moral philosophy with the celebration of recognition. In the Phenomenology of Spirit Hegel affirms the role of the other’s recognition in the emergence of subjectivity. Without this recognition, the subject remains caught up in an illusory sense of its own isolation and unable to find a satisfying identity.2 This is why the struggle between the master and the slave, where the stake is nothing but prestige (or recognition), marks a significant advance for the subject. In this struggle, the subject realizes its dependence on the **other’s recognition**, even though the master and slave cannot properly recognize each other. In the later stages of the dialectic, recognition finds a form adequate to it in the spiritual community, and at this point, subjectivity arrives at its ethical terminus.

For a liberal thinker like John Rawls, Hegel’s conception of the ethical role that the quest for recognition plays is the key to his worth as a moral philosopher. Hegel’s great contribution, his advance beyond Kant, lies in his ability to link recognition — that is, social conformity — to ethical duty. He conceives of a social rather than an individualist ethical program. As Rawls says, “Hegel wants us to find our moral compass in the institutions and customs of our social world itself, as these institutions and customs have been made part of us as we grow up into them and develop habits of thought and action accordingly.”3 By seeking recognition, Rawls contends (or believes that Hegel contends), we initiate ourselves, perhaps even unconsciously, into the ethical position that best corresponds to our social world. Rather than marking an ethical nadir (our desire to give up our autonomy and become dependent on social authority), seeking recognition forms the basis for our ethical subjectivity.4

The problem with this reading of Hegel (which is in no way confined to Rawls and is in fact nearly the dominant reading) stems from its inability to come to grips with Hegel’s insight into the **ultimate failure of recognition**.5 Though the search for recognition inaugurates subjectivity, recognition can **never apprehend the subject** in its singularity. Recognition reduces the subject to a **symbolic identity** — I am recognized as a professional, as a parent, as an American, and so on — and thus completely misses the subject’s uniqueness, what in the subject is irreducible to determinate symbolic coordinates, even if this uniqueness is finally nothing more than a fantasy (or the subject’s singular mode of fantasizing).

The failure operates in the other direction as well: the subject who seeks the other’s recognition **does not address itself to the real other** but only to a symbolic entity that exists only as a construction of the signifier. Even when we seek the recognition of an actual person, what gives value to this recognition is its **authorization by social authority**, which is itself wholly unauthorized. The search for recognition cannot have any ethical status whatsoever because it involves **submission to an entity** that exists only through the act of submitting to it.6

When the subject seeks recognition, it devotes itself to becoming someone in the eyes of social authority, and the search for recognition validates this authority. But at no point does the subject actually encounter the real other, the other as such. Encountering the real other, the other that several thinkers have christened the “neighbor,” requires turning away from social authority and abandoning the project of recognition.7 At the point where the subject does not experience social recognition, it discovers the neighbor. As Kenneth Reinhard explains, the neighbor “materializes an uncanniness within the social relationship, an enjoyment that resists sympathetic identification and ‘understanding.’”8 The experience of recognition **obscures this uncanniness** and mediates the other’s enjoyment in order to render it more palpable for the subject. But in the process, recognition allows the subject to avoid the neighbor or the real other.

The encounter with the real other is the key to the subject’s ethical being and to the subject’s enjoyment. Psychoanalysis allows us to see the foundational link that exists between ethics and enjoyment, where other approaches erect a clear divide between the two. Ethics, for most ways of thinking, involves a sacrifice of my own enjoyment for the sake of someone else’s. Rather than lying to get ahead at work, I tell the truth to help create a more pleasant workplace atmosphere. Rather than devoting all my free time to watching pornography, I spend part of it working at the food bank. For Spinoza in his Ethics, **I become ethical when I cease thinking from my own private perspective** and approach an Amor intellectualis Dei, or “intellectual love of God,” in which I can think in terms of the whole of creation rather than simply view isolated events from my limited perspective. This movement from the private and self-interested to the public and concerned for the whole defines almost every ethical project. But psychoanalytic thought does not conceive of ethics in this way. It is through **enjoyment itself**, not the sacrifice of it, that I genuinely encounter the other. An insistence on enjoyment is at the same time an **insistence on ethical subjectivity**.

### L – Revolution – Deleuze

#### They are narcissists.

Weatherill 17 (Rob Weatherill, master’s degree in psychotherapy from St. Vincents Univesity Hospital as well as the European Certificate in Psychotherapy, “THE ANTI-OEDIPUS COMPLEX: Lacan, Critical Theory, and Postmodernism,” pgs. 26-28)//JRD

With psychoanalysis now overwhelmed by therapy culture, our authors’ attack was farseeing. A lachrymose philosophy around victimhood, the allegedly traumatic nature of ordinary life, the “fragile child,” the “loving” mother, the regressive infantilisation of language, and so on, have become commonplace since Anti-Oedipus. However, has schizoanalysis fostered this regression, while aggressively asserting the opposite? The “flowers” were told that they had no power against the fascist System. They were traumatised by excess! No wonder the mass of ordinary working people at the time failed to understand and sympathise with their hysterical protesting! The paranoid logic machine deployed through books, TV, lectures, sit- ins, workshops, etc., convinced and seduced many into believing that the “military industrial complex of the West” was at work everywhere; the silent masses were complicit, as fascistic as the war-planners in Washington or Moscow. They were told and believed that they had been alienated, colonised, violated and conditioned into fascistic “normality;” and with this ideology the engine of narcissism and hurt was set going demanding a whole therapeutic culture to put things right.21 They were tuning in and dropping out like flies. The baby- boomers had the biggest tantrum in history. Born into an unprecedented age of prosperity after WW2, protected by the welfare state, educated beyond what any former generation could ever have hoped for, pampered with consumer goods, and they are the ones to complain! They felt guilty about war, about violence (televised from anywhere in the world for the first time in real- time), about wealth, about living. They succumbed to ressentiment, as activated anti- Oedipal force or desire is turned around against itself, ‘pushed back and repressed, incarcerated within and finally able to discharge and vent itself only on itself’ (Nietzsche cited: 234). Baudrillard referred to this self-hatred or backlash as the last stage in the liberation of the species, a paradoxical turning around against the self at the advanced stage of rationality and civilisation. ‘There is no need to posit a death drive at work, a biological nostalgia for a state prior to individuation and sex’,22 just a reflexive mortification as we glimpse the degree to which the soul has lost its grandeur. Two post-psychoanalytic strands took shape during the past half century. First, the non-erotic infantile logic based in hurt and trauma; second, the “nonhuman erotic” spirited on by neo-Reichians and anti- Oedipeans with their desiring machines and molecular rhizomal energies. Both strands claim a psychoanalytic heritage; both have polemicised an aspect of Freud to the detriment of his whole opus. And now it is probably too late to rescue that whole thing. Sloterdijk noted that psychoanalysis lacked thymos and thymotic potential, what he called a “bank of rage.” Instead of mobilising prideful rage, honour and ambition, we domesticated rage, turning it into hurt, while becoming preoccupied with sex as an end in itself. In short, we went crazy about both love and humility, creating ‘subcultures in which beautiful souls sent one another messages of love’.23 The interruption of pride for the sake of a libidinal politics entirely suits contemporary capitalist consumerism, buying off the dignity of human beings with gadgets as concessions. Pride, dignity and honour are not part of the psychoanalytic lexicon. Instead they have become pathologised by ‘the thymos-forgetting therapeutic culture … in the tradition of Christian moralists’.24 The rage generated in the pages of Anti- Oedipus against familial domestication in all its forms is a great burst of freedom, a mass break-out and escape- release of great thymotic potential. Why in practice does it fall back to earth in narcissistic ruins, a failed project easily reterritorialised by the capitalist machine? In the last chapter of Rage and Time, called “The Dispersal of Rage in the Era of the Centre,” Sloterdijk points to this diffusion of desire where ‘every individual is turned into a consumption citizen, who unless uplifted by family, cultural and cooperative counter- forces, is increasingly fixed to a poisoned loneliness with a doomed irritation of desire’.25 Desire per se, destined for total liberation by anti- Oedipeans, forever free and untrammelled, becomes just an irritation. Enzenberger, seeming to echo Anti- Oedipus, refers to “molecular civil wars.” ‘The reality is that civil war has long since moved into the metropolis’. As Enzensberger26 says, ‘The beginning is bloodless, the evidence circumstantial. Molecular civil war starts unnoticed; there is no general mobilization’. Rubbish accumulates, syringes and broken bottles appear in the park, graffiti is daubed on the walls. In schools and colleges, classroom furniture is smashed. These are ‘muted declarations of war which any experienced city- dweller can interpret’. Then, tyres are slashed, cars set on fire. In one incident after another, rage is vented, hate turns on anything that works, and forms an insoluble amalgam with self- hate’. He concludes, ‘its only message [is] one of autism’.27 Not dispersal of rage, but a free-floating random affair, a lone-gunman syndrome – molecular, atomistic, homicidal- suicidal. The desiring machines exact their revenge for their wholesale failure to break through and break out by turning themselves into rage machines. Add self- radicalisation here as Islamism is a ready conduit for rage. The flowers are turned into weeds, dominated not by Oedipus and daddy, but by mommy alone, or indeed by no one at all. Be orphan. Be nomad. Be free. Go viral: ‘Make rhizomes, not roots, never plant! Don’t sow, grow offshoots! Don’t be one, be multiple, be multiplicities!’28 Free – to be bereaved, homeless, rootless, aimless “singularities” with “enjoyments,” left absolutely alone with ‘the unconscious that produces itself in a cyclical orphan movement’ (319). The wreck of psychoanalysis is to be found at these two extremes: at the weedy end with mommy, safe but fragile; or with mommy and daddy slaughtered long ago as part of the libidinised, schizo killing machines – ‘knowing nothing of persons … nothing of the ego’ (392) – in total indifference creating a level killing field and a race to the bottom- anus- shit. If you take schizoanalysis seriously you seem bound to end as a speck on a pseudopodium of the erotic (Foucault), or a green- fly parasite consumer sucking on the erotic juices of Capitalism. No effective thymotic, no bank of rage, no balls, just generalised neurasthenia and stress. Every bridge back (to civilisation) has been burned by the scorched earth deterritorialisations of capitalism and schizoanalysis, with no way of deciding about these mass “enjoyments,” daring not even to venture a judgement. Sloterdijk shares our disillusion with a reference to Lacan. ‘In its pretension to co-form a revolutionary subject, politicised psychoanalysis failed miserably’. So, as a half-way house to revolution, ‘the new purists [Lacanians] mark themselves off from everything to do with sense-giving, interpretation, construction, life-projects, because this would once again put into play the need to explain people normatively, to develop positive ideas of culture [civilisation], and introduce creative processes’.29 By retaining notions such as castration, the Law, the Symbolic, they are still part of the kill-joy processes, while pretending to be otherwise. As our authors say, psychoanalysis spans a mixed semiotic. On the one hand, ‘a despotic regime of significance and interpretation’, and on the other, ‘an authoritarian regime of subjectification and prophetism’. Between the fetishised authority of the unconscious and the aura of the silent analyst: ‘[T]he worst, most underhanded of powers are founded on it’ (138). For its part, however, romanticised schizoanalysis has been influential. Like Zarathustra, these romantics know incredible sufferings and sicknesses. Fifty or more years on are they still remarkable? ‘They must reinvent each gesture. But such a man produces himself as a free man, irresponsible, solitary and joyous, finally able to say and do something in his own name, without asking permission; a desire lacking nothing …’ (142).

### L – Sacrifice/Bataille

#### The desire to sacrifice is one that masks the loss underneath that is imposed onto bodies to endure – it ends up reenacting the state

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have”, University of Nebraska Press, Pages 148-150, 1 July 2013, MG)

It is this excess that motivates the philosophy of Georges Bataille, perhaps the foremost thinker of sacrifice. Of all those who confront this mysterious phenomenon, Bataille is the one who does not try to reduce sacrifice to some form of interest. Instead, he accepts sacrifice as an act performed for its own sake. Societies sacrifice, according to Bataille, because sacrifice is essential to their functioning and because they enjoy it. He claims: “There is generally no growth but only a luxurious squandering of energy in every form! The history of life on earth is mainly the effect of a wild exuberance; the dominant event is the development of luxury, the production of increasingly burdensome forms of life.”8 Divesting itself of excess is the fundamental social operation, and this occurs most often through sacrifice. As society advances, it becomes more luxurious, sacrificing more and more, and this sacrifice is always its own reward, providing an enjoyment that derives from a process of unburdening.9

The problem with Bataille’s theorization of sacrifice resides in the **obscure ontology that informs it.** For Bataille, there is an overabundance of energy in the world — represented most obviously by the sun, which is constantly burning offits excess — and the fundamental goal of existence is the elimination of this excess. All beings engage in efforts to rid themselves of their surplus energy, either through gift s, sacrifice, or simply destruction. Elimination in whatever form becomes, according to this theory, the primary fact, and accumulation occurs only in order to engender possibilities for sacrifice and destruction. While Bataille correctly sees the primacy of sacrifice as a social phenomenon, he links it to a theory of being as **intrinsically excessive** that is, at bottom, empirical (as evidenced by his argument about the sun). Where Bataille sees excess, one could just as easily see **balance**: a universe in which beings take in a certain amount of energy and then expel that same amount. But he sees excess in being itself because he begins with a philosophy of excess.10

Though psychoanalytic thought arrives at the same conclusion as Bataille — seeing sacrifice as a primary social fact not reducible to selfinterest or a social good — it takes a **different path to get there**. It locates the impulse to sacrifice in the original loss that constitutes the subject and that entry in the social order repeats. Because loss creates society as such, societies tend inevitably toward **reenacting it**, most often in the form of sacrifice. Societies perform sacrificial rituals in order to allow subjects to experience and enjoy the social bond through an encounter with the nothing that they hold in common.

Such rituals appear explicitly in premodern societies, which consistently make public sacrifices of animals (or people) to please their gods. While sacrifices have the expressed intent of gaining good favor or warding offbad, their unconscious function consists **solely in enacting the sacrifice itself**. Any pleasure that follows from the sacrifice — such as abundant rainfall that produces good crops — is strictly secondary to the enjoyment of the sacrifice itself. Societies sacrifice for the sake of sacrifice, not for the end that it produces. This sacrifice for the sake of sacrifice doesn’t end with the onset of modernity but instead continues primarily in a disguised form. What defines modernity isn’t so much a degree of enlightenment and rationality as a fundamental refusal to avow the primacy of sacrifice.

Modernity replaces a regime centered around sacrifice and squander with one centered around utility and accumulation. Modern consciousness directs itself toward the useful: one justifies technological advances, medical breakthroughs, and economic progress through their utility.11 Modern societies act with the conscious intention of making the world run smoother and with the utmost efficiency. And yet, at the same time, **wasteful behavior endures** — most conspicuously in the form of religion, which modernity’s philosophy of utility has not succeeded in extirpating.

Even though modern religious observations tend for the most part to avoid animal or human sacrifices, they do nonetheless represent one of the predominant arenas in which social sacrifice occurs. Thought of in terms of the self-interest of participants or the larger social good, religion constitutes a massive sacrifice of time and resources. This is what renders it problematic for evolutionary biology. According to the tenets of this science, natural selection tends to eliminate waste rather than foster it.12 The wastefulness of religion, combined with its continued wide appeal, forces evolutionary biologists to explain its existence and persistence as the by-product of another process that has evolutionary benefits (which is, according to most prominent evolutionary biologists, the tendency to trust authority figures). But what the evolutionary biologist cannot see, because this science does not take enjoyment into account, is the appeal of the sacrifice of resources for its own sake. Religious rituals persist in modernity — even if in a completely modified form, like the worship of a sports team — because they provide an opportunity for the repetition of the original shared social sacrifice.

Not only do religious observations allow subjects to repeat the original social sacrifice, but they also **mask this sacrifice as the source of enjoyment**. Religions tell their adherents that they must sacrifice freedom in their lifestyle choices, money that might be spent for pleasure, and time otherwise left for leisure. The reward for these sacrifices — most typically, an eternal life of pure enjoyment, or at least membership in a privileged community — serves to justify them. As a result, the sacrificing adherents of the religion can believe that they are sacrificing for the sake of the future reward rather than for the sake of the sacrifice itself. When we practice religious sacrifice, we **don’t see where our true enjoyment lies** — we don’t recognize the link between loss and enjoyment — and this deception is crucial for religion’s attractiveness. We **cling to our enjoyment,** but we also **cling to the illusion that it is something that we might have rather than a loss that we must endure**.

#### Bataille fell for the capitalist trap – sacrifice is a tool out of capitalism’s pocket to justify itself and forces dissatisfaction onto subjects

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 131-133, 20 September 2016, MG)

The problem with Bataille, however, is that his theory of sacrifice is grounded in an **ontology of excess energy**. We enjoy sacrifice because we are burdened with too much energy: there is enjoyment in the diminution of this burden. But Bataille never explains how this excess arises and how we obtain it. In this way, he misses the creative power of sacrifice, its capacity to form something out of nothing. We don’t begin with too much but with undifferentiated being, and sacrifice enables us to differentiate, to create a value where none otherwise exists. It is the **creative power of sacrifice** that generates its appeal.

In terms of his analysis of capitalism, Bataille’s emphasis on the impoverishment of sacrifice leads him astray. He mistakes the secularization of sacrifice for its evanescence, and this error leads him to **underestimate capitalism’s appeal.** If sacrifice was “a need as inevitable as hunger” as he says, capitalism could not endure while turning away from it. The invisibility of sacrifice is not its disuse but its multiplication. But Bataille nonetheless captures the experience of the capitalist subject reacting to the hiddenness of sacrifice in the capitalist world. His thought functions not so much as a critical analysis of capitalist society but as a phenomenology of capitalist life, a life that hides its dependence on sacrifice.

The hiddenness of sacrifice often produces **outbursts of sacrifice** that attempt to compensate for its apparent absence. The secularization of sacrifice creates the image of a world in which all objects are equal and thus one in which no object has any value. Where everything has a price, nothing is worth anything. Outbursts of sacrifice occur most prominently with contemporary terrorists. The true terrorist is the one who is not fighting for a particular ethnic or nationalist cause but rather struggling against capitalist modernity. This figure finds the absence of visible sacrifice in modernity suffocating. Modern subjects appear to exist without any sacrificial demands: they can display their bodies openly, watch obscene films, and even engage publicly in overtly sexualized behavior. They seem to enjoy in lieu of sacrificing, and the terrorist aims at reintroducing sacrifice into this abyss.

The terrorist always sacrifices others and often sacrifices herself or himself to create value in the monotony of the modern world. Though terrorism involves destruction, it is always also creation. The terrorist tries to gives existence a value that it seems to have lost. But this judgment on the part of the terrorist reflects a failure to recognize how the capitalist system actually functions.

It is true that the tedium of capitalist existence appears valueless. But this is just the result of the transmutation of sacrifice performed by capitalism, not its absence. Capitalism’s secularization of sacrifice actually **multiplies its frequency** in the social order. Though no one in capitalist society cuts out the beating heart of a sacrificial victim, nuclear warheads, elaborate churches, and slaughterhouses testify to the persistence of sacrifice. And unlike the Aztecs and the Mayans, modern subjects have **lost the alibi of ignorance**, which makes the presence of sacrifice within capitalism so instructive.

Because sacrifice becomes less explicit and more integrated into everyday life under capitalism, subjects often fail to see its presence and seek out more direct forms of sacrifice out of a sense of **dissatisfaction with modernity**. This is the dissatisfaction that produces terrorist attacks, fundamentalist revivals, and bungee jumpers. The reactionaries that take up these activities are the direct result of capitalism’s ideological commitment to utility. They sacrifice themselves in senseless activities to proclaim their disgust with utility and their adherence to something of value. But the hatred of capitalism’s universe of utility reflects a failure to diagnose that universe and its mobilization of sacrifice.

To hate capitalist modernity for the abandonment of sacrifice and the desecration of value is to **accept capitalist ideology at face value**. Though capitalist ideology professes that capitalism is the most efficient economic system because it is the most responsive to human needs and eliminates the unnecessary sacrifices of time and energy that haunt other economic systems, sacrifice remains the **sine qua non** of capitalism, just as it was for earlier economies. But responses like terrorism, fundamentalism, and bungee jumping themselves play a part in furthering this ideology as well. They work to convince us that capitalism does really eliminate sacrifice and simply gratify needs by implicitly criticizing it for doing so. Their failure to see capitalist sacrifice helps to render it more invisible. But the answer to these reactionary positions should be an analysis of capitalism’s structural similarity to them.

One must only look and see in order to become aware of the ubiquity of sacrifice in the capitalist economy. The moments of satisfaction that capitalism offers are themselves replete with sacrifice, but the system shields us from confronting it. As a result, we accept the capitalist myth that sacrifice belongs to a prior epoch, and either we accommodate ourselves to this world or violently revolt against it. But this violent revolt rests on a **fundamental misunderstanding of how capitalism sustains itself**. One need not turn to terrorism in order to rediscover the spirit of sacrifice. This spirit has never left. Every act that we perform in the capitalist system involves us in forms of sacrifice, even if the system renders them invisible. Instead of flying a plane into a building, all one need do to experience the most violent sacrifice is to buy a new iPhone.

### L—Survival Strategies

#### \*\*\*K of survival strategies:

#### ---affirming individual survival maintains the construction of a psychotic social order. Deprived of any symbolic order, the subject can only appeal to a web of contradictory gazes, producing profound mistrust of anything beyond the self. This maintains the structure of neoliberalism by letting corporations and government alike off the hook for social responsibility and making collective political change structurally impossible.

#### ---despite describing themselves as socially alienated from the institutions they castigate, they still require validation from those institutions, maintaining a structure of desire that will fail to produce enjoyment without that institutional gaze --- they want their survival affirmed by the crowd to validate what they’ve accomplished.

**Dean 16** [Jodi, Professor of Political Science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges and Erasmus Professor of the Humanities in the Faculty of Philosophy at Erasmus University in Rotterdam, *Crowds and Party*, Verso (Brookyn, NY): 2016, p. 33-35]

Silva’s account of a transition to adulthood marked not by “entry into social groups and institutions but rather the explicit rejection of them” provides a poignant rejoinder to Sennett.19 One man tells Silva that “the hardest part about being an adult is finding a real fucking job.”20 People aren’t lacking a narrative for adulthood. Capitalism presents adulthood as an individual project. For the young working people Silva interviewed, individualism equals dignity. They tell heroic tales of self-sufficiency, turning inward as they manage feelings of betrayal, accept flexibility and flux, and buttress their sense of being utterly alone. Although the dependencies of the welfare state and corporate bureaucracy that Lasch associates with the therapeutic sensibility have been dismantled and replaced by a harsher, more competitive capitalism, therapeutic language remains the vocabulary through which to account for individual success and failure.

Instead of the jettisoning of the past that Lasch and Sennett observe, Silva’s subjects embrace the past as they narrate the challenges they have had to overcome in order to realize their authentic selves. Understood in terms of familial and personal experiences, the past provides an open field of explanations for hardship, failure, and the diminution of what they see as success. Unlike Lasch’s empty narcissists, Silva’s young adults have lives of inner purpose—surviving on their own in a context where the odds are against them. They struggle with illness and battle with addiction. They overcome dysfunctional families and past relationships. The fight to survive is the key feature of an identity imagined as dignified and heroic because it has to produce itself by itself.

Silva’s young adults point to an imaginary identity beyond the rugged individualist and the narcissistic gamesman: the survivor. Unlike the symbolic identity of institutions (the place from which one sees oneself as acting), imaginary identity is the image one adopts of oneself. Since so many of Silva’s informants feel they have had to do it all by themselves, in contexts of poverty and diminishing opportunity, they take the fact of their survival as the morally significant fact: making it on one’s own is what bestows dignity.

Some of the white survivors Silva interviews resent “socialists” like US President Barack Obama for trying to take away their last best thing, the special something that is all they have left, namely, the dignity they have because they are completely self-reliant.

The black survivors, too, narrate their experiences in individual rather than collective terms. They, too, seek to hold on to the only person they can count on—themselves. Betrayed by schools, the labor market, and the government, Silva’s working-class informants in general feel “completely alone, responsible for their own fates and dependent on outside help at their peril.” For them, surviving means internalizing the painful lesson that “being an adult means trusting no one by yourself.”21

What Sennett lauded as a repudiation of dependence appears in Silva’s account as a deep skepticism of solidarity. Reliance on other people requires acknowledging one’s insufficiency as an individual, one’s inability to survive alone. The hostility to the needy expressed by some of Silva informants suggests a defense against their own need. Hostility lets them displace their need onto others and thereby shore up a fragile and impossible individuality. Having learned that they can’t rely on anyone, these young working-class adults try to numb their sense of betrayal by affirming the worst cultural scripts of individualism, personal responsibility, and self-reliance, hardening themselves to the world around them. Their hostility to various forms of government intervention, particularly affirmative action, makes them ideal supports for neoliberal capitalism. Incidentally, those of us who write and circulate critical exposés—stories of governmental corruption, university failure, and corporate malfeasance—may not be helping our cause. We may be affirming what some in the working class already know to be true: they are being betrayed.

Likewise countering Sennett’s happy rendering of the repudiation of dependence, Carrie M. Lane’s research on white-collar technology workers in Dallas situates the emphasis on individual responsibility in the context of wide-scale layoffs and unemployment.22 Insecurity is a primary feature of the lives of these tech workers. Most alternate through contract positions of varying duration, unemployment, and selfemployment.23 Lane notes how the technology workers she interviewed embrace a “career management” ideology that casts “insecurity as an empowering alternative to dependence on a single employer.”24 They construe loyalty as a thing of the past: since everyone is a victim of economic forces beyond their control, neither companies nor employees owe each other anything. Owners and workers both want to make money however they can. No one should expect a company to provide employment security or opportunities for professional development. Such an expectation indicates a childish attitude of dependence. According to one executive, “To give my employees job security would be to disempower them and relieve them of the responsibility that they need to feel for their own success.”25 Laid-off and job-seeking tech workers adopt the corresponding individualist mindset: success comes from doing “whatever it takes” to get by, get through, get that next job.

The survivor is a compelling identity under conditions of extreme competition and inequality. It validates surviving by any means necessary. Survival is its own reward. Setbacks and lapses are new challenges, ultimately greater proof of one’s survival skills. Popular culture provides a wide array of survivors to emulate (as well as examples of those who have been unable to get themselves together): from Katniss in The Hunger Games, to the winners of uncountable reality television competitions, to games like Day Z and Fallout, to victims of illness or crime. Emotions of anger, suspicion, and defensiveness are justified—one can rely only on oneself—and potentially useful as the psychic weapons that can help maintain an impossible individuality.

The survivor is a figure not for a culture of narcissism but for a psychotic culture. If narcissistic culture is characterized by the dislodging of symbolic authority, psychotic culture is characterized by its foreclosure.26 In brief, Lacan defines psychosis in terms of the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father or master signifier. That the master signifier is foreclosed means that it does not stabilize meaning; the signifying chain lacks an anchor that can hold it together. The generalized loss of symbolic power impacts the subject such that he feels this now-missing authority to be all the closer, more powerful, and intrusive. In a psychotic culture, then, mistrust is pervasive, all-consuming. Each confronts power directly and alone.

To compensate for the missing symbolic authority, the psychotic turns to the imaginary. He positions himself in relation to a “captivating image,” perhaps of one whom he hates, admires, or fears.27 This imaginary other would then be a rival to defeat or destroy. The psychotic may try to mimic those around him, particularly as he grapples with intense fear and aggression. And he may also become captivated by an image of himself. Here the psychotic imagines himself not as anyone or anything in particular: I am my own worst enemy. What matters is persistence, survival, for its own sake.

Whether rendered as caring for oneself or looking out for number one, the captivating image of the individual enjoins its own maintenance. For all their emphases on self-reliance, Silva’s interviewees nonetheless want to be recognized. They want someone else to hear their stories, validate what they’ve accomplished. Communicative capitalism supplies the necessary infrastructure, the crowd of many who might view, like, or share.

Lasch’s diagnosis of cultural narcissism has lost its currency: communicative capitalist society is less narcissistic than it is psychotic, oriented via an alliance of the imaginary and the Real in the wake of the loss of the symbolic. Rather than enduring a surfeit of expertise, we are awash in multiple, conflicting, irreconcilable opinions.

Unable ever fully to determine which is right, we have to decide for ourselves. Algorithms and data render social science obsolete. Power is backed by neither authority nor knowledge, appearing and manifesting instead as violence. Therapy offers neither justice nor cure. Militarized policing—arrests and shootings without accountability or cause—takes the place of the former; a wide array of pharmaceuticals takes the place of the latter, and when these fail there is depression, incapacity, addiction, and suicide. Finally, precarity, competition, and social networks supplant the antagonistic cooperation Lasch associates with the internal life of the corporation.

Aggressive impulses need not be repressed under a veneer of cheerfulness. In the extreme inequality of communicative capitalism, multiple channels encourage their expression: hate and outrage circulate easily in affective networks.28

Nevertheless, Lasch’s attention to the forces that simultaneously command and undermine individuality remains compelling for the way it opens up the growing weight placed on the individual form. As subsequent sociological research attests, the interiorization of this weight continues to unburden corporations and the state from social responsibilities, intensifying concentration on already stressed individuals. An effect has been the diminishing of expectations such that survival itself becomes the achievement worth celebrating.

### L – Sublimity

#### Sublimity is capitalism’s pet – their endorsement of it exposes subjectivities and desecrates them by leaving them terminally dissatisfied as well as recreating the system

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 242-244, 20 September 2016, MG)

Every society makes use of sublimity. The sublime serves as the engine for **social organization** and for individual activity within that organization. Without some indication of the sublime, a society would become idle and cease even to reproduce itself. The sublime gives the subject the capacity for enjoyment by convincing it that its life is not simply a series of empty physical processes. The subject’s capacity for satisfaction emerges along with the idea of the sublime and **can’t endure without this idea.** The end of the sublime would mark the **end of subjectivity itself** in addition to the social order in which the subject exists. As subjects of the signifier, we need a reason to go on, and sublimity provides that reason for us.

The act of sublimation occurs when the subject creates an **object that is out of reach**, but it is precisely the status of being out of reach that serves to animate the subject. If we did not have an object that we could not obtain, we would cease to be active subjects because we would find ourselves with no incentive to act. Everything would be attainable, and nothing would be worth attaining. Sublimation provides a way for the subject to fail, and the subject satisfies itself by repeating a necessary failure. It produces **satisfaction for the subject, but this satisfaction is never that of obtaining the object**.1

Traditional society based on rigid social hierarchies and capitalist society are radically distinct. But both **share the need for the sublime**. If capitalism simply eliminated the sublimity of traditional society, it would not be able to provide any enjoyment for its subjects, and they would never invest themselves in its perpetuation. Because there are people devoted to capitalist society, we know that it has not eliminated sublimity altogether. And yet, the situation with regard to the sublime is not what it once was. The site of sublimity has undergone a transformation, and in the process, our understanding of the sublime has shifted as well.

In traditional societies, gods, leaders, or priests bore sublimity. People followed their commands because these commands emanated from a site that transcended the brute material world and gave significance to that world. Though some people continue to treat political or religious leaders as sublime figures today, this status has for the most part been lost in the epoch of capitalist modernity. A popular music star or famous athlete is more likely to appear sublime than a president or a priest, but this type of sublimity is contingent and confined to a limited number of fans. Capitalism allows for the beheading of kings, the mockery of presidents, the critique of popes, and the denunciation of preachers. All of traditional society’s bastions of sublimity find themselves **exposed to desecration under capitalism**. Capitalist society appears to function without the necessary ingredient for social reproduction. But sublimity doesn’t disappear under capitalism, even though it seems like it does.

The transformation in the sublime that capitalism effectuates creates a **more palatable version of sublimity for the subject**. Just as capitalism gives us love in the less traumatic form of romance, it gives us the sublime without the awe-inspiring and terrorizing figure that we must obey. Capitalism **sustains sublimity**, but it subtracts the traumatic figure in which subjects experience this sublimity. Even though capitalist sublimity lacks the power to produce the extreme versions of satisfaction produced by the traditional sublime, it gives it to us in a more tolerable package. This is the bargain the capitalist subject accepts: a less terrifying sublime in exchange for a **lessened satisfaction that derives from the sublime**.

Capitalism’s transformation of the sublime is not self-evident, even though everyone can see that we no longer live in a world of kings or priests. But a seeming contradiction in Marx’s thought reveals the complex operation that capitalism performs in regard to the sublime. To grasp the nature of the capitalist sublime—that is, to see why people **invest themselves** to profoundly in the self- destructiveness of the capitalist system—one must confront this point at which Marx speaks against himself. The tradition of this type of reading of Marx begins with Louis Althusser, but we must take it in a new direction.

### L – Unproductivity

#### Their radical act of unproductivity gets commodified and used for new surplus value for the system – they’ve provided the same potentiality to the system as Donald Trump and Bill Gates

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 190-192, 20 September 2016, MG)

In a number of works dedicated to potentiality, Giorgio Agamben has advocated just this type of change in perspective. He identifies potentiality not with the capacity to realize one’s desire but with the satisfaction that comes from the failure to realize it. As he argues in the essay “On Potentiality,” “To be potential means: to be one’s own lack, to be in relation to one’s own incapacity. Beings that exist in the mode of potentiality are capable of their own impotentiality; and only in this way do they become potential. They can be because they are in relation to their own non-Being.”16 Potentiality implies impotentiality and failure, an ability to identify with one’s own inability to realize a desire.17 Potentiality is an immanent alternative that exists within the capitalist system. Despite its insistence on all potentiality realizing itself in actuality, capitalism **relies on impotentiality** or the interruption of productivity to create new values and to sustain the **functioning of the system**.

The insistence on impotentiality is not just a protest against capitalism’s demand for productive ends. It is also—and perhaps more importantly—an act that contains within it the essence of capitalism’s productivity. Impotentiality’s refusal blocks the process of capital’s actualization, but such refusals are the real source of value. Capitalism relies on subjects of impotentiality even when they destroy potential productivity, because these subjects open up **other avenues for productivity**. Even though capitalism demands productivity and reduces laborers to instruments of reproduction, it desires and in fact requires an interruption of this pure productivity. The special talent of capitalism lies in its capacity for marshaling the threat of impotentiality in the service of its regime of actuality. This is why the political valence of impotentialty is never cut and dried.

Within the capitalist mode of production, the interruption of productivity becomes a **new way of creating surplus value**. As Hannah Arendt theorizes it, capitalism—and communism, about which she is equally critical—demands the reduction of all potentially active subjects to laborers. Labor, which is nothing but the reproduction of life itself, becomes the only possible mode of relating to one’s existence. Work (which is world creating) and action (which is the realm of the political) cease to be viable concerns within the modern capitalist universe. The dominance of labor and its pure productivity create a world in which there is no value at all, and this destruction of value forms the basis for Arendt’s critique of capitalism and communism.18

But what Arendt misses is the impossibility of a system continuing to survive just for the sake of surviving.19 Even when we claim to want only to survive, we must find **some satisfaction in this survival** or else we wouldn’t bother with it. Pure survival simply isn’t worth the effort, either for the individual or for the socioeconomic system. Every system needs a source of value, and in order to create it, capitalism relies on the interruption of the pure productivity —or, to put it in Agamben’s terms, the interruption of actuality—that it explicitly demands. Pure productivity cannot create value, which is precisely why Marx sees capitalism’s production of value infinitely shrinking. This process, for Marx, will ultimately lead to capitalism’s decay and overthrow. But capitalism finds **new forms of value** in those moments when productivity stops and when an interruption manifests itself. This is what Marx fails to anticipate, and his failure is due to his investment in productivity as the fundamental value. Withdrawal from the capitalist system energizes the system by providing it with a new potential that it must work to actualize.

We can see an exemplary case of this in any great modernist work of art. Marcel Duchamp’s Fountain (1917) is simply a urinal torn from the system of productivity, an interruption of that system. Though Duchamp’s work had a scandalous effect at the time of its initial appearance, its interruption of productivity later became the site of immense productivity. Many art historians consider it one of the greatest artworks of the twentieth century, and replicas appear in museums around the world. It now generates revenue through museum admissions, T-shirt sales, and related ventures. Duchamp’s work marks a genuine interruption of capitalist productivity, but that **productivity uses such interruptions as the fuel that propel it forward**.

Even though it is difficult to imagine Duchamp’s Fountain bringing new life into a decaying capitalist mode of production, this is nonetheless what happens. Duchamp’s work is not just resistance but also interruption, and capitalism **requires interruption in order to survive**. Fountain and other similar works force capitalism to change course and begin to do things differently in order to respond to the refusal that they embody. Perhaps Duchamp’s subtraction of the urinal from the regime of productivity would create a change in the construction of urinals or of museums, for instance. Perhaps this refusal would lead to the privileging of a wholly new commodity. Insofar as it reduces subjects to beings of pure survival, capitalism would destroy itself, but it can thrive insofar as it can make use of figures such as Duchamp’s urinal. What doesn’t fit is just as necessary to the **perpetuation of capitalism** as what does. This applies as much to people as it does to objects.

Nowhere is this reliance on those who don’t fit clearer than in the world of fashion. New fashions derive not from insiders but from outsiders, subjects exiled from mainstream society. To take the most obvious example, the style of baggy pants did not emerge in the Upper East Side of New York or from Paris but from street gangs. But it quickly spread to clothing production and provided untold millions in profits for manufacturers who undoubtedly scorned (and didn’t socialize with) the gang members who started the trend. The figures that interrupt productivity drive the productivity of the market, even though they receive no monetary benefit for their creative act. They are the **exiles from the capitalist system**, but they are **every bit as integral to it as Donald Trump and Bill Gates.20**

#### Student movements, Vietnam, university reform, sexual liberty, civil rights, and the sexual revolution all prove that their ethic of unproductivity gets captured to fuel the regime, only the alt can solve

McGowan 16 (Todd McGowan PhD - Professor of English at the University of Vermont, “Capitalism and Desire: The Psychic Costs of Free Markets”, Columbia University Press, Pages 193-196, 20 September 2016, MG)

Capitalism’s reliance on the outburst of nonproductivity that is politically opposed to the system is manifest in the response to the **student movement of the 1960s**. For many leftists, the 1960s—and especially May 1968—represent a highpoint in recent political history. 22 In contrast with the apolitical years of the 1980s and 1990s when university students around the world seemed more focused on finding a place within the capitalist economy than on asserting themselves politically, the 1960s were a time of dissatisfaction with this economy, a time when many tried to “turn on, tune in, and drop out.”23 The student radicals took up a position of nonproductivity and refused to comply with capitalist society’s demand that they become productive members of this society. They were a group who preferred not to contribute to capitalist relations of production.

The nonproductivity of the student movement became **literal** in the free speech movement at Berkeley. Led by Mario Savio, Berkeley students began by protesting against, as the name of the movement suggests, university restrictions on speech. When the police arrived to arrest students who occupied university buildings, the students responded in a unique way that indicated their commitment to nonproductivity. Rather than go quietly with the police or resist arrest—what seem to be the only two legitimate options for someone in this situation—they let their bodies go limp so that the police had to drag them from the buildings. When this happens, the resistance against capitalist society and the refusal to go along with the demands of that society confront every viewer of the scene.

The development of this form of resistance represents a brilliant strategy on the part of the free speech movement precisely because it is not just a strategy. The form of the protest is the expression of its content. Fighting back against the police does not simply run the risk of escalating repressive violence. It also involves an assertion of productivity and testifies to an inherent complicity with the capitalist system against which one is struggling. The limp body, in contrast, does not just negate but rather affirms nonproductivity. 24

Though the authority figures of capitalist society responded to the revolts with displays of force, capitalism as a system found **revitalization in them**. As Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello rightly note in their discussion of May 1968 in France, “it was by recuperating some of the oppositional themes articulated during the May events that capitalism was to disarm critique, regain the initiative, and discover a new dynamism.”25 This final point is the most significant. The assertion of nonproductivity within capitalism’s regime of productivity **fuels the regime**. Capitalism requires the assertion of nonproductivity in order to continue to survive, as nonproductivity renews capitalism by **providing it with a limit that it must conquer**. In response to the student revolts, it had to realign itself in accordance with the demands that they articulated. New products and professions followed in the wake of these revolts.

The insistence on nonproductivity in the student revolts of the 1960s went beyond limp bodies. It manifested itself in the insistence on **sexual liberty**, in the refusal to fight in the **Vietnam War**, in demands for **university reform**, in advocacy for **civil rights**, and so on. The nonproductivity of the revolts was the source of new value for capitalist society. This is most clearly the case with the **sexual revolution**. The status of sexuality after the student revolts of the 1960s underwent a vast transformation. The idea that sex should be restricted to married life became outmoded and restricted to a nostalgic reaction to sexual liberation. Even if most people did not take up the practice of free love, the relaxation of sexual mores proliferated throughout capitalist society. Though some had the dream that sexual liberation would topple capitalism, the effect was quite the contrary. The movement opened a new market and allowed capitalism to expand into a previously unavailable domain.

After sexual liberation, sex became a new source of value. Businesses began selling more sexy underwear, revealing clothes, and sex toys. The pornography industry began in earnest in the United States in the 1970s, and it opened up a vast field of production to meet an increasing demand. In fact, in 1972 the porn film Behind the Green Door (Artie Mitchell and Jim Mitchell) was the fourth highest grossing film of the year in the United States, beating out popular mainstream films such as Cabaret (Bob Fosse, 1972) and The Getaway (Sam Peckinpah, 1972). And in a more indirect manner, sex became fecund territory for advertisers, as innumerable companies began to appeal to consumers by associating their products with sex. One can now see sexually explicit advertisements that would have been unthinkable in the 1960s. Rather than harming capitalism, sexual liberation helped to save it.

But this should not imply that valuing the means and nonproductivity is a fool’s errand, that it simply **feeds the society from which it withdraws**. The problem lies in the **approach that we take to the means**. Capitalism requires thinking in terms of the final cause, and prioritizing the means does not fit smoothly in this context. If we recognize capitalism’s dependence on the means and insist on the means for its own sake, we undermine the logic that sustains capitalist production. Once the priority of the means becomes apparent, we move beyond the confines of the capitalist system.

The linchpin of a critique of capitalism—and the formation of a workable alternative—rests on valuing the means over the end. Rather than acquiescing to capitalism’s use of means for the end of the production of value, rather than submitting the means to the reign of the capitalist final cause, we can turn our attention to the **means in itself**. Attention to the means is always the revolutionary gesture, even when it ultimately becomes transformed into actuality.

### !—Trauma of Slavery

**The impact is the trauma of slavery—the signifier of race destroys black subjectivity, crushes the possibility of fantasy, and renders black life fungible**

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 19-21)//guyB

The applicability of this notion of the barred subject to a theory of African American identity and agency becomes clearer when read in relation to race theorist Hortense Spillers’ essay “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book.” Here Spillers describes the social Symbolic as operating through the **signifiers of race** to restructure the very identity of African Americans. For Spillers, African Americans are subjects “embedded in bizarre axiological ground,” **buried under the signifiers of “a dominant Symbolic order**.”28 This order was created out of **a “rupture and a radically different kind of cultural continuation**” that Spillers identifies as slavery.29 Spillers finds in slavery the “**total objectification” of an “entire captive community**,” the “dehumanizing, ungendering, and defacing” of “subjects” who come to **be “taken into account as quantities**.”30 As a result of this process of quantifying and commodifying human beings, the slave’s identity adheres to “no symbolic integrity,” and a restructured Symbolic unfolds as “an American Grammar” grounded in the “originating metaphors of captivity and mutilation.”31 Particularly useful in Spillers’ theory is its prescient observation of slavery’s ability to **conflate identity with commodity** for the slave, its ability to reduce the slave to the status of a signifier with monetary exchange value. The narratives told by the slaves themselves support such a reading. In the slave narrative of William Wells Brown, for example, Brown describes as one of the most memorable incidents of his enslavement the case of a blind child deemed worthless by his master and sold for “the small sum of one dollar.”32 What the slave narratives record is not just the commodification of the slave but the **appropriation and rearticulation of his or her identity by the signifiers of the Other.** As James Olney argues, the repeated phrase that begins most slave narratives, “I was born,” is precisely an effort to establish the identity that is stricken out by the slave master’s rewriting of the slave’s identity, a rewriting that we see often occurs through the violent inscriptions of the master’s whip.33 Significantly, both Brown’s narrative and that of Frederick Douglass start by detailing the place of their birth and then move within mere paragraphs to scenes of whippings (suffered by Brown’s mother and Douglass’ aunt) as conveying through “bitter experience” what it means to be a slave.34 The narratives identify such experiences of devaluation as “the blood-stained gate, the entrance to the hell of slavery, through which” these ex-slaves were “about to pass.”35 When read alongside the testimony of ex-slaves, Spillers’ work allows us to see that excessive domination by the Other’s signifier is characteristic of the slave’s experience. Indeed, Brown’s relation to the transcribing whip and the Other’s signifiers is so overwhelming that even upon gaining freedom he states, “the fact that” there was no longer anyone “to stand over me with the blood-clotted cow-hide . . . made me feel that I was not myself.” This **split relation to the self** is what I suggest slavery establishes for the slave. What is stricken from the slave here, and is read as a blow to his or her sense of identity, is more precisely the slave’s fantasies of being. Being can be understood as an illusory, lost state of wholeness and “totality” that never existed for the subject but that the subject ever pursues.37 This fantasy of a lost wholeness is necessary because the splitting of the subject by language is inherently traumatic, constituting the Real as a psychic register of lack founded in trauma. Where it is “rupture,” the division of the psyche into the conscious and the unconscious that simultaneously **grants subjectivity and makes lack and “absence emerge**,” the subject compensates for the trauma of this loss with the “mirage” of a “false unity,” a whole being or unified self capable of being refound because it existed “anterior” to the splitting initiated by language.38 Being fantastically emerges for the subject as **an illusory autonomy and state of pleasure** that is displayed most visibly in the Imaginary of the mirror stage, wherein the child conflates ~~him- or herself~~[themselves] with the mother seen in the mirror, forming the gestalt of a single self who is misapprehended as one “whole” being. The search for this lost being propels subjectivity, constituting desire as that which directs the subject endlessly toward Symbolic substitutions that promise to fill the subject’s constitutive lack. Through such illusory notions of wholeness, the final, traumatizing truth avoided by the desiring subject is that his or her status as a subject demands both a perpetual condition of lack and a reduction to the status of signifier. What I wish to argue is that slavery and racism seek to bring about precisely a traumatic confrontation with lack and an unveiling of the subject’s status as signifier. I call this confrontation **the trauma of slavery**, an assault directed not simply at the slave ~~him- or herself~~ [themselves] but, more critically, at the very fantasies that sustain subjectivity. Lacan defines “fantasy” as that which employs language and the signifiers of the Symbolic to mask the traumatic lack of the subject and construct the illusions of self, the I-cracies, through which the subject compensates for a psychic sense of loss. What we see in the case of Brown, however, is **the instability of such fantasies for even the freed slave**. Because his subjective sense of self remains scarred by the effects of the master’s whip, Brown is unable fully to recognize himself in the illusions of autonomy that freedom more readily allows. I suggest that because the slave and his African American descendants continually confront obstacles in their efforts to manipulate the discourses that define them, these racialized subjects often struggle more than is usual to maintain their safe distance from the traumatic jouissance of lack. My argument is that slavery and racism become traumatic because they **seek to inhibit the subjectifying function of fantasy**, aiming to confront African Americans with the very lack that is necessarily masked in the Lacanian subject.

### !—Phallic Whiteness

**The impact is phallic whiteness, a resentful attachment to race that necessitates antiblack violence as an iteration of the fantasy of white identity**

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 24-27)//guyB

Lacan calls this fantasy object the objet a, or object a, arguing that the fantasy “object a was the place Marx revealed, uncovered, as surplus value.”59 This fantasy object, which Lacan allows us to associate with capital, **may also be seen productively in American society as race**. Where the master signifier, **whiteness**, and its accompanying discourses of race are **rooted in slavery**, Lacan displays that “there is a use of the signifier that we can define by starting out from the master’s signifier’s split” from “the body lost by the slave, which becomes nothing other than a body in which all the other signifiers are inscribed.”60 What was split from the slave through the Symbolic’s transcription upon his or her body of the master’s meanings and fantasies was not only the master signifier, whiteness, but also the fantasy of being that race guaranteed to the master. The fantasy object of race established whiteness hierarchically as the pinnacle of being by **binding the master’s being to an asserted absence of being in the slave**. As Lacan shows, “the master can only dominate [the slave] through excluding” from the slave “this [surplus] jouissance,” **this fantasy of being**.61 The master’s illusory supremacy lay in his ability to reinforce for the slave the Symbolic’s essential function of defining the subject as a signifier while also depriving the slave of the fantasies utilized by subjects to compensate for this traumatic subjective condition. Through discursive manipulation of the signifier whiteness, the master attempted to reduce the slave to not just a signifier with monetary exchange value but also a fantasy object with jouissance value. Both the abstract concept of racial whiteness and the tangible, embodied slave himself were presented in slavery as versions of the object a, emerging as the supports that buttressed the master’s fantasies of being. By masquerading in the master’s discourse as the source of a distinctive racial identity, whiteness adopted in slavery the object a’s core function of remanifesting being, emerging as a “semblance of being,” or as what I have called **the para-being that replaces the being irretrievably lost to the subject**.62. But, beyond the masquerade, whiteness remained only a signifier, the signifier I shall describe more fully in chapter 4 as the phallus; where **the phallus is a fantasy object a that has achieved discursive dominance as the representative of being**, presenting itself as the possession that signals a completion that defies castration, all other manifestations of the object a attain their own fantasy value by standing as “referent” to the phallus, whose ascendency they thus also support.63 As phallus, I argue, whiteness ultimately functioned to designate an ascendant state of plenitude and completion that was available to the master only through a fantasy relation to the slave as object a. The master’s proof that he possessed the illusory phallic object of whiteness was his **commodified possession of the slave,** whose stricken being allowed the slave to be presented not just as the fantasy object a but also as a visible, tangible signifier of the master’s supremacy. The process of desubjectifying the slave through his or her transformation into a representation of the object a was pivotal to both the notion of whiteness and the economics that supported the social structure of antebellum America. Through denying the subjective fantasies and humanity of blacks, white slaveholding Americans not only sought to transform the slave from subject into commodity but also shored up **white fantasies of being**, employing slaves themselves as signifiers of this being; indeed, white Americans were able to purchase and display their illusory being through the very procurement of slaves. Slaveholding became an access route to economical bliss and the surplus jouissance of fantasy, grounding through the slave as possessed object the hierarchy of social status in the South. The refined sophistication and vaunted pre-eminence that seemed uniquely inherent to the southern leisure class was the surplus snatched from the labor of the bought slave, whose very service to this class pronounced its members’ gentility through the distinction implied in having a slave courteously answer one’s door, pour the right wine at the right time, or flaunt the master’s wealth and family in the slave-driven carriage that paraded them to church and on other outings.64 Making jouissance and being calculable, a man’s slave was an index of his superiority over both the slave and his white compatriots; but as status and surplus jouissance were tied to slave ownership, in buying slaves an unestablished white man could move up the social ladder, asserting not only his entitlement to membership within the mastering race but also his status as an individual of distinction, worthy of a position within the master class of slaveholding aristocracy. As **it made white men into gentlemen**, so too did ownership of slaves enable white womanhood, providing the means for, say, a poor white woman tilling the fields to advance into the domestic sphere as a lady lording over her own home. The slave served as the capital, the financial backing, that guaranteed these identities of plenitude. Slavery was the foundation of an economics in which the abstract value of both a white man’s capital and his superior being were not only signified but also reified by the subjugated body of enslaved blacks. This effort to reify white phallic supremacy by splitting being from the slave was so central to antebellum America and white identity that even the third president of the United States and author of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, is inspired to assert in his Notes on the State of Virginia his “suspicion” that blacks are “inferior to the whites in endowments both of body and mind.”65 Jefferson discursively contributes to the fantasies of race that deprive the slave of being by pinning the “real distinctions” he finds between blacks and whites not on the “condition” (or enslavement) of blacks but on nature, arguing that skin color is both the sign of a difference that is “fixed in nature” and the “foundation of a greater or less share of beauty in the two races.”66 Through the visible difference of skin color and through the hegemonic power of the master signifier, whiteness, to organize difference, Jefferson delineates, fixes, and ranks deeper attributes of blacks and whites, **helping to solidify race as the fantasy object** a that guarantees a differential relation to being and secures white phallic sovereignty. Starting with an aesthetical argument that merely asserts his preference for the “fine mixtures of red and white” that are “expressions of every passion” in white faces and his distaste for “that eternal monotony, which reigns in the countenances” of blacks, Jefferson **transforms aesthetics into proof of racial inferiority**, suggesting that the “veil of black” not only covers “all the emotions of the other race” but also indicates an essential absence of sentiment.67 Through his reading of the races, Jefferson fortifies the notion of the insensate slave, immune to the inherent pains and hardships of slavery, that came to center ideological justifications for the institution.68 Finding in blacks a want of that “tender delicate mixture of sentiment and sensation” evident in his own race, Jefferson declares of blacks, “griefs are transient,” “less felt,” and “sooner forgotten with them.”69 Especially in an antebellum culture that praises sentimentality, emotions are proof of sentience, humanity, and subjecthood. However, while this discursive remaking of the slave’s identity contributed to by Jefferson and others impaired the slave’s ability to compensate for lack through the surplus jouissance of fantas. In denying both the emotional and intellectual capabilities of blacks, Jefferson thus questions the concept of their full humanity, the very fantasies of self that center the I-cracy of human subjectivityy, it did not guarantee an unproblematic relation to being for white Americans. Indeed, what especially the slave master did as a result of this curtailing of a surplus jouissance of fantasy was let loose **a terrifying psychic jouissance of the Real**, one that, significantly, impacted both slave and master. What occurred in slavery’s discursive splitting of the master signifier from the black body that was established as other to the white self was, in actuality, a process by which the psychic distinctions between self and other became blurred by a mutual approach to jouissance. Defining **jouissance as fundamentally “evil,”** Lacan not only acknowledges that in embracing the jouissance that emerges from the other’s pain we “move toward some cruelty,” but also poses the striking question of whose cruelty is involved here, the other’s “or mine”; Lacan answers his own question with the assertion that “nothing indicates they are distinct,” arguing that such evil cruelty emerges “on condition that those limits which oblige me to posit myself opposite the other as my fellow man are crossed.”70 While slavery maintained racial oppositions, it breached the psychic boundaries of the self by founding jouissance not just on fantasy but also on access to a Real that is approached through transgressions against the other.

### 2NC/1NR—Biological Essentialism DA

**Biological Essentialism DA: The perm’s insistence on race’s political utility masks their succumbing to the seductive visibility of race, a subtle attempt to map race onto biology—that imbues racial lines with permanence and kills alt solvency**

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 39-42)//guyB

The debate that has developed between Appiah and Outlaw over Du Bois’ relationship to race allows us some insight into how both Du Bois and contemporary African Americans like Outlaw seek to conserve the jouissance of the traumatic past. The debate centers on what Appiah identifies as Du Bois’ **irrational inability to give up the socially accepted biological conception of race** in spite of Du Bois’ avowed efforts to replace it with a sociohistorical conception. Outlaw responds to Appiah in defense of Du Bois, arguing that, whereas Appiah reads Du  Bois as essentially presenting a biological definition of race, Du Bois is more properly read as combining both a sociohistorical and a biological conception. Outlaw allies Du Bois with “natural philosophers of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries” who define race as a “cluster concept that draws together under a single word” references to “biological, cultural and geographical factors”; the properties this concept describes are to be taken “disjunctively,” says Outlaw, so that possession of “at least one of the properties” identifies an individual as a member of the race.7 Outlaw echoes Du Bois in acknowledging the inability of race to define precisely its referent, but for Outlaw this does not imply that “all racial classification is thereby inappropriate.”8 Where race fails to serve the purpose of “characterizing persons into or in terms of biologically constituted groupings,” Outlaw argues, “**it might well just mean that an additional racial or sub-racial category may be needed** for such persons.”9 What we find in both Du Bois and Outlaw, I suggest, is **an effort to conserve race beyond its referential value** and **an attachment to race that extends beyond the logic of these individuals’ arguments**. Part of the reason for this adherence to race is a dogged belief that, despite the conceded lack of scientific basis for race, this concept does indeed have some perceivable referential value. Du Bois himself argues that a “scientific definition of race is impossible,” for “physical characteristics are not so inherited as to make it possible to divide the world into races.”10 But race asserts its existential veracity through appeal to the eyes, through assertion of a natural and visible difference, marked in skin color, that helps to seduce equally Du Bois and Outlaw into compliance with racial thinking. It is this seductive visibility of race, this “common sense” evidence from “everyday life,” as Outlaw puts it, that we must first come to terms with in understanding the compelling attachment to race maintained by African Americans like Outlaw and Du Bois. Though race is a discursive construct, one that I argue is inspired by psychic urgencies, race remains compelling to the eyes because **racial differences emerge from a grafting of the meanings of the Symbolic onto biology**. It is this propensity of race to conflate the Symbolic’s discourses with biology that Du Bois and Outlaw promote in clustering race as both sociohistorical and biological. Emerging from the intersection of biology and the Symbolic, race does not manufacture difference but instead structures a prescribed mode of interpretation that grants forms of existent biological difference more critical Symbolic value. The biological fact of phenotypic variations functions in racial discourse as race’s alibi, masking the inherent arbitrariness of racial distinction by internalizing and eternalizing difference as an embodied permanency. Because phenotypic differences in pigmentation and morphological variations in bone and hair are often traceable through ancestral lines, these visible differences provide an ostensive basis for a biological notion of race as defined by inheritable characteristics. However, as the history of racial passing in this country attests, such characteristics do not always correlate in predictable ways with racial identity. Though, by grounding itself in the biology of phenotype, race comes to imply deeper dissimilarities in such things as morality, intellect, degrees of licentiousness, violent proclivities, and so on, it is the system of the Symbolic itself that grants race and these implied dissimilarities their value, establishing a differential status that has meaning only within a chain where black adopts its Symbolic significance through its interrelation with and distinction from white. Precisely by grafting itself onto biology, however, race presents itself as pre-dating the system of the Symbolic, masquerading as an inherent component of nature indicative of visible, natural variations in groups of humans. This ability to grant **permanency to difference through biology is both what enables race to function as the accomplice of psychic fantasies aimed at jouissance** and what Outlaw attempts to reinforce by defining race as a cluster concept. Though Outlaw contends that racism today is caused by “invidious conceptualizations of raciality and ethnicity” and that therefore today “we desperately need . . . settled and widely shared knowledge” of “empirically and socially appropriate identification of persons and groups,” Outlaw does not embrace the cluster concept for its empirical or social appropriateness.12 Recognizing that race’s lack of scientific grounding makes it a concept that will always be “subject to challenge and change,” Outlaw admittedly embraces the “cluster concept” definition of race for its fluidity and its ability to account for “variation across time and space”; **he embraces this definition because it allows him to maintain race and racial distinctions**.13 We note most visibly the contradiction in Outlaw’s argument when he asserts that the “continued **existence of discernible racial/ ethnic communities of meaning is highly desirable**, even if, in the very next instance, racism and invidious ethnocentrism in every form and manifestation were to disappear forever.”14 If race, though failing to define its referent, is yet needed to achieve “social peace and harmony” in the face of invidious racism, **why this compulsion to maintain race once racism disappears forever?**15 It would seem that what Outlaw seeks is not to establish communities of meaning but to maintain racial communities forged by the memory of this very history of race and racism Outlaw seeks to overcome. What is revealed in this break in Outlaw’s logic, I suggest, is his **unconditional attachment to a traumatic history**. Outlaw’s insistence on conserving the concept of race is determined by his resistance to relinquishing the traumatic past that established this concept. Because America, “from the onset,” was “structured, with the assistance of complex doctrines of white racial supremacy, into a racialized, hierarchic nation-state,” says Outlaw, reference to the racial past is always necessary for “understanding the historical and social being” that this past has created.16 But Outlaw’s emphasis here is not on understanding the multiplicity of each subject’s identity in the present or on recognizing each subject’s situatedness along numerous points of cultural intersection; it is, instead, primarily on an effort to perpetuate the process of racializing subjects as African American through linking them to the past. There is in Outlaw’s thinking **an imbrication of the historical past with contemporary personal identity** such that this past becomes the dominating core of the self. Such an imbrication, I suggest, **threatens to ground the psyche primarily in a subjective sense of self** built on a relation to the trauma of the past. This process of collapsing one’s self with the past of slavery allows for **a bond with slavery’s trauma** that must be conceptualized in the light of what Lacan identifies as the “hauling of the subject, who always drags his thing into a certain path that he cannot get out of.”17 Where for Outlaw reference to this traumatic past remains necessary even in a hypothetical future when this past’s influence not only is nonexistent but has disappeared “forever,” it is clear that moving past racism should never entail giving up race or the memory of a racial history that once forced certain identities upon African Americans. But most significantly, what Outlaw finally resists giving up, I think, is an attachment to what, at “the onset,” initiated America into the racial history that Outlaw will not forget: **not just slavery but also the trauma it produces**. Lacan describes trauma as a “form” of the Real that, though excluded from the Symbolic, structures both consciousness and Symbolic activity.18 Slavery, I argue, is an intrusive traumatic Real with which African Americans like Outlaw maintain a psychological link through adherence to the concept of race. Outlaw’s insistence on race breaks free of the logic of his argument about its political utility so as to become, I propose, an “act of homage to the missed reality,” a tribute to the inaccessible and unsymbolized trauma emanating from the past of slavery.19 Where trauma defies Symbolic representation, such **insistences on race perform “a rite, an endless repeated act”** as a means **to “commemorate” the “not very memorable encounter” that I call the trauma of slavery**.20 The insistence simultaneously fends against and facilitates the repetition of this traumatic Real through what Lacan refers to as the automaton, “the return, the coming back, the insistence of the signs, by which we see ourselves governed by the pleasure principle” and its “function of fantasy.”21 I thus point to the “sign” of race as unifying for African Americans a returning automaton, a “network of signifiers” entrenched in the fantasy construction of their racial identity.22 African Americans maintain an attachment to the fantasy of this racial identity because what lies beyond race’s return as the insistent sign, as the sign that African Americans like Outlaw would “drag” and “haul” into the present and future, is the repetition of the Real that cannot be confronted but yet must not be forgotten. The insistent automaton produces race as what Lacan speaks of as the “obligatory card,” the card dealt by the Symbolic that must be drawn by the subject, the returning sign that the subject comes to seek after actively because its return masks the repeated Real “beyond the automaton.”23 This obligatory card, race, is drawn, dragged, hauled, and insistently conserved by many African Americans as **a means of maintaining but not confronting the very trauma of slavery** that conditions and accompanies race’s compulsory return.

### Alt – Anti-Anti-Oedipus

#### Our alternative asks the question of “what remains after the death of Oedipus?” In opposition to their will to positivity, we forefront the negative, the lack, the irreducible void at the heart of subjectivity.

Weatherill 17 (Rob Weatherill, master’s degree in psychotherapy from St. Vincents Univesity Hospital as well as the European Certificate in Psychotherapy, “THE ANTI-OEDIPUS COMPLEX: Lacan, Critical Theory, and Postmodernism,” pgs. 123-125)//JRD

Psychoanalysis, to be (in)credible must keep faith with the traumatic kernel of the Real – negative thinking. Insofar as therapy supports repression with its recovery programmes, our husband will try to focus on the fact that he did arrive home too early, or, even if he didn’t, and whatever his wife was doing, he should work on his issues – to do with jealousy, dependency and so on. Mindfulness would help him relax. The whole drama of psychoanalysis struggles against these false notions of recovery, growth and comfort which are legion, to find instead the “basic fault,”63 where the story breaks, or the mask slips, the lip quivers and the cracks appear. The analyst struggles against all the various “fixes” that tempt the sufferer, from CBT programmes to drug therapies, all of which have their uses, but have to do with “doing” and “utility” rather than with “being” as such; to do with “moving on” rather than “being still,” to do with continuous re-invention and re-branding, the “new me,” and so on, rather than reflection. In this Heideggerian sense, therapies are indeed ‘forgetful of Being’, individual being and the larger Being. Following the machinic anti-Oedipal logic, treatments for mental suffering resemble hit-and-run crashes, where drivers leave the scene of the accident never to return. ‘My father was depressed; his brain was malfunctioning; he just needed a drug to fix it’. Return to the devastated surface. Is he okay now? Yes. Well fine! Within a very short time, the road is cleared, the traffic is flowing again. A few bits of glass remain. How can an analyst ever be an authority again without the Oedipal compass that should orient everything analytic? Who is willing to believe that, for instance, a hyperactive child, let us take a hypothetical but not uncommon instance, is continually trying to evacuate from his mind/body, unbearable and unthinkable anxiety generated by his distressed mother, deserted by the boy’s father, living in a part of town that is disadvantaged, now on her own and unable to cope herself? The child seeks a “container,” his school, or the classroom to hold him together, but he continually destroys it as he repeats and “communicates” his psychotic distress about his (idealised and unreachable) mother who bore him and now cannot love him. No! He has a damaged brain, neuro-imaging shows it, and he must take his Ritalin. Who is willing to investigate by listening to the narrative of the life of a middle aged woman who presents with, for her and her family, an unaccountable depression after her father died, which has continued too long. Medication is indicated. She believed that out of her four siblings she was secretly her father’s favourite, enjoying really special times with him especially when her mother got sick. In adult life, she became his unofficial secretary and confidante and would even accompany him to functions as his career progressed. She got married, had children, but her imaginary father still held a special place in her heart. When he got sick and died suddenly just a few years back, she was distraught. But when his will was read, she was left with practically nothing. Who, without analytic insight and experience, can really appreciate the intense rage and hurt at the “betrayal” by her father and the self punishment and self-hate (depression) that ensue as she identifies with his rejection and abandonment, first by dying and second at the level of his final desire/will? The analyst with an Oedipal compass understands the primitive oral omnipotence involved in anorexia, the master-slave fight to death with the re-discovered disappointing mother, over food – the ravaging greed coming from the id and the cannabalistic superego that that reduces her body to a skeleton that looks as if it might win the battle of will and counter-will in the war for total control and total perfection of the emaciated body. And the father was forced out to be a helpless bystander. Everyone has a story to tell, but the analyst needs investigative powers, the skill and the desire to get beyond the story’s manifest content – the very limited story – to the real scandals of Oedipal dynamics. Who understands and accepts as real, for instance, the intense emotions elaborated by Melanie Klein – matricidal, infanticidal, the insane mute limits of the human? And who in these non-judgemental days is prepared to find hidden sadism and masochism? Even analysts under supervision regularly miss human deviousness, complicity, deceit, double-dealing, and so on. They refuse in toto the real range of human dialectic, preferring instead the sentiments around a “damaged self,” or now a “damaged brain,” with minimal responsibility. We believe what people say, but must also disbelieve, because revelation and resistance alternate. Resistance is always present. Only the gullible will just listen and believe, but this now passes for the highest therapeutic understanding and respect. To disbelieve is disrespectful and insulting unless you are a negative thinker. Winnicott spoke of the true and false self. If we give it a Levinasian gloss, conatus essendi is the false self. The striving to maintain being, the false self qua caretaker self, or ego, begs the question of the status of the true self. Does it exist? Winnicott’s answer is that it “exists” to a degree in secret,64 until it finds a facilitating environment (in life, in analysis?) in which to express its emergent spontaneity, aliveness and real feeling, or in Lacanian terms, until it can speak. An analyst unaware of this distinction may allow years of analysis to continue unproductively – ‘The patient’s false self can collaborate indefinitely’.65 The existential twist creates a necessary edge, not there with Winnicott. The delight with Winnicott was always his sense of ease and playfulness. However, analysis is bound to interrogate the false self, as it can become not so much a caretaker, but a minder, at worst a paranoid mindbody guard, protecting the subject from suffering, from the other within and without. With the loss of the “facilitating environment” over the half-century since this paper was written, the minder false self increasingly threatens to usurp the whole scene, guaranteeing security at the expense of life. Disturb this minder false self (via analysis) and he is likely to retaliate with terroristic threats against the subject and the analyst. What happens, observes Winnicott, is ‘a need to collect impingements from external reality so that the living-time of the individual can be filled by reaction to these impingements’.66 Thus, an analysis risks taking on the minders but with no certain outcome! Rather than resolving the Oedipus complex, the anti-Oedipal “solution” is likely to end up becoming bogged down within it, or remaining pre-Oedipal. But who can detect this without the Oedipus compass? Like the young man with no history and no dreams, who lives from minute to minute, not thinking but reacting. His mother calls him many times a day as she worries about him. He lets her. She does his washing and sometimes she “feeds” him. He works a little but spends time helping out his sisters with their children. He says, ‘they are always there for him’. There is never a mention of his father. Who without an Oedipal orientation can identify the “plague,” the story spoken of around the forbidden/enjoyable/disappointing incestuous bonds? A young woman was given medication to cope with the ongoing stress caused by her parent’s acrimonious divorce 10 years previously. Her father left and remarried. She had no self-confidence in spite of significant success in her career. Her therapist gave her positive exercises to increase confidence but to no avail. Analysis revealed her secret Oedipal wish that her fighting parents would separate, countered by an equally strong reparative wish that they would stay together. When they really did divorce, her guilt was intense. She had caused it. She tried to excel at work to ward off her “badness.” When her father re-married, his “betrayal” was complete, stirring up more jealous hatred and punitive self-condemnation. Only by proper analysis of Oedipal desire, confronting head-on the negative drives, is it possible to rebuild, repair, but not recover. The subject remains divided. People used to fear their demons, derived from negative thinking and wishes associated with the Oedipus complex. Now, after anti-Oedipus there is shallowness. With positive thinking, not just some things are phoney, but everything may be phoney! Semblants everywhere forcing their dissembling reality on you like an insomniac roar to drown out the void. The closer the void, the louder the roar, which bespeaks the ultimate failure, the ultimate cynicism of positive thinking. The pendulum has swung so far in this direction that all moderation has been lost. Heidegger reminds us that for the Greeks, truth is something stolen from concealment. For Heraclitus, the prevailing of things has in itself a striving to conceal. The risk of analysis is underlined by American satirist H. L. Mencken: ‘for every nugget of truth, some wretch lies dead on the scrapheap’. The conceit of positive thinking is that it can definitely improve on the prevailing of things, whereas analysis, in creating a space for the saying of what is concealed, risks the radical contestation of “prevailing of things.” The criticism of modern “analysis” is that it does not contest. It listens well but does not analyse. Analysis per se belongs to a master discourse and must cease its search for truth. Listen but don’t analyse; the end of analysis. Freud’s instruction to the analyst was ‘to put aside all his feelings, even his human sympathy, and concentrate his mental forces on the single aim of performing the operation [analysis] as skilfully as possible’. Freud concludes his remarks by reference to the French surgeon, Ambroise Paré: ‘I dressed his wounds, God cured him’.67 At first reading, this is the best refutation of the comforting therapeutic you could imagine – analysis not therapy. This instruction should be read in conjunction with the aforementioned assertion by Freud that ‘analysis is a cure through love’ – clearing a space free of sympathy, pity, etc., yet dressing his wounds, and finally, the unknown – God’s cure – through love. But who ever thinks of God?

### Alt – Clinical Disavowal

#### Our alternative is to adopt the analytic of the Lacanian subject as a means to decipher the truths of the racially hierarchized social order. We must disavow the very fantasy of race in and of itself and move towards a new kind of imaged signifier that, drained of jouissance, stands for difference as such.

George and Hook 22 (Sheldon George, Professor and Chair of the Department of Literature & Writing at Simmons University, Derek Hook, Associate Professor in Psychology at Duquesne University, “Introduction: Theorizing Race, Racism, and Racial Identification,” Lacan and Race: Racism, Identity, and Psychoanalytic Theory, pgs. 6-11)//JRD

Racial identification and the subversion of race Having foregrounded the centrality of fantasy and enjoyment to racism, and even fantasy’s centrality in previous psychoanalytic engagement with racialized others, we might ask: how are we to be liberated from such fantasies of race? Lacanian perspectives on race and racism would be of limited value to us, surely, if they did not broach this difficult question. Jennifer Friedlander’s chapter, “In medium race: traversing the fantasy of post-race discourse,” provides a prospective answer to how such a liberation might occur. Drawing on contemporary scholarship that recognizes race as an illusion, Friedlander highlights how identification with the illusory object of race is tied to race’s promise to serve as a “medium” through which to decipher the truths of the racist social reality this illusion itself helps generate. Friedlander questions the knowledge we seem to arrive at through this illusory medium. She urges “disavowal” of race through a Lacanian process of separation from the signifiers of race, which, she argues, secure formidable bonds of racial identification within post-racial discourse precisely through the fantasy of having seen past race and its illusions. The Lacanian concepts of the objet a and the Act may, she hopes, be harnessed to disrupt the binding structure of race, destabilizing race’s grip by pressing on—and identifying with—precisely its negativity. Friedlander argues that we should expose the incompleteness of the Symbolic order—the signifier’s inability to generate any finalized metatruth about our racial reality—alongside its inability to ever fully ground any subjective identity. To subvert such attempted grounding of identity, however, our contributors suggest that one must work from a clear understanding of the mechanisms at play in racial identification. This latter task is embraced most directly by the chapters of this section. One of the most egregious historical sites of global white supremacy was apartheid South Africa, a site of mass identification with the myth of racial whiteness. Derek Hook’s chapter “The object of apartheid desire: A Lacanian approach to racism and ideology” returns us to this site, drawing on the novelist J.M. Coetzee’s conceptualization of “the mind of apartheid” as a means of foregrounding a series of paradoxes underlying the racist ideology of this political system. How, for example, might we separate historical from subjective agency when accounting for the persistence of apartheid? Who, moreover, might be said to be the author of such racist ideologies when apartheid’s ideologues seem themselves subject to its parasitic spread of ideas? Taking as his starting point Coetzee’s suggestion that apartheid ideology was sustained by the promise of various “phantasmatic rewards,” Hook goes on to deploy a set of Lacanian concepts (the desire of the Other, objet petit a, the processes of alienation and separation) to advance a fulsome account of racist fantasy. Without an appreciation of racism as an ongoing transaction between the perceived desire of the Other and the subject’s own fantasmatic response to that desire (in the form of object a), says Hook, we fail to grasp how racism is simultaneously a subjective and a social formation; and, moreover, we fail to account for the insistent momentum and gratifications of racism and racial identification. Molly Rothenberg’s chapter “Raced Group Pathologies and Cultural Sublimation” is likewise concerned with the pathological dimension of raced group identification. Rothenberg focuses her analysis of identification on the production of a fantasm, that is, the embodiment of a common attribute of identification that overwrites the values of a given cultural egoideal and obstructs the development of individual desires. She explores desire and racial group identification in light of Lacanian structures of perversion and neurosis. Nella Larsen’s novel Quicksand serves as a crucial point of reference for Rothenberg, dramatizing as it does the effects on desire of fantasmatic raced identifications. It is in Lacan’s theorization of Atè, the ultimate object of desire veiling the death drive, that Rothenberg finds a prospective answer to what might counter and disrupt such pathologically perverse and neurotic raced identifications. Lacan regards Atè within the context of Sophocles’ Antigone, designating Antigone herself as Atè, as a new kind of imaged signifier (Un seul) that, drained of jouissance, stands for difference as such. For Rothenberg, the cathartic effect of Sophocles’ play depends on its production of just such a new kind of signifier that offers a model of cultural sublimation that could subvert pathological raced identifications. Race and the clinic A crucial factor enabling us to move beyond the parameters of much contemporary theorizing about race and racism concerns the clinic, and, more directly, the vocabulary that emerges from the realm of Lacanian clinical practice. One of Lacan’s most important contributions in this respect takes the form of his structural categories of diagnosis, namely, neurosis, psychosis, and perversion. Sheila Cavanagh makes figurative reference to the last of these in her chapter, “Race, perversion and jouissance in Portrait of Jason.” She explores Shirley Clarke’s (1967) documentary film on Jason Holliday—the first gay African American man to appear solo on screen—in which Holliday presents himself as a provocative and loquacious hustler. The film, for Cavanagh, resembles an unorthodox psychoanalytic scene where the intention is not to cure, but rather to expose a perverse truth about Holliday. His stories of anti-black racism are, she says, as erotic and titillating as they are harrowing and unbelievable, inviting uncertainty with respect to the difference between fact and fiction, reality and the Real. Holliday becomes the object cause of the Other’s (Clarke’s) jouissance in the tradition of the Lacanian pervert, his perverse performative discourse foregrounding the psychic traumatism of racism in an utterly distinct way. At the heart of clinical vocabulary is, of course, the term psychoanalysis itself. Patricia Gherovici’s contribution, “The lost souls of the barrio: Lacanian psychoanalysis in the Ghetto,” reminds us that in promoting this term, psychoanalysis, Freud put the accent on the first of its two conjoined parts, with “psyche” being the Greek word for soul. This is important, says Gherovici, inasmuch as nearly all of Freud’s references to the soul (die Seele) have been removed from English translations and replaced with “mind.” Gherovici links Freud’s emphasis on the soul to the legacy of Bartolomé de las Casas, a 16th-century Spanish historian, social reformer and theologian who denounced the atrocities committed against Indigenous Peoples considered to be soulless animals. For de las Casas, to emphasize that Indigenous Peoples had souls was a way of advocating for a more humane policy of colonization. This historical juxtaposition frames Gherovici’s meditation on contemporary forms of racism, which she bases on her ongoing clinical work with inner-city Latinx analysands living in Philadelphia’s barrios. Gherovici’s Lacanian psychoanalytic perspective aims at establishing the right of barrio patients to own their “souls.” This means, she says, that they have the right to be considered as appropriate candidates for a psychoanalytic treatment, and to avail themselves of the emancipatory potential of the unconscious. Gherovici’s chapter stresses a need for both redefinitions of psychoanalysis and reconceptualization of its curative impact upon subjects of race. As Kareen Malone and Tiara Jackson similarly assert in their chapter, “Dereliction: Afropessimism, anti-Blackness and Lacanian psychoanalysis,” the work of the clinic itself must be reenvisioned to account for race. For such accounting, in the clinic and beyond, Malone and Jackson turn to Afropessimism, one of the most formidable and challenging critical perspectives on white supremacy and global racism to have emerged in recent years. They stage a conversation between Lacanian psychoanalysis and Afropessimism to think through anti-blackness and its relationship to the Lacanian registers of the Symbolic, the Real and the Imaginary. Moving between the fields of psychoanalysis and Afropessimism—both of which, significantly, are invested in questions of subjective formation or the lack thereof—Malone and Jackson invite us to consider the liminal space between being and nonbeing as a paradigm for thinking antiblack racism and violence. Taking up the effects of the history of enslavement and blackness as a category of nonbeing, they examine Black being/nonbeing in the “afterlives” of this history so as to situate black subjects in the context of both Lacan’s clinical frame and that of black social life. Their chapter closes with an examination of Christina Sharpe’s “wake work” as a modality of sublimation for blacks living within the perils of anti-blackness. While Malone and Jackson reconsider the relation of Lacanian theory specifically to anti-blackness, it remains important to explore, especially from a clinical perspective, how Lacanian theory might illuminate issues of cultural and racial identification that exist beyond blackness as a, perhaps, dominant frame of reference. Kazushige Shingu’s chapter, “Japanese intersignifier subjects: jouissance in the locus of the character,” expands this frame by engaging head-on Lacan’s scandalous suggestion in the preface to the Japanese translation of his Écrits that psychoanalysis is neither necessary nor possible for Japanese subjects. Shingu notes how the Japanese writing system allows most characters (kanji) to be read in two ways, a fact which, for Lacan, grants the Japanese subject a fundamentally different relation to the signifier. Although this subject—like any other— remains divided by the signifier, Lacan suggests that there is no masking the repressed for the Japanese subject because the repressed can find expression in the shifting significations of the letter in kanji. But kanji, for Shingu, more properly expresses a Lacanian notion of the littoral, or the boundary space that positions the Japanese subject between on-yomi and kun-yomi, that is, between China and Japan, the two cultural sources that coalesce in Japanese writing as kanji. This littoral is expressed in Japanese culture through folktales, origin myths, and stories that emphasize oppositions— including the opposition of life and death—and that situate the unconscious of the Japanese subject at the littoral between such extremes. Through case studies from his own practice, Shingu demonstrates that this unconscious mediates the cultural and personal fantasies that establish a patient’s relation to life and death. Residing in the littoral between polysemic meanings, it does not reveal but mask itself in the signifiers of kanji. Theorizing the racialized Lacanian subject While many of Lacan’s early contributions to psychoanalysis have by now become standard reference points in critical and cultural theory—such as the Imaginary, the mirror-stage, the role of the signifier in unconscious life, the Symbolic Order, the big Other, and even, increasingly, ideas pertaining to jouissance—Lacanian scholars in this collection are exploring facets of Lacan’s work that have hitherto been only inadequately utilized in reference to race and racism. This new theorizing insists upon recontextualizing Lacanian concepts in ways that allow for new readings of the Lacanian subject as a racialized subject. Sheldon George’s contribution, for example, “The Lacanian subject of race: sexuation, the drive and racial subjectivity,” presents Lacanian theory as an exploration of human subjectivity that is left incomplete by its inability to account for race. Where this theory highlights the agency of the Symbolic in providing answers to the subject’s existential questions about sex and being, George argues that race too, surely, lies at the core of such queries. George’s chapter takes up the concepts of drive and sexuation that have proved foundational to psychoanalysis, but he rethinks them for their relation to contemporary formations of race. Given subjectivity’s constitution through lack—wherein both the signifier and physical embodiment strike being and sexual libido from the subject—race emerges, says George, precisely as a promised recuperation of loss. Through analyses of the lasting legacy of slavery and Jim Crow era racism, George’s chapter presents race as a fantasy object a, an illusory object that fuels racial desire while also agitating the drive in its pursuit of jouissance. Through a reading of Lacan’s graph of sexuation, the chapter presents race as a signifier that aids in the process of structuring the unconscious around jouissance. Race, George argues, is an object of the drive that helps sexuate and racialize the body around gapped zones of enjoyment, tying enjoyment by the body and the psyche to histories of racism. It is not only core Lacanian concepts like sexuation that may allow redefinition of the Lacanian subject. In the decades-long process of refining his theories of the subject, Lacan introduced and abandoned multiple concepts that the authors of this section suggest are useful to the theorizing of race that Lacan himself did not conduct. Consider Lacan’s puzzling notion of the lamella, presented in The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis as a mythical organ of the body, one that gives substance to Freud’s concept of libido and provides a means of thinking the operations of the libido in the subject’s formation. In her chapter, “Skin-things, fleshy matters and phantasies of race: Lacan’s myth of the lamella,” Michelle Stephens takes up this intriguing mythical notion to suggest that the drive, and the lamella specifically, become sites for the appearance of corporeality as psychic phenomenon in Lacan’s work. For Stephens, Lacan’s myth of the lamella is the catalyst for imagining—alongside our common tropes of skin as signifier—an alternative gesture to a fleshy libido-body that exceeds the remit of language and social construction. Highlighting how racialized skin might itself operate as lamella, Stephens shows that fantasies of race cannot be reduced to the idea of skin as the desired object of difference. It is instead the case that fantasies of the flesh of the racialized body point to disavowed aspects of corporeality that exceed current discursive constructions and social meanings of blackness. One of the most challenging and yet also most analytically promising concepts in Lacanian psychoanalysis is the notion of the Real. This domain, which exceeds containment by both the Symbolic order (of language and law) and the Imaginary order (of imaged representation), provides a crucial means of understanding racism’s effective “de-ontologization” of racialized subjects. Gautum Basu Thakur’s “Fanon’s ‘zone of nonbeing’: Blackness and thepolitics of the Real” develops this idea. By embracing a postcolonial strategy of rereading texts for their foreclosed signifiers and disavowed meanings, Basu Thakur reconvenes a dialogue between Fanon and Lacanian theory, reading Fanon’s Black Skin, White Masks against the grain to theoretically explicate Fanon’s concepts of “zone of nonbeing” and “Blackness” precisely in relation to Lacan’s theory of the Real. For Basu Thakur, a focused examination of Black Skin, White Masks unravels Fanon’s most important contribution to the study of colonialism, namely that colonialism may be conceived less in terms of social justice—as a question of economic and/or political inequality—and more in relation to ontology. Properly revived, the idea of the zone of nonbeing posits blackness as negativity, highlighting the need for a shift in focus from conceiving colonialism in terms of Symbolic politics (the rehabilitation of stifled voices and identities) to an understanding of colonialism in terms of ontological absence and the Real. But it is precisely through its negativity that Basu Thakur imagines a new possible agency for the colonial subject. What Basu Thakur finds in Fanon is, ultimately, the theory of a new subject. Fanon imagines, says Basu Thakur, a “New Man” able to achieve his own disalienation from the identities generated by racism in the colonial Symbolic, paradoxically, through dwelling within the negativity of his own lack: this new subject, most radically, abandons identity for lack.

### Alt – Drive

#### We must forefront the analytic of the drive. Only analysis which begins from the question of enjoyment and the abandonment of the good as a model of desire can ever hope to transform political terrains.

McGowan 13 (Todd McGowan, Professor of English at the University of Vermont, USA, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis,” pgs. 283-286)//JRD

There is no path leading from the death drive to utopia. the death drive undermines every attempt to construct a utopia; it is the enemy of the good society. It is thus not surprising that political thought from Plato onward has largely ignored this psychic force of repetition and negation. But this does not mean that psychoanalytic thought concerning the death drive has only a negative value for political theorizing. It is possible to conceive of a positive politics of the death drive. The previous chapters have attempted to lay out the political implications of the death drive, and, on this basis, we can sketch what a society founded on a recognition of the death drive might look like. Such a recognition would not involve a radical transformation of society: in one sense, it would leave everything as it is. In contemporary social arrangements, the death drive subverts progress with repetition and leads to the widespread sacrifice of self-interest for the enjoyment of the sacrifice itself. This structure is impervious to change and to all attempts at amelioration. But in another sense, the recognition of the death drive would change everything. Recognizing the centrality of the death drive would not eliminate the proclivity to sacrifice for the sake of enjoyment, but it would change our relationship to this sacrifice. Rather than being done for the sake of an ultimate enjoyment to be achieved in the future, it would be done for its own sake. The fundamental problem with the effort to escape the death drive and pursue the good is that it leaves us unable to locate where our enjoyment lies. By positing a future where we will attain the ultimate enjoyment (either through the purchase of the perfect commodity or through a transcendent romantic union or through the attainment of some heavenly paradise), we replace the partial enjoyment of the death drive with the image of a complete enjoyment to come. There is no question of fully enjoying our submission to the death drive. We will always remain alienated from our mode of enjoying. As Adrian Johnston rightly points out, “Transgressively ‘overcoming’ the impediments of the drives doesn’t enable one to simply enjoy enjoyment.”1 But we can transform our relationship to the impediments that block the full realization of our drive. We can see the impediments as the internal product of the death drive rather than as an external limit. The enjoyment that the death drive provides, in contrast to the form of enjoyment proffered by capitalism, religion, and utopian politics, is at once infinite and limited. This oxymoronic form of enjoyment operates in the way that the concept does in Hegel’s Logic. The concept attains its infinitude not through endless progress toward a point that always remains beyond and out of reach but through including the beyond as a beyond within itself. As Hegel puts it, “The universality of the concept is the achieved beyond, whereas that bad infinity remains afflicted with a beyond which is unattainable but remains a mere progression to infinity.”2 That is to say, the concept transforms an external limit into an internal one and thereby becomes both infinite and limited. The infinitude of the concept is nothing but the concept’s own self-limitation. The enjoyment that the death drive produces also achieves its infinitude through self-limitation. It revolves around a lost object that exists only insofar as it is lost, and it relates to this object as the vehicle for the infinite unfurling of its movement. The lost object operates as the self-limitation of the death drive through which the drive produces an infinite enjoyment. Rather than acting as a mark of the drive’s finitude, the limitation that the lost object introduces provides access to infinity. A society founded on a recognition of the death drive would be one that viewed its limitations as the source of its infinite enjoyment rather than an obstacle to that enjoyment. To take the clearest and most traumatic example in recent history, the recognition of the death drive in 1930s Germany would have conceived the figure of the Jew not as the barrier to the ultimate enjoyment that must therefore be eliminated but as the internal limit through which German society attained its enjoyment. As numerous theorists have said, the appeal of Nazism lay in its ability to mobilize the enjoyment of the average German through pointing out a threat to that enjoyment. the average German under Nazism could enjoy the figure of the Jew as it appeared in the form of an obstacle, but it is possible to recognize the obstacle not as an external limit but as an internal one. In this way, the figure of the Jew would become merely a figure for the average German rather than a position embodied by actual Jews. Closer to home, one would recognize the terrorist as a figure representing the internal limit of global capitalist society. Far from serving as an obstacle to the ultimate enjoyment in that society, the terrorist provides a barrier where none otherwise exists and thereby serves as the vehicle through which capitalist society attains its enjoyment. The absence of explicit limitations within contemporary global capitalism necessitates such a figure: if terrorists did not exist, global capitalist society would have to invent them. But recognizing the terrorist as the internal limit of global capitalist society would mean the end of terrorism. This recognition would transform the global landscape and deprive would-be terrorists of the libidinal space within which to act. Though some people may continue to blow up buildings, they would cease to be terrorists in the way that we now understand the term. A self-limiting society would still have real battles to fight. There would remain a need for this society to defend itself against external threats and against the cruelty of the natural universe. Perhaps it would require nuclear weapons in space to defend against comets or meteors that would threaten to wipe out human life on the planet. But it would cease positing the ultimate enjoyment in vanquishing an external threat or surpassing a natural limit. The external limit would no longer stand in for a repressed internal one. Such a society would instead enjoy its own internal limitations and merely address external limits as they came up. Psychoanalytic theory never preaches, and it cannot help us to construct a better society. But it can help us to subtract the illusion of the good from our own society. By depriving us of this illusion, it has the ability to transform our thinking about politics. With the assistance of psychoanalytic thought, we might reconceive politics in a direction completely opposed to that articulated by Aristotle, to which I alluded in the introduction. In the Politics, Aristotle asserts: “Every state is a community of some kind, and every community is established with a view to some good; for everyone always acts in order to obtain that which they think good. But, if all communities aim at some good, the state or political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at good in a greater degree than any other, and at the highest good.”3 Though later political thinkers have obviously departed from Aristotle concerning the question of the content of the good society, few have thought of politics in terms opposed to the good. This is what psychoanalytic thought introduces. If we act on the basis of enjoyment rather than the good, this does not mean that we can simply construct a society that privileges enjoyment in an overt way. An open society with no restrictions on sexual activity, drug use, food consumption, or play in general would not be a more enjoyable one than our own. That is the sure path to impoverishing our ability to enjoy, as the aftermath of the 1960s has made painfully clear. One must arrive at enjoyment indirectly. A society centered around the death drive would not be a better society, nor would it entail less suffering. Rather than continually sacrificing for the sake of the good, we would sacrifice the good for the sake of enjoyment. A society centered around the death drive would allow us to recognize that we enjoy the lost object only insofar as it remains lost.

#### Embracing the anxiety of the other’s enjoyment --- the death drive itself --- offers the only possibility of ethical encounter

McGowan 13 [Todd, Associate Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Vermont, *Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis*, Symploke, University of Nebraska Press (Lincoln, NE): 2013, p. 112-120]

The alternative — the ethical path that psychoanalysis identifies — demands an embrace of the anxiety that stems from the encounter with the enjoying other. If there is a certain ethical dimension to anxiety, it lies in the relationship that exists between anxiety and enjoyment. Contra Heidegger, the ethics of anxiety does not stem from anxiety's relation to absence but from its relation to presence - to the overwhelming presence of the other's enjoyment. In some sense, the encounter with absence or nothing is easier than the encounter with presence. Even though it traumatizes us, absence allows us to constitute ourselves as desiring subjects. Rather than producing anxiety, absence leads the subject out of anxiety into desire. Confronted with the lost object as a structuring absence, the subject is able to embark on the pursuit of the enjoyment embodied by this object, and this pursuit provides the subject with a clear sense of direction and even meaning. This is precisely what the subject lacks when it does not encounter a lack in the symbolic structure. When the subject encounters enjoyment at the point where it should encounter the absence of enjoyment, anxiety overwhelms the subject.

In this situation, the subject cannot constitute itself along the path of desire. It lacks the lack-the absence -that would provide the space through which desire could develop. Consequently, this subject confronts the enjoying other and experiences anxiety. Unlike the subject of desire - or the subject of Heideggerean anxiety-the subject who suffers this sort of anxiety actually experiences the other in its real dimension.

The real other is the other caught up in its obscene enjoyment, caught up in this enjoyment in a way that intrudes on the subject. There is no safe distance from this enjoyment, and one cannot simply avoid it. There is nowhere in the contemporary world to hide from it. As a result, the contemporary subject is necessarily a subject haunted by anxiety triggered by the omnipresent enjoyment of the other. And yet, this enjoyment offers us an ethical possibility. As Slavoj Zizek puts it, "It is this excessive and intrusive jouissance that we should learn to tolerate."27 When we tolerate the other's "excessive and intrusive jouissance" and when we endure the anxiety that it produces, we acknowledge and sustain the other in its real dimension.

Tolerance is the ethical watchword of our epoch. However, the problem with contemporary tolerance is its insistence on tolerating the other only insofar as the other cedes its enjoyment and accepts the prevailing symbolic structure. That is to say, we readily tolerate the other in its symbolic dimension, the other that plays by the rules of our game. This type of tolerance allows the subject to feel good about itself and to sustain its symbolic identity. The problem is that, at the same time, it destroys what is in the other more than the other - the particular way that the other enjoys.

It is only the encounter with the other in its real dimension - the encounter that produces anxiety in the subject - that sustains that which defines the other as such.

#### We should adopt a position of drive, rather than desire, when confronting the topic of race. I know, that sounds nebulous. Desire is when one thinks that there is an object which can fill their lack. Drive, by contrast, affirms lack itself as constitutive of the subject- founding identity on a void that can never be filled. 1) This is the condition for WISDOM, according to Lacan. 2) This is the only way to overcome the fantasy of a self that can be complete or full or satisfied. 3) This is the condition for overcoming racialized desire.

**George 16** [Sheldon, Associate Professor and Director of the Graduate Program in English, Simmons College of Arts and Sciences, *Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity*, Baylor University Press: Waco, TX, February 1, 2016, p]

Radically altering one's psychic relation to the Other, the process of self-naming I here advocate both redirects the urge to grieve the ancestor and repudiates the racialized designations through which the Other seeks to confine the subject in the steel jug of the Symbolic. What is ultimately entailed in this self-naming is the subject recognizing his or her "own image" as "a mortal cause, and griev[ing] this object" as a loss, as an emptiness around which the subject's own personality must be built as an incrementally expansive structure to contain this internal absence.32 In establishing such personality, the goal is not to escape lack but rather to ground the self within it, to, more precisely, build the self around its sustained void. Lacanian theory shows that the only way "to found wisdom [is] on lack," which presents the single viable source of self-recognition afforded the subject.33 The absent image, as container, as personality, must be cultivated and built up "ex-nihilo," from nothingness, as psychic defense against the alluring phallus and objects a that act as the decoys for desire within the confining ambit of the Symbolic.34 By recognizing this absence as the true pathway to desire, and by coming to travel this discovered path, the subject of race may not only attain the means of expressing the multiplicity of an identity and desire unhinged from the fantasy a of race, but also potentially direct him- or herself toward a goal that centers the very practice of psychoanalysis: not just a transcendence of race but a transcendence of the fundamental fantasy of recoverable loss that drives subjective and racial desire. What Lacanian theory posits is the possibility that, after the experience of actively mapping one's own relation to the fantasy object is undertaken by the subject, this "experience of the fundamental phantasy" can become "the drive" by which desire is then "agitated"; unveiled by the theory is the potential that, in cynically questioning the fantasy of race, the subject may confront the very lack that fuels all fantasy and all desire, the lack that must be subjectified as the empty core of a newly adumbrated self.35 Lacan importantly cautions that the "loop" of the subject's fantasy often must be "run through several times" before the subject abandons it. I propose, however, that because of the cynicism already central to their relation to the Symbolic, African Americans are uniquely positioned to embrace this very daunting task of transcending both race and the fundamental fantasy it supports.[36](#bookmark1602)

### Alt – Fanonian New Man

#### Our alternative is to cultivate the Fanonian New Man, the subject neither of-lack, nor in-the-lack, but just “lack” in and of itself – the drive incarnate. We must break ourselves apart from our toxic attachments to racial structures of psychic oppression and move towards a decolonized subjectivity beyond the western fantasy of racial identity.

Thakur 22 (Gautam Basu Thakur, Associate Professor and Director of Critical Theory at Boise State University, “Fanon’s ‘zone of non-being’: Blackness and the Politics of the Real,” Lacan and Race: Racism, Identity, and Psychoanalytic Theory, pgs. 293-296)//JRD

Written nine years after BSWM and from within the context of segregated French Algeria, the stakes in WOE are very different. French Algeria is a military occupation where the colonized live as bare lives and in a continuous state of siege. Therefore, the demolition of the blatant structural and material divisions between the colonized and the colonizer must be accomplished before the subject-(un)making process of the decolonized masses can be possible. But this second step is essential for the “substantive liberation of the colony from economic and psychic neocolonialism” (Ciccariello-Maher 2010: 14). It is only through both these two stages of violence, one external and the other internal, it is possible to create a society where the conundrum of nonrelationality can be ethically addressed and a politics of social relation formulated around, and not in spite of, the antagonism. The goal is to free society from all fantasies of sovereign identity and destroy all bogus social and cultural institutions responsible for sustaining a reality of identity politics. Violence, in this sense, is a “detoxifying and destructive, creative and reinventive” force (Marriott 2018: 72). Akin to Coleridgean daemonic imagination, Fanonian violence is a magical and synthetic force which recreates men and society by bringing the discordant inherent to the social into focus. Fanonian violence seeks “the veritable creation of new men”—free from desire, identity, and Symbolic belonging (Fanon 1968: 35). The New Man: a cut instead of a conclusion The notion of the New Man is yet another theoretical experiment on the part of Fanon—an exercise in abstraction, another effort trying to define the asignificative (negativity) for a politics of the Real. Conceptually, it is related to and an expansion on the notions of nonbeing and Blackness. Like these, the New Man, too, is an impossibility that is positively unrealizable at the level of the Symbolic, since it is impossible to conceive man sans desire. Also akin to these, the New Man disrupts the principle of exchange that is foundational to the colonial regime. Insofar as both the creation of social relations around the exploitation of the colonized as labor and the constitution of the colonized as subjects desiring Whiteness are grounded in the logic of exchange, the New Man, theoretically speaking, has the potential to challenge the colonial script. An in-depth discussion of the concept will require an entire chapter, so here I will restrict my observations to the relation between the New Man, violence, and the Real, and to how the concept of the New Man aligns with the concept of nonbeing in Fanon. The New Man emerges by being violently unmade or stripped from delusions of being, desire, and sovereignty—the “colonized becom[ing] a man during the same process by which it frees itself ” (Fanon 1968: 36). But this is not a freedom that sets up the colonized for a socially equal life, that is, a freedom premised on the notion of justice or equal rights for every human in society. Rather, Fanon indulges here in thinking about freedom that is philosophical but with consequences for real politics. It is a thinking about equality before real material conditions for living equally can be accomplished. In the philosophical sense of being free, therefore, the idea of the New Man attempts to reinstate the body as pure negativity back into the Symbolic. Hence, the New Man in the Symbolic is nothing but a potential corpse. Or, a corpse that speaks! But, importantly, neither can this body be marked by the Signifier nor can its speech be recognized in terms of articulating desire. The New Man is both present in and absent from the Symbolic. Unregimented by desire, the New Man is not “of-lack,” not “in-the-lack” but just “lack”—the insupportable not-all existing in but gesturing to a beyond of the Symbolic order. Disrobed of epidermal (in)security, this New Man is truly disalienated from the flesh—it is a body devoid of the skin as dress of the Symbolic; as such, it is the drive incarnate. It is a speaking subject without a misrecognized body, therefore, a Thing, or, a voice, and nothing more. The New Man is, consequently, a paradox: Signifier of a non-significative vacuity, it is the deathdrive sticking to and ticking through the Symbolic. The colonized’s transition from a pre-revolutionary to a post-revolutionary subject(ivity) involves shifting from desiring (to become White) to becoming the negativity (that eviscerates the fictions of Whiteness): that is, from being crossed out in the Symbolic to reappearing in the Symbolic as the apparition of the Real. As the Real, the New Man returns, remains, but cannot be (un) seen. But this is not the “I” becoming the “We” of the Third World oppressed; rather, this “I” expresses the radical particularity (en moi) standing in for the Universal and, thereby, demonstrates true Universality not in a common positive but in a shared excluded, i.e. the lack as foundational to being. It is by passing through the subject eviscerating “real hell”—the zone of nonbeing—that a new Man can come to “exist absolutely” without confinement in History or desire. And with the “density of History determin[ing] none of [its] acts,” this New Man is not trapped in the dialectic of becoming, but, rather, by remaining in “permanent tension” with the (im)possibility of achieving freedom outside the dialectic, the New Man is a unique possibility for imagining a social politics for a universal of negated subjects (Fanon 2008: 205–6). But this is a dangerous freedom. It requires being without the support of desire and the guarantees of a (big) Other. What’s worse is that this notion of freedom is irreconcilable with our habitual understanding of politics, and, therefore, questions might arise regarding whether it is at all possible to conceive politics without wholesome ideas, defined identities, and clearcut horizons of action demarcated by desire? Indeed, can ontology-based politics replace the grind of the politics of representation? Does the impossibility of living as persistent, determinate negativity—without desire and without identity—not problematize or capsize politics altogether? Sadly, Fanon does not address these issues; in fact, he seems only to bring them up in the gaps or interstices of his writing. Unfortunately, I too cannot expand upon this without moving beyond Fanon and lengthening this chapter considerably. Therefore, in lieu of a conclusion, I will end this essay abruptly, at this point, raising more questions than answers. My hope is that a cut here will only encourage further conversations about Fanon’s ontology-based politics of social (non-)relation. Continuing these conversations are crucial not only for a serious reevaluation of Fanon but also for understanding how Fanon shows the way for non-Europeans to occupy psychoanalysis.

### Alt—Self Naming

#### The alternative endorses a process of self-naming—rather than attempting to fill or escape the Lack we ground ourselves within it and embrace the multiplicity of personal identity

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 135-141)//guyB

Centering this study is the recognition that race functions not only at the social level but also at the psychic. We can more precisely say that the staying power of race, the inability to discard it despite our awareness of its illusory groundings, is founded in race’s capacity to structure a relation to jouissance for the subject of race. Beyond its Symbolic value, race grounds the fantasies and transgressions through which both African Americans and white Americans access a semblance of being. With race thus conflated with being by the historical trauma of slavery, with it functioning as the central apparatus through which raced subjects define their own and the racial other’s relation to the jouissance of being, **contending against race means contending against the fundamental fantasy of the desiring subject**, the aspiration toward wholeness that founds subjectivity itself. But what I would like to suggest here is that the alienation of especially the African American subject, which has been emphatically displayed in the racist Symbolic that justifies oppression through disregard for African American fantasies of being, has produced in many African Americans a cynicism toward the Symbolic that is an essential defense against psychic alienation. I have shown that Lacan defines alienation as the effect constituted upon the subject by language. “Man,” Lacan says, “is ravaged by Word,” experiencing through the signifier the “death” that “brings life.”1 In ascending toward subjectivity through language, **the subject sacrifices an essential part of the self in order to conform to the definitions of self that are imposed by the Symbolic**. The subject is constrained by the limits of the signifier and thus “designates his being only by barring everything” of the self that escapes linguistic signification.2 But, Lacan maintains, **the signifier is also “the cause of jouissance**,” the means of articulating an illusory recovery of the lost being.3 I have shown how the master signifier of whiteness seeks to recover this being for the white subject but more often denies it to blacks. As Lacan elaborates, “Every dimension of being is produced in the wake of the master’s discourse—the discourse of he who, proffering the signifier, expects therefrom one of its link effects.”4 **African Americans struggle against the effects of the master signifier of race originally proffered by whites through seeking to resignify its value and reaffirm a fantasy of being**. But this struggle at the level of the Symbolic is both necessary and insufficient. The necessity involved here is determined by the fact that the exaltation of whiteness as master signifier and the structuring of desire within the Symbolic around the white phallus impair the ability of African Americans to identify with the Symbolic itself and to establish the fantasies of being that facilitate a psychic sense of contentment. Thus, it would seem, what is needed in race relations is access by both African Americans and white Americans to vivifying fantasies of being. This need is supported by the fact that the limitations placed upon jouissance by the Symbolic through its shaping of fantasies of being enable a possible mediation of aggression toward the other. Where the subject “cannot recognize himself” except “by alienating himself” in the desire and image of the Other, what the subject most naturally aims at in his or her “aggressiveness” toward the racial other is an effort to “refind” him or herself “by abolishing the ego’s alter ego.”5 This alter self, experienced in the “extremity of [an] intimacy that is at the same time excluded” internally, is what the racial other comes to personify for the raced subject, such that the racial other stands as “the locus of the decoy in the form of a,” in the form of the object that embodies a fantasy manifestation of what is essentially lost to the subject.6 It is for this reason that Lacan contends, “A solid hatred is addressed to being.”7 Thus **it is at the level of fantasy, through the operations of the fantasy object a that designates a relation to being, that this aggressivity must be mediated**. Through a redefinition of the Symbolic and its signifiers, language may attain a mediating function in which “it allows two men to transcend the fundamental aggressive relation to the mirage of their semblable.”8 Making a place for African Americans in the Symbolic therefore means the destruction of old fantasies of race, but, I contend, **it does not mean the creation of new ones**. This study ultimately **refutes the concept of race**, designating it as a primary source of subjective alienation. We may say that with race the master signifier structures identity in such a fashion that between the raced subject’s “proper name,” as the signifier of his or her identity, and the signifiers of race, a “poetic spark is produced” that “metaphorically abolishes” this identity, transforming the subject into his or her race.9 Race thus perfectly exemplifies the process through which the subject, as Lacan states, is transformed into a signifier and deprived of being. Yet the paradox I have shown is that **raced subjects remain bound to race because through it they dangerously recover a fantasy sense of being**. Race, emerging from a traumatic past that eruptively manifested jouissance through sanctioned acts of transgression, perilously exacerbates illicit desires for jouissance by fixing jouissance to the racial other. Through positioning the other as a source of jouissance, race co-opts the function of the phallus by defining desirability in the Symbolic, and what it defines as desirable is the Real of an exultant bliss to which not only the Symbolic but also the self and other that occupy it are subordinated. Bound through race to the jouissance of the traumatic past, the subject of race remains alienated by the desire of the Other, by the racist Symbolic that “proffered” the terms of race that African Americans ascribe to even in their efforts to redefine them. What is needed, therefore, is **a “separation” from the Symbolic and the master signifier of the Other** that grounds it in the jouissance of race.10 This separation must be founded, first of all, on a recognition of the interdependence of the subjectivities of the self and the racial other. The fact of the extimacy of this racial other, who is internal to each American’s subjective sense of self, is exemplified in the racial fantasies that structure both subjective and national identity for Americans. In the first chapter of this book I showed how **the identity of the slave master depended on that of the slave**, and I suggested in chapter 2 how slave songs and jazz music became integral to American identity. The implication here is the need to conceive of individuals in terms of broader cultural identities that transcend racial differences and acknowledge interconnectivity across groups. This is the solution I pointed to in my reading of Ellison’s Juneteenth, which presents the figure of Abraham Lincoln as a paternal authority that transcends race. Present in Ellison’s work is an urgency guiding us toward recognizing the vast diversity in American identity and the disparately intermingled racial lineages that root America in cultural hybridity, not racial separation. This hybridity, what Du Bois conceives of as the problem of the “two warring souls in one dark body” that characterizes African American double consciousness, is the very extimacy that Ellison rightly celebrates in his own life.11 Usefully modeling for us his own relation to the Symbolic in his essay “The World and the Jug,” Ellison speaks of ancestral figures that shape his role as artist. Where Ellison admits that an African American author such as Richard Wright may be seen as a “relative” of his, it is white writers like Hemingway and Faulkner that he counts as his “ancestors.”12 The title of Ellison’s essay stems from his rejection of the notion that the traumatic experiences of African Americans have cornered them into a place of “unrelieved suffering,” as though they are trapped in an “opaque steel jug.”13 Ellison asserts that “if we are in a jug it is transparent, not opaque, and one is allowed not only to see outside but to read what is going on out there.”14 It is this **ability to see outside the limitations imposed by race** that enables Ellison to claim Hemingway and Faulkner as ancestors. Ellison explains that “one can do nothing about choosing one’s relatives,” but “one can, as artist, choose one’s ‘ancestors.’ ”15 In choosing his ancestors, however, Ellison attempts not to discard his relatives but rather to foreground the urgencies of his own desires and drives. Privileging an understanding of the self in the active choice he makes in his identification with the other, Ellison explains, “Hemingway was more important to me than Wright . . . not because he was white” but “because he appreciated the things of this earth which I love and which Wright” didn’t “know,” and because “all that he wrote” was “imbued with a spirit beyond the tragic with which I could feel at home.”16 Seeking after that with which the self is most at home, Ellison extends beyond race toward a hybridized cultural identification with Hemingway precisely because the spirit of Hemingway’s writing is “very close to the feeling of the blues” that also speaks to Ellison’s sense of self.17 Forestalling an identity grounded singularly in the metaphor of race, Ellison pursues this sense of self through its accumulation in the metonymic movement of self-identifications that are driven by an individualized artistic desire to explore the homely spirit of tragedy. What Ellison ultimately models is **a desire grounded in cynicism toward notions of race and racial lineage**. This cynicism, I suggest, establishes a liberating distance mutually from the alienating desire of the Symbolic Other and from the avenging desire of the racial ancestor. Lacan makes clear that “desire is a defense” against alienation, a defense that “reverses the unconditionality” in which “the subject remains subjected to the Other” who, in this case, binds ~~him or her~~ [them] to a psychic relation to race.18 Lacan argues that “**what the subject has to free ~~him~~[them]self of is the aphanisic [or fading] effect**” to which the subject is submitted by the signifiers of the Symbolic, and the way that the subject does this is through “scepticism” as what Lacan calls “a mode of sustaining man in life.”19 Where “man’s desire is the Other’s desire,” granted to the subject and structured for him or her by the Symbolic Other, a “cynic[ism]” by which the subject questions the desire of the Other is the stance that “best leads the subject to the path of his own desire.”20 Along this path, the subject must articulate what Lacan calls the Chè vuoi?, the simple question, “What does he want of me?”21 This question creates distance between the conflated desires of the subject and the Other, allowing for the emergence of something more properly subjective and personal to the subject. As Lacan argues, “if there is a position that one can essentially qualify as subjective,” it is “clearly” the position of “doubt.”22 **This position is one uniquely available to the African American subject**, as a subject who is continually urged toward an antagonistic relation to the Symbolic Other. In his reading of James Joyce, Lacan shows how this antagonism can lead to an exploration of one’s own desires. Like African Americans in their relation to the ancestor, Joyce is a figure who has been confronted with the belief, Lacan states, that “his father was lacking, radically lacking.”23 This confrontation complicates Joyce’s relation to the Symbolic. Unable to identify with the Symbolic, Joyce takes to an extreme the sense that the Symbolic and language are imposed upon the subject, the feeling, I argue, that is also experienced by African Americans submitted to the Symbolic’s racist signifiers; Joyce comes to sense that **“language” is a parasite**, a “veneer,” a “cancer which afflicts the human being,” and he therefore moves to embrace “**equivocation” as his “only weapon” against the Symbolic**.24 This equivocation leads to not only a restructuring of Joyce’s desires but also their resituation in direct relation to his own Real. Joyce develops what Lacan calls his own sinthome, as a substitute for the function of the father. Where subjectivity is comprised of the three registers of the psyche—the Imaginary, Symbolic, and Real—it is the father that functions metaphorically as sinthome, as the knot that ties together the registers into a unified subjective self.25 The sinthome is the root of the ego, which is, at the decline of the oedipal complex, modeled after the agency of the paternal metaphor as ego ideal. It is this modeling of the self after the Symbolic Other that leads to alienation in the Symbolic. But as “heir” to a father found lacking, Joyce is able to assume through equivocation the position of the “heir-etic” who questions both the father and the Symbolic.26 This equivocation occurs at the level of the emergence of the “personal” as the “support of the subject,” at the level where “personality” comes to stand as not a link to the Other but a “link between [this] sinthome and the unconscious, and between the imaginary and the real.”27 Though the unconscious, “structured like a language,” incorporates within it the signifiers of the Other that make complete liberation impossible, this linking occurs through Joyce’s embrace of the individual lack that centers his personal, unconscious relation to being.28 It starts with a recognition **not only that the ancestor lacks but that so too does the Symbolic itself**. It acknowledges a “lack inherent in the [Symbolic] Other’s very function as the treasure trove of signifiers,” an incapacity in its purported function of defining the subject’s identity, desire, and lack.29 Insofar as “the Other is called upon (chè vuoi) to answer for the value of this treasure,” insofar as the heir-etic child of the Symbolic puts the Symbolic Other to the impossible task of naming the lack personal to his or her subjectivity, this cynical subject begins the process of making a name for [themselves]~~him- or herself~~.30 Instead of paying homage to the dead ancestor or bowing to the definitions imposed by the paternal authority of the Other, **what is availed the subject is the capacity to valorize [their]~~his or her~~ own “proper name**,” designating it as the only signifier to be paid the deference he or she bequeathed to the Other.31 It is this signifier that must come to stand for the lack, the absence, that is [their]~~his or her~~ being. Radically altering one’s psychic relation to the Other, **the process of self-naming** I here advocate both **redirects the urge to grieve** the ancestor and **repudiates the racialized designations through which the Other seeks to confine the subject** in the steel jug of the Symbolic. What is ultimately entailed in this self-naming is **the subject recognizing [their]~~his or her~~ “own image**” as “a mortal cause, and griev[ing] this object” as a loss, as an emptiness around which **the subject’s own personality must be built as an incrementally expansive structure to contain this internal absence**.32 In establishing such personality, **the goal is not to escape lack** but rather to ground the self within it, to, more precisely, build the self around its sustained void. Lacanian theory shows that the only way “to found wisdom [is] on lack,” which presents the single viable source of self-recognition afforded the subject.33 The absent image, as container, as personality, must be cultivated and built up “ex-nihilo,” from nothingness, as psychic defense against the alluring phallus and objects a that act as the decoys for desire within the confining ambit of the Symbolic.34 By recognizing this absence as the true pathway to desire, and by coming to travel this discovered path, the subject of race may not only attain **the means of expressing the multiplicity of an identity and desire unhinged from the fantasy a of race**, but also potentially **direct [themselves]~~him- or herself~~ toward a goal that centers the very practice of psychoanalysis**: not just a transcendence of race but a transcendence of the fundamental fantasy of recoverable loss that drives subjective and racial desire. What Lacanian theory posits is the possibility that, after the experience of actively mapping one’s own relation to the fantasy object is undertaken by the subject, this “experience of the fundamental phantasy” can become “the drive” by which desire is then “agitated”; unveiled by the theory is the potential that, in cynically questioning the fantasy of race, the subject may confront the very lack that fuels all fantasy and all desire, the lack that must be subjectified as the empty core of a newly adumbrated self.35 Lacan importantly cautions that the “loop” of the subject’s fantasy often must be “run through several times” before the subject abandons it. I propose, however, that because of the cynicism already central to their relation to the Symbolic, African Americans are uniquely positioned to embrace this very daunting task of transcending both race and the fundamental fantasy it supports.36

### 2NC/1NR—AT: Race k2 politics

**Attachment to race exceeds political utility and masks the effort to conserve a violent relationship to trauma**

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 37-38)//guyB

In chapter 1, I presented slavery as constituting for African Americans a jouissance of the past that repeats itself in the present. Through a focus on the work of the renowned African American scholar W. E. B. Du Bois, I will now describe how **racial identity facilitates an unconscious link to this traumatic past**. Grounding my reading of this link on a Lacanian definition of trauma and viewing trauma as structural both to the operations of the signifier and to subjective self-identification, I will demonstrate how this past still urges at a psychic level the allegiance to race of not only contemporary African Americans but also contemporary African American scholars. Where I have argued that in slavery African Americans most often relied upon religion, and not race, to constitute for themselves an essential semblance of being, I point to Du Bois as an important nexus in efforts to shift from religion to race as determinant of the fantasies of being that organize African American identity around the trauma of slavery. In the late nineteenth century Du Bois starts to articulate the notion that establishing and maintaining a racialized identity is a **political urgency** for African Americans. Recognizing the centrality of the church as “the first distinct voluntary organization of Negroes,” Du Bois maintains that “the Negro church came before the Negro home” and “stands to-day as the fullest, broadest expression of organized Negro life”; yet it is Du Bois’ contention that “the Negro church must become differentiated” from the home and other personal and political aspects of Negro life.1 Du Bois finds the church incapable, ultimately, of protecting African Americans from moral and social decay “born of Reconstruction,” which has left the Negro only with the limited “defense of deception and flattery, of cajoling and lying.”2 Instead of religious organizations, argues Du Bois, “**we need race organizations**: Negro colleges, Negro newspapers, Negro business organizations,” and, above all, a “Negro Academy” that gathers “about it the talented, unselfish men and the pure and noble-minded women” of the race to “determine by careful conference and thoughtful interchange of opinion the broad lines of policy and action for the American Negro.”3 Most emphatically in his 1897 essay “The Conservation of Races,” Du  Bois argues that **to achieve social equality African Americans must conserve the concept of race** forged in slavery and “**maintain their race identity**.”4 In promoting racial identity, Du Bois begins to articulate the central assertion still made today by many African Americans: that African Americans should maintain the concept of race as an essential means to fight politically against racism. Echoing this sentiment, contemporary African American critic Lucius Outlaw argues that because of “continuing legacies of invidious ethnocentrism and racism” in America, justice cannot be “achieved practically without giving consideration to raciality and ethnicity.”5 My own reading of race and trauma, however, complicates this political justification for racial identity. As Anthony Appiah’s critique of Du Bois in his book chapter “Illusions of Race” implies, **it is not only the political utility of race that causes African Americans to use and conserve this concept**; often, it is also a compelling attachment to the concept itself. Appiah reveals that whether Du Bois was able to use the concept of race to escape “racism, [Du Bois] never completed the escape from race” itself.6 Appiah cannot identify the influence that produces in African Americans like Du Bois this attachment to race that clearly exceeds race’s political utility. What I propose, however, is that **the conservation of race by African Americans often masks an effort to conserve the trauma of America’s racial history and shore up a personal sense of being fortified by the apparatus of race.**

### 2NC/1NR—explains cap (could prob also be an impact card)

**Slavery and capitalism both arose through the violent excision of surplus jouissance and the Master’s masking of the lack**

**George 16** (Sheldon George, Professor of English at Simmons University, 2016 , "Trauma and Race: A Lacanian Study of African American Racial Identity", pp 21-24)//guyB

This interpretation of slavery and African American identity demands an appreciation for apparatuses of power, oppression, and ideology that is rarely ascribed to Lacanian theory. Specifically in The Other Side of Psychoanalysis, however, Lacan provides a reading of discourse, the signifier, and slavery that emerges precisely as a revision of the notions of power presented in the socioeconomic theories of Karl Marx. Of particular interest to us in this work is Lacan’s analysis of what he calls the master’s discourse. Lacan describes the master’s discourse as incorporating a master signifier that serves the hegemonic function of **making a Symbolic system “readable**.”39 This master signifier is the “joint,” the “quilting point” that “creates” any given discourse.40 Lacan asserts that the master signifier not only “can be any signifier” but also can serve the function of “mythical support of certain societies” when it enables a belief of the master “being identical with his own signifier.”41 Racial whiteness is just such a signifier, establishing slavery as a nodal point for the myths of race that still retain levels of structural control over American society and its social Symbolic. This view of slavery’s relation to a master signifier allows us to supplement groundbreaking scholarship done by Lacanian theorist Kalpana Seshadri-Crooks on the psychoanalytic workings of race. Astutely defining whiteness as the master signifier for discourses of race, Seshadri-Crooks argues that whiteness establishes “a structure of relations, a signifying chain that through a process of inclusions and exclusions constitutes a pattern for organizing human difference.”42 Her work supports the notion that **race grounds the fantasies that promise the subject access to being**. Whiteness does this by using its signifying chain to establish a hierarchy in which whiteness comes to represent the pinnacle of being, or “sovereign humanness.”43 Seshadri-Crooks thus rightly reads whiteness as “the inaugural signifier of race” that “implicates us all equally in a logic of difference,” but what we are able to specify through Lacan’s The Other Side of Psychoanalysis is a differential relation to this signifier that implies for African Americans certain obstacles in the construction of those fantasies of wholeness that protect the subject from a traumatic confrontation with lack.44 It is here that Lacan’s rereading of Marx is useful. What Lacan does in The Other Side of Psychoanalysis is present capital and power as determinative of access to a jouissance of excessive pain and pleasure made available to the subject through a display of lack. Not only does Lacan tie the pursuit of being to capitalism with an assertion that Marx’s “surplus-value is surplus jouissance,” but he also supplements Marx’s focus on the worker with his own focus on the slave, arguing that **surplus jouissance is what “the slave brings” the master**.45 In Theories of Surplus Value Marx observes, “Only that labour is productive which creates a surplus-value.”46 Marx defines “surplus value” as the monetary excess that the laborer’s work or “labour-power secures for the user of labour-power,” arguing that “this surplus-value can clearly only consist in the excess of labour which the labourer returns to the capitalist over and above the quantity of labour that he receives for his wages.” As an expansion of Marx’s theory, Lacan’s surplus jouissance focuses not on excess capital produced through underpaid labor but on the unearned excess pleasure the master receives through the slave’s work: “**The work is mine, and the surplus pleasure is yours**,” says Lacan.48 But where true jouissance is bound to an impossible wholeness that is lost with being, **surplus jouissance most precisely designates the fantasy of being**. As a term, what surplus jouissance ultimately conveys is the excessive, brutal abuse of the other that may emerge from the subject’s determined pursuit of actions and objects that fantastically secure an impossibly complemented state of being for the subject. Lacan argues that **capitalism is always tied to a “birth of power,”** and what brings slavery and capitalism together in Lacan’s theory is precisely his sense that power over others facilitates a control over discourse that allows the subject to mask lack.49 A central component of Lacan’s interest in capitalism is his focus on defining a historical moment when “the signifier is introduced as an apparatus of jouissance.”50 Lacan’s discussion of capitalism and slavery is primarily a rereading of Hegel and Marx, and not a direct analysis of race-based oppression. But one cannot ignore the striking similarity in Lacan’s language to Spillers’ description of slavery, an institution that Spillers sees as initiated in the middle passage’s attempt at “transforming personality into property” through that process by which “subjects are taken into account as quantities.”51 Similar to Spillers, Lacan maintains that “something changed in the master’s discourse at a certain point in history”; beginning possibly with “Luther, or Calvin, or some other unknown traffic of ships around Genoa, or in the Mediterranean Sea, or anywhere else,” on “a certain day surplus jouissance became calculable, could be counted, totalized.”52 This traffic of ships, for Lacan, identifies the historical moment when “the accumulation of capital begins” as a means of **quantifying a surplus jouissance** that **exceeds the exchange value of labor**.53 At least in antebellum America, one cannot deny the connections between the master’s pleasures, a flourishing capitalist economy, and slave labor. What Lacan allows us to do is read slavery **not simply as about racism, or even capitalism**, but as **bound most fundamentally to the master’s own masking of lack** through the surpluses allowed by a coordination of capital and fantasy. Showing that capitalism and power enable certain fantasies for the master, Lacan asserts that to act “the master is to think of oneself as univocal” and to, through fantasy and discourse, “mask[] the division of the subject.”54 What “essentially constitutes the master’s discourse,” Lacan states, “is that he commands, that he intervenes in the system of knowledge,” and thereby accesses the means to hide the “truth” that, like all subjects, “**the master is castrated**.”55 The master submits himself to this castration through reliance upon the signifier, even in the very act of “giv[ing] an order”; but, through the signifier, something also comes “back within the master’s reach.”56 Making a distinction between the jouissance of being, or wholeness, that is ever lost to the subject and the jouissance one receives from the mere fantasy of wholeness, Lacan maintains that what returns to the master is not the lost jouissance of which castration deprives him, but its surplus, a pleasure one may steal from the other. He explains, “something necessitates compensation . . . for what initially is a negative number,” for that subtractive loss imposed upon the subject.57 This compensation emerges as “an irruption, a falling into the field, of something not unlike jouissance—a surplus,” a fantasy object snatched from the Symbolic and made to signify the jouissance of being that it can never make manifest.58

## Aff Answers

### 2ac death drive

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 2ac death k

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

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

Conclusion

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

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

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

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

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

Recuber 11 Timothy Recuber is a doctoral candidate in sociology at the Graduate Center of the City. University of New York. He has taught at Hunter College in Manhattan "CONSUMING CATASTROPHE: AUTHENTICITY AND EMOTION IN MASS-MEDIATED DISASTER" gradworks.umi.com/3477831.pd

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

### 2ac falsifiability

#### Psychoanalysis is a pseudoscience ---

#### 1---Belief in Authority

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

**Belief in Authority**

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

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

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

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

#### 2---Unrepeatable Experiments

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

**Unrepeatable experiments**

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

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

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

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

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

#### 3---Handpicked Examples

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

**Handpicked examples**

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

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

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

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

#### 4---Unwillingness to Test

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

**Unwillingness to Test**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### 5---Disregard of Refuting Information

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

**Disregard of refuting information**

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

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

#### 6---Built-in Subterfuge

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

**Built-in subterfuge**

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

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

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

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

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

#### 7---Explanations are Abandoned without Replacement

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

**Explanations are abandoned without replacement**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### 8---Obscurantism

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

**Obscurantism**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 1ar falsifiability matters

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

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

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

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

### 2ac framework

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 2ac mcgowan/perm

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

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

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

### 2ac at: nuclear language bad

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

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

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

### 2ac at: nukespeak

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 2ac psychoanalysis wrong

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 1ar no-scale up

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 2ac positivism good

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### 2ac psychoanalysis racist

#### Psychoanalysis is antiblack.

Frosh 13

Stephen Frosh, Department of Psychosocial Studies, School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy, Birkbeck College, London, UK. Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology, “Psychoanalysis, Colonialism, Racism” 2013, Vol. 33, No. 3, 141–154

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

### 1ar psychoanalysis racist

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

Beaulieu, ‘3

Elizabeth Ann Beaulieu, Assistant Professor in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Appalachian State University, and has served as Director of Women's Studies there. Her previous books include The Toni Morrison Encyclopedia (2003), and Black Women Writers and the American Neo-Slave Narrative: Femininity Unfettered (1999), Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003, “The Toni Morrison Encyclopedia” (Google eBook), pg 34

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

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

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

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

1. Jacques Lacan, French psychoanalyst, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan: The Other Side of Psychoanalysis* (Vol. Book XVII) (The Seminar of Jacques Lacan) (Bk. XVII), tr. Russell Grigg, 2007, p. 72 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)