## Referential Ownership AC

#### Nixon’s proclamation that “Gold is dead” marked the end of material labor relations. With no anchor to production the financialization of capitalism has made revolution impossible. Only the exacerbation of viral reactions solves through catastrophic collapse.

Baldwin 15 - Dr. Jon Baldwin, London Metropolitan University, International Journal of Baudrillard Studies, July 2015 “Baudrillard and Neoliberalism” [https://baudrillardstudies.ubishops.ca/baudrillard-and-neoliberalism/] Accessed 10/5/20 SAO

As would be expected of a thinker from the left concerned with issues of political economy, Jean Baudrillard’s work can be used to illuminate the machinations of geopolitical finance and the global economy. The most significant event to recently occur to this economy was the financial crash and crisis of 2007/8. A Baudrillardian reading of these events is the prime focus of the essay. Baudrillard’s work proposes that the origins of the crash can be found in the transformation of capitalism into a new form of hyper-capitalism, namely neoliberalism. As well this is the transformation of the economy into a financial simulacrum, namely a hyper-real economy. This article proposes that the suspension of the gold standard by United States President Richard Nixon in 1971 is the principal act of deregulation of the market. This fundamentally transmuted the nature of the economy. This ‘freeing’ of the market can be understood as a semiotic act, even a creative act, and is compared to radical movements in the arts. It is common to use the phrase gold standard to refer to a model of excellence or a foundation upon which judgement may be based. Postmodernity may be defined as an era that has lost such gold standard foundation. Nixon’s claim that ‘Gold is dead’ echoes Friedrich Nietzsche’s claim that ‘God is dead.’ Nothing is the same after this. There is no longer any possible morality of the market. The flow of capital is freed from any anchor to real wealth. We witness, as Baudrillard had fully anticipated, the virtual international autonomy of financial capital. Monetary debt becomes a mere paper promise and the world becomes more successful at creating claims on wealth than creating wealth itself. This is the play of floating capital. In this financial simulacrum money becomes a sign free of any reference to real wealth or production. When this simulacrum is exacerbated to the point of parody, the bubble bursts and crash ensues. The crash and crisis of neoliberalism can be seen to fully correlate with Baudrillard’s principle of exacerbation. The article begins by outlining the official and unofficial accounts of the crash of 2007/8. It suggests that capital is, to a certain extent, perpetual crisis. The move of the economy into neoliberalism and the discontent this facilities is remarked upon. The deregulation of the gold standard is a key moment in the move to a hyper-real economy. Analogies with post-modern architecture, music, literature, and poetry are made. These analogies are possible because, at heart, they all involve issues with the political economy of the sign. Indeed, in the early 1970’s Baudrillard had identified a certain correlation between Saussure and Marx on the semiotics of value. The deregulation of the gold standard is argued in the article to be central to the genealogy of the hyper-real economy. The implications of this are considered as well as consequences of the move to simulated finance and the virtual market. One outcome is the freeing of the economy and unlimited financial speculation. The trans-economics of speculation is argued to be exacerbated to the point of parody, and hence the bubble bursts. The article concludes with a discussion of the Baudrillardian motif of exacerbation. The world’s leading economies are in crisis and the harsh repercussions of the financial crash of 2008 are still being felt. The global financial meltdown continues and economic inequality has reached extremes not seen for a century. Business and government in their economic activity, commercial or military expansion, corruption, and surveillance are widely distrusted. Many people regret the consumerism and social corrosion of modern life. **However the emancipatory activities of protest, activism, and both the traditional and radical left, appears already exhausted, ineffectual, and have yet to deliver.** Less fortunate people in the west seem entrapped in a form of what Baudrillard would call Stockholm syndrome – expressing empathy for a system that does not have their interests at heart and which conceals gross inequalities of wealth, power, and opportunity. They seem content to accept exploitative and precarious working conditions, and the compensatory pathologies of narcissistic consumption (retail therapy), media spectacle (a thousand channels and nothing on), fantasies of status and advancement (the mythologies of advertising), and celebrity idolatry (the twittered selfie). Meek acceptance or resignation to a banal, materialistic, nihilistic society appears complete for some. Capital and affluent societies have always had waves of boom and bust – stasis and chaos – but what is crucial about the current financial situation is its scale. It is a global crisis and not regional like other previous crashes. It cannot be contained, assistance is not available from some other region, and austerity measures are already being met with civil disobedience. Dependent on one’s perspective, this heralds one of the greatest catastrophes of recent history or one of the most significant opportunities for radical change. Nobel laureate economist, Joseph Stiglitz, has proposed that the crisis – the fall of Wall Street, the revelation of the machinations of the bankers, and market fundamentalism – presents a legitimation crisis to capitalist society akin to the effect of the fall of the Berlin Wall upon communism. What was the catalyst for the crash? After decades of largely steady growth and expansion the global economy began to reveal signs of distress in 2007. On the 9th August BNP Paribas is the first major bank to acknowledge the risk of exposure to the subprime mortgage market and freezes three of their funds. Subprime lending is typically made to those who may have difficulty maintaining the repayment schedule. These high credit risk loans are characterized by higher interest rates making them lucrative to the institutions granting them. The chief executive of another major bank, Northern Rock, will later claim that this was ‘the day the world changed.’ In 2008 it became apparent that financial difficulty had snowballed and that the world was experiencing the onset of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Day by day there was the utter collapse of huge and household name financial institutions, the failure of core businesses, stock and housing market downturn, and decline in consumer wealth and economic activity. Global retirement funds dropped by 20 per cent in a single week. Economies worldwide slowed, credit was tightened, and international trade declined. Banks had to be bailed out by nation states to avert a meltdown on Wall Street. A number of causes and triggers of the crash were proposed with varying weight given by differing authorities. These involved a complex intersection of economic policies and deregulation. They include the encouragement of home ownership, the relatively easy access to loans for subprime borrowing, and subsequent overvaluation of bundled subprime loans, all of which assumed the housing market would continue to grow indefinitely. There were also questionable modes of trading by buyers and sellers, an ambition for short-term instant profit over longer term growth. There was a lack of adequate capital holdings by banks and insurance companies to support the financial commitments they made. An important distinction should be made here between the individual and the economic system itself. Often it is all too easy to scapegoat a few individuals for their failings in the attempt to present the financial system as essentially just and workable. Undoubtedly there were individuals’ idiosyncrasies within the system. There was blatant greed, idiocy, insider dealing, criminal activity, and escalation of little more than Ponzi schemes. There were dealers on cocaine, antidepressants, or anti-anxiety medication, which fuelled exuberance and the taking of risks one would normally avoid. Memorably, Tom Wolfe cites a study that discovered that “traders with unusually high levels of testosterone at the start of the trading day could be counted on to turn a profit by the day’s end.” However, when it came to sex “his demonstration rarely took more than 60 seconds. It went pump pump pump pump pump pump pump pump oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oooouh uh oo agghhh and bingo – roll off, snore like a bear” (Wolfe, 2013: 19). Traders treated their customers with disdain, referring to them as ‘muppets’, ‘guppies’, ‘suckers’, ‘marks’, ‘sheep’, ‘chumps’, ‘lambs’, ‘baby seals’ (Ibid). But these were the only people actually providing ‘liquidity’, that is, ready money. Also worthy of consideration are the hiring policies of financial Human Resources departments with their tried and tested techniques for ensuring they only hire the most aggressive and money-driven of all their candidates, and their ability to weed out anyone with morals, restraint or empathy. Whilst there is an element of ‘human error’ to the crash ultimately focus should be upon the economic system itself, a system that churns out and feeds off such individuals. The U.S. Senate’s report, Wall Street and the Financial Crisis: Anatomy of a Financial Collapse, concluded that the crash was the result of “high risk, complex financial products; undisclosed conflicts of interest; the failure of regulators, the credit rating agencies, and the market itself to rein in the excesses of Wall Street” (U.S. Senate: Levin-Coburn, 2011). Concomitant with this, and to address and attempt to lessen the chance of a recurrence, the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act regulatory reforms were adopted. This was an overhaul of the U.S. financial regulatory system on a scale not seen since the restructurings that followed the Great Depression. The act attempts to increase regulation of banking and risk, increase transparency of markets (in particular derivatives), and protect consumer and insurance interests. There are further measures to increase standards and cooperation in accounting procedures and credit rating agencies. The ambition of the legislation is announced as follows: “To promote the financial stability of the United States by improving accountability and transparency in the financial system, to end ‘too big to fail’, to protect the American taxpayer by ending bailouts, to protect consumers from abusive financial services practices, and for other purposes” (Ibid.). Alongside the new regulatory measures there have been two dominant responses to attempt to lessen the impact and aggravation of the crisis. One is unprecedented fiscal stimulus such as institutional bailouts and quantitative easing – the printing of more money – to promote economic activity. Another has been the implantation of austerity measures such as public spending cuts, and certain tax increases. The general mood from western governments and big business has been one initial embarrassment and hand-wringing followed by an air of business as usual: the show must go on. There has been the regulatory patching up, the closing of a few loopholes, the making of some cuts here, and a stimulus of the economy there. The belief is that after several years, maybe even a decade or two, economic growth will return to the previous level and things will be back to normal. The masses must tighten their belts. They must accept the slashing of public spending, the shrinking of social protection, and an impoverished quality of life. They must accept the thwarting and regression of progressive change. They must knuckle down and ride out the storm while seeing advancement opportunities for their children dwindle to levels unknown for more than half a century. That is the mainstream official, Wall Street, version of events. On this account the crash presents no insurmountable obstacle to the ideology of free market capitalism. The crash is seen as just a blip. There is historical amnesia and myopia in this official vision. On the other hand there is a more critical view of the crash. Capitalism, its critics say, has always had waves of boom and bust. A boom fuelled by lending and private debt is always and inevitably followed by bust. Witness the recent bubbles in third world debt (1980s), the Asian meltdown (1990s), dot.com fever (2001), and property and mortgages (2007). On this view capitalism is perpetual crisis. The regular and cyclical nature of boom and bust is apparent in a broad historical overview of US economic activity. There were depressions in the 1830s, 1870s, and 1890s, and a financial panic in 1907: “It is interesting to note that all were immediately preceded by some kind of speculative financial boom that went bust, followed thereafter by the sharp and deep contraction of the real economy in the wake of the speculative bust” (Rasmus, 2010: 11). The crash of 1929 was a massive financial catastrophe chiefly caused by highly leveraged speculative borrowing. Hand-wringing and regulation followed such as the introduction of rules to stop such leveraged speculative trading by banks with customer deposits. Certain stability in the 1950s and 60s followed and there was no major financial catastrophe until the deregulation and removal of the aforementioned rules in the 1970s and 80s. Hence we arrive at another massive financial catastrophe caused in part by highly leveraged speculative borrowing. Again, this is being followed by hand-wringing and regulation. And so it continues like endless sequels to a film that was awful to begin with. As Marx and Engels had anticipated in The Communist Manifesto, “And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises?…by paving the way for more extensive and more destructive crises” (Marx, 2002: 184). What is crucial, however, about the contemporary financial situation is its scale. In the late 1990s Baudrillard had proposed that “what has triumphed isn’t capitalism but the global” (Baudrillard, 1998: 10). It may now already be a cliché and a form of wishful-thinking for some, but Christian Marazzi suggests that this is “one of the greatest crises of history” (Marazzi, 2011; 9). joseph Stiglitz has proposed that the crash presents a legitimation crisis for capital and should all but silence the most vociferous supporters of neoliberalism (the neoconservative supported vision of ‘capitalism on steroids’). This may well be overly optimistic but what remains significant is the fact that ‘capitalism’ or ‘neoliberalism’ is now emerging as the name of the problem rather than as something that seems obvious, the best, natural, or even inevitable. The term neoliberalism was originally coined in Europe in the late 1930s to suggest a new form of liberalism following the decline of interest in classical liberalism. It fell out of favour until recently whereby the meaning has shifted somewhat to embrace a host of related ideologies, mode of governance, and policy packages that are all favourable to a hyper-capitalism. There is a clear relationship with globalisation and imperialism. There are nuances but typically the political philosophy of neoliberalism supports total economic liberalisation, ultra-free trade, open markets with no geographic restriction, complete deregulation, and on-going privatisation. It would weaken and decrease the public sector in favour of the private sector. For its critic’s neoliberalism is a form of fundamentalism as crude and dangerous as any other fundamentalism. This market fundamentalism seeks market solutions and suggests competition as the answer to any problem**. The competition**, however, is not on a level playing field: **it is won by those with** connections and concentration of **capital, founded on imperialism, slavery, theft, and lineage**. The players take illegal short cuts, creatively cut corners, exploit others, and avoid tax payments. As with any competition it ensures that there are some winners but a majority of losers. This is at odds with the neoliberal claim that competition ensures the best outcome for all involved. A political economy has been established which ultimately only benefits a wealthy elite. Neoliberalism advocates the unfettered use of free market techniques and principles outside the spheres of commerce and business in the creation of new markets and interventions in non-economic areas and social space such as health, care, education, culture, energy, and so on. The basic premise is that everything will run better if run as a business. The neoliberal answers to the canonical questions of philosophy, such as ‘Why are we here?’ and ‘What should I do?’ are answered thus: We are here for the market, and you should compete. Neoliberals tend to believe that “humans exist for the market, and not the other way around” (Treanor, 2005). The human is defined as merely a potential entrepreneur, the middle-manager of their own life, which is seen as their own initial capital and enterprise. Neoliberalism perhaps makes sense only to those already holding the bargaining chips of economic power, or the poor souls who have internalised this ideology and definition of their finite time on earth in purely economic terms. Since the 1970s neoliberalism as a practical system of government has been implemented in various forms around the world often under the guise of liberal-democracy but in reality as variants of crony capitalism (a sprinkling of liberal legitimacy to dictatorships), corporatocracies (the corporate takeover of nation states), and unfettered and unrequested globalisation. The governments of Ronald Regan and Margret Thatcher, with big business whispering and tonging in their ears, are said to have done much to facilitate and disseminate such neoliberal ideology. A key resource for their ideas is Friedrich Hayek’s paranoid and unwarrantedly influential book The Road to Serfdom. Hayek argued that the trend, as he saw it, towards socialism and collectivisation occurring throughout the west in the 1940s was incompatible with freedom and democracy. The fear is of the growth of the state and variants of socialism. His ideology is perhaps best summarised by Ronald Reagan’s famous quip: “The nine most terrifying words in the English language are ‘I’m from the government and I’m here to help.’” Given the recent bank bailouts this rings rather hollow today. Thatcherism is largely synonymous with neoliberalism. The tributes that followed the recent death of Thatcher revealed how much of neoliberalism is now taken for granted even of the left of the political spectrum. One delightful piece of dissention was offered by Labour M.P. Glenda Jackson in a House of Commons speech which went against the mainstream of historical amnesia. She spelled out the disapproval of such neoliberalism for the general population of the UK. Thatcherism wrought “the most heinous social, economic and spiritual damage upon this country… We were told that everything I had been taught to regard as a vice – and I still regard them as vices – was, in fact, under Thatcherism, a virtue: greed, selfishness, no care for the weak, sharp elbows, sharp knees, all these were the way forward…[people know] the price of everything and the value of nothing” (U.K. Parliament, CM201213). Also typical in enumerating the social problems, growing populist reaction, and discontent of neoliberalism are the heartfelt words of a UK school teacher: “We train children to be successful, ruthless, greedy and selfish; our virtues are money, fame and looks. We do not reward kindness, do not value loyalty, we do not care about courage” (Griffiths, 2013: 11). The World Health Organisation has predicted that depression is on track to become the second most widespread disease, after heart disease, in the developed world by 2020. Oliver James (2008) posits a strong correlation between rising rates of mental distress and nations most advanced in neoliberalism. Our hugely increased wealth over the past half century has done nothing to increase our happiness. In fact not only does market capitalism have little impact on improving levels of happiness but it actually exacerbates certain types of mental illness. Rates of distress among women in the UK almost doubled between 1982 and 2000. This is also true of the US and in striking contrast with more egalitarian and collectivist countries. Capitalism itself, with countless boom and bust cycles, is fundamentally bi-polar, swinging from the hyped-up mania and exuberance of a boom to the depression and come down of a bust. The advocacy of cognitive behaviour therapy, James suggests, must be refuted as merely a sticking plaster for a sick society which encourages individuals to try to think positively rather than challenge the status quo. James describes the human being under neoliberalism as a passive, empty, anxious, isolated person for whom life has no meaning except work and who compensates for this through compulsive consumption. Our emotional malaise is a direct result of increased competitiveness, individualism, materialism, and the way that these exploit our insecurities. **Selfish capitalism generates insecurity and inflates comparisons**. A winner-takes-all competitiveness merely creates losers and a pandemic of low self-esteem. It offers only compensatory pathologies around consumption, celebrity, and status. The acceleration of neoliberalism is clearly a crisis in itself, and a back-drop to the actual crash. There will be numerous ways of telling the story of the crash and the ‘biggest bubble in history’ but at some stage all plot lines will converge to one place and one time: Camp David, Maryland, on the afternoon of Friday 13th August 1971. Here, in secret, Richard Nixon met Federal Reserve chairman Arthur Burns and other advisers. The backdrop was high inflation, and high unemployment. These were implications of the fact that since the mid 1960’s the US had begun to borrow enormous sums to fund Lyndon B. Johnson’s ‘Great Society’ and the Vietnam War. In essence “the US began to live – and kill – considerably beyond its means” (Kunkel, 2012:23). To avert a run on America reserves Nixon announced the advice he was going to follow on television on Sunday 15th August, before the markets opened: “I have directed Secretary Connally to suspend temporarily the convertibility of the dollar into gold … Now, what is this action – which is very technical – what does it mean for you?” (http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?%20pid=3115%20#axzz%201UZnES7PMon). Indeed, what does it mean and what are the implications today? Previously the Bretton Woods system of international financial exchange had fixed exchange rates based on the US dollar, which was redeemable for gold by the US government at the price of $35 per ounce. This anchor meant that the U.S. was committed to backing every dollar overseas with gold. The dollar was anchored to gold and other currencies were anchored to the dollar. Paper banknotes in circulation carried the guarantee that they could be exchanged for a certain amount of gold. As gold is scarce, this put strict limits on the amount of money that governments could print. The suspension of the direct convertibility of the U.S. dollar into gold ushered in the era of **freely floating currencies**. This is a move away from the strict post-Depression regulation of U.S. finance. The current world monetary system assigns no special role to gold; indeed, the Federal Reserve is not obliged to tie the dollar to anything. It can print as much or as little money as it deems appropriate. Nixon’s neat opportunism “changed the rules of world trade” (Auters, 2010: 35). and Slavoj Žižek confirms that the decision to abandon the gold standard for the US dollar “was the sign of a much more radical shift in the basic functioning of the capitalist system” (Zizek, 2012: 17). In semiotic terms Nixon suspended the relationship between a sign and its referent – in this instance money and gold. This disconnected the circuit between paper and bullion, and hence representation and the real. The implications following this type of divorce of sign systems from their referent (even if the relationship was always only ever idealist or utopian) underpin much of Baudrillard’s work. The implications of the loss of a core referent, or loss of a sign systems connection to a reality, are often discussed under the rubric of postmodernism. The much debated term was first used around the 1870s but gained wider currency in the 1970s. Following Nixon there is no transcendental law of capital and in many ways anything goes. There is incredulity to grand narrative of the modern, planned, regulated market. One can make an analogy with developments in the arts. Around the date of the ‘Nixon Shock’, July 15, 1972 at 3.32 pm to be exact, Pruitt–Igoe, a large urban housing project in St. Louis, Missouri, was given the final coup de grâce by dynamite and the first stage of demolition was complete. For architectural theorist and provocateur, Charles Jenks, this was the day modern architecture died and a new paradigm emerged: postmodern architecture. The destruction of the complex, typified by poverty, crime, and segregation, signalled the failure of public policy planning and is seen as a direct indictment of the ideals of modernism and of the society-changing aspirations of the International School. Modernist architectural form, planning, and space were meant to regulate good conduct and healthy behaviour. Postmodern architecture, for better or worse, is incredulous to such ambitions and has loss the gold standard and regulation of modernist planning. In music one might point to composer Arnold Schoenberg’s ambition of the emancipation of the dissonance. Music loses the standard of tonality and arguably sounds like the dissonance of emancipation. Literature loses the regulated contract between author, text, and reader with fragmentation, paradox, parody and questionable narrators. The work of art loses the divine and cult value. It is no longer the representation of a referent just as money is no longer a representation of gold or wealth. Religious and mythological themes, the portrait of the patron, the landscape, and the slice of modern life all dissipate. Art becomes a self-referential sign system playing with its own possibilities. Its referent becomes other art movements and as such becomes simulation. New Age spirituality is a quasi-sentiment of the ineffable freed from the dogma and rituals of the standard of institutionalised religion. In Baudrillard’s signature theory, reality itself becomes a self-referential system disconnected from the gold standard of the Real. Let us take a moment to stretch a tentative analogy with what happened in poetry and the deregulation of verse. The Oxford Companion to English Literature announces that “Verse in the twentieth century has largely escaped the straitjacket of traditional metrics.” Likewise we can say that ‘Economics in the twenty first century has largely escaped the straitjacket of the traditional regulated market.’ In England ‘free verse’ was initially a term of derogation before it became a battle cry, and today is more or less a neutral descriptor. Emerging at the advent of European modernism, the French term vers libre, first used by Gustave Kahn in the late 1880s, signified poetry free from the closed forms such as the sonnet, villanelle, or sestina, making very little or no use of traditional rhyme or meter. Kahn refused all legitimacy to traditional meter, seeing in it only a constraint, “an essentially political one – the inherited legacy of royal centralism and absolutism, put to work in servile manner” (Meillassoux, 2012: 22). Charles Baudelaire, with his focus on modern life in the city, also signals the freeing of poetry from strictly religious, mythological, or natural referents. There is no standard in terms of form or content that poets are bound or restricted by. For pedagogical convenience we can cite the myth of Arthur Rimbaud as pioneering these developments. The poet is raised to ‘seer’ with ‘verbal hallucinations’ and ‘verbal alchemy’ under the aegis of the theory that ‘inventing the unknown calls for new forms’. This is Rimbaud, in his own words, “exempt from all morality” (Robb, 2001: 194). Une Saison en Enfer was one of the first modern works of literature to show “that experiments with language are also investigations into the self.” Fifteen years before the vers libre made its official appearance in French literature, the idea that poems could be written without rhyme or metre “sounded like artistic vandalism” Ibid.). For Stéphane Mallarmé, Rimbaud was the sort of ‘attractive hooligan’ who could, and did, do “serious damage to French literature” (Ibid.). In ‘Crisis of Verse,’ Mallarmé will speak of the “exquisite and fundamental crisis” (Meillassoux, 2012: 21). occasioned by the emergence of free verse. The qualified acceptance of free verse is enabled insofar as “God had ceased, for the young Mallarmé, to guarantee the status of literary symbols” (Ibid.: 28). For verse, as the poet believes, there are to be no political or centralist constraints, no referents or standards, no morality, and ‘God has ceased.’ For the economy, as Nixon states, there are to be no political or centralist constraints, no referents or standards, no morality and ‘Gold is dead.’ For organised religion and philosophy, as Nietzsche states, there are to be no political or centralist constraints, no referents or standards, no morality, and ‘God is dead.’ If we have broken with these standards and referents of poetry, religion, and philosophy then it is because we have killed their guarantor and transcendental signified – God. If we have broken with these standards and referents of the economy then it is because we have killed their guarantor and transcendental signified – Gold. The ending of the gold standard may not be the single cause of the current crisis but it is certainly an enabling factor. In 1973 dollar-gold convertibility was abandoned once and for all. Enter now the play of borrowing and lending: all monetary debt since has been “mere paper promises” (Kunkel, 2012: 23). Overall indebtedness has grown faster than most national economies: “In the last forty years, the world has been more successful at creating claims on wealth than it has at creating wealth itself” (Ibid.). Marx’s circuit M – C – Mˈ (Money – Commodity – Money) becomes, as he anticipated, M – Mˈ (Money – Money). In likewise, fashion pioneer of semiology, Ferdinand de Saussure’s formula S – R (signifier and signified comprise the (S) sign which refers to (R) a referent) become S – S (Sign – Sign). That is, it becomes what Baudrillard will term a simulation, a self-contained self-referential sign system. In the financial economy money – a ‘paper promise’, a ‘claim on wealth’ – becomes a sign free of any reference to real wealth or production: a financial simulacrum. Economic referents enter into a play of self-generated signs abstracted from real value. In The Mirror of Production, Baudrillard summarises: “The sign no longer designates anything at all. It approaches its true structural limit which is to refer back only to other signs. All reality then becomes the place of a semiurgical manipulation, of a structural simulation” (Baudrillard, 1975: 128). A financial bubble, viewed through a Baudrillardian lens, can be conceived as one such simulation. It is becoming routine in discussions of Baudrillard to note the uncanny nature of how his thought anticipates and seems to predict future developments: “the prefigurative qualities of Baudrillard’s writing are, now, self-evident” (Noys, 2012). Problems with the symbolism of the disentangling of the gold-standard are emblematic and the seeds of the current crash are planted in the early 1970s. Baudrillard notes, in 1973, that this process culminates in the ‘virtual international autonomy of finance capital’, in the uncontrollable ‘play of floating capital’. When financial capital is extracted from ‘all productive cautions’, and even from ‘all reference to the gold standard’, then ‘general equivalence’ becomes the strategic place of the manipulation: “Real production is everywhere subordinated to it. This apogee of the system corresponds to the triumph of the code” (Baudrillard, 1975: 129). Here, in a characteristic motif, the economic real (of production for instance) is subordinated to economic simulation: simulation becomes more real than the real (hyper-real). The code now becomes the greater political problem than alienation, exploitation, inequality, and so on. **The financial simulacrum should not be taken as having no effect on everyday economic life:** the code, the model, precedes the real. The economy is hence forth considered hyper-real. Elton McGoun uses Baudrillard’s notion of hyper-reality in his study of intrinsic value. The simulation-model and virtual market comes to determine the real economy itself: “decisions affecting production and employment are made on the basis of stock prices, and not on the basis of production and employment” (Elton, 1997: 113) The following conclusion is reached: it is not the ‘real economy’ that shapes reality but activity in the financial economy. “The financial economy is thereby more real than the real economy itself; it is a hyper-real economy” (Ibid.). This results in a financial simulation which consists of an exchange sphere without any reference to economic reality. It is an internal (virtual) exchange with no referent. The sophistication of the financial simulacrum tends to reduce the degree of materiality of the financial reality. Schinckus explains the evolution from commercial fairs to financial markets, whereby “the goods were not exposed anymore and the transactions (on paper) became symbols” Schinckus, 2008: 1086. Finance has largely abandoned its role of raising capital or supporting entrepreneurial activity (with subsequent variants of exploitation) and is now almost totally dedicated to speculation. Orléan evokes the ‘virtual character’ of finance to describe this disconnection with the sphere of production (Orléan, 1999). Schinckus uses Baudrillard to tease out some of the consequences of the move to e-finance and the technological virtualization of the financial market. The emergence of automatic trading and the creation of electronic financial products have profoundly modified the organisation of the markets and financial exchanges themselves. The ‘Iowa Electronic Market’, created in 1988, was the first virtual market where all interactions took place online. Oral negotiation has been superseded by an abstract sociability whereby traders only interact via computer screens. Wolfe describes traders “trying to monitor six screens at once, six screens that fan out three over three, obscuring any connection we have to the real world” (Wolfe, 2013: 27). This leads to a ‘screen sociability’ which sees traders “personify their screen by giving them a hypothetical personality” (Schinckus, 2008: 1081). Often stock market transactions (or rather risks) concern minute quantities, which may be just fractions of a per cent. But when these are amplified into quantities of hundreds of millions of dollars of shares these fractions soon add up. One might buy a stock (any stock, it is immaterial – and herein lies one of the very problems) to hope to inflate the general share price and then sell immediately and attempt to make an instant profit. Or vice versa, sell then buy. Wolfe cites an early example from the pioneer Edward Thorp: “He bets $332.5m – virtually one third of a billion – on selling a stock short – and bets another third of a billion buying the same stock to make a profit of one one-hundredth of 1%. Think of risking a total of close to two thirds of a billion dollars to make $2.5m! Sheer madness” (Wolfe, 2013: 21). One effect of the emergence of quantitative trading is that “It had nothing to do with any stock’s or bond’s value. It was a purely mathematical way to game the markets” Ibid.). One issue with this creation of a virtual market is the ambition to reach the idea of the ‘perfect market’ model seen only in economic theory textbooks. In this case, “the finance reality has become a “hyper-reality” i.e. the image of the theoretical reality that we have in mind” (Schinckus, 2008: 1082). One trend of this desire to develop ‘hard models’ in finance has been the rise of econophysics, whereby economists, physicists, statisticians and computer specialists endeavour to apply models seen and developed in physics to the market. In these instance financial quotations are studied as if they behaved, for example, like gas molecules. These models then actually shape the market by being transformed into computational algorithms to price or hedge financial securities with the belief that returns will behave like physical entities. One prominent simulation model, certainly influential in derivatives, has been the Black-Scholes formula published in 1973. This was meant to cut risk and scientifically legitimate the activities of options markets around the world. However, over-reliance upon the model, and its incorrect axioms (e.g. the presupposition of negligible probability of extreme price change) was said, by the likes of NassimTaleb and Jean-Philippe Bouchaud, to spiral into the worldwide October 1987 crash. Capital freed from regulation has no obstacle to circulation and value radiates “endlessly in every direction” (Baudrillard, 1987: 25). Recently, **trade in derivatives worldwide was one quadrillion US dollars, which is ten times the total production of goods on the planet over its entire history**. This is one sense of what Baudrillard means by ‘floating capital’. There is no anchor in real production or wealth. Žižek has recently suggested that the stages in the predominant mode of money seem to obey the Lacanian triad of psychoanalytic concepts of the Real, Symbolic, and Imaginary. Gold functions as the Real of money (what it is ‘really worth’); with paper money we enter the Symbolic register (paper is the symbol of its worth, worthless in itself); and, finally, the emerging mode is a purely ‘Imaginary’ one – money will increasingly exist as a purely virtual point of reference, of accounting, without any actual form, real or symbolic (the ‘cashless society’) (Zizek, 2012: 101). Financial speculation is “without reference to production or its real conditions…it plays now on its own orbital circulation and revolution alone” (Baudrillard, 1998:1). One result of this is the ‘fictitious’ nature of wealth, as Gérard Duménil and Dominique Lévy suggest in The Crisis of Neoliberalism. For instance, income is withdrawn against asset bubbles, and there are claims made on future wealth that neither can, nor will, be produced. The signs engendered by the financial simulation cannot fully be converted into real wealth, as the market is currently experiencing. Duménil and Lévy make the case that neoliberalism has less been an ideological programme on behalf of free markets than a quest for more high income on the part of the upper classes. This goes against the traditional legitimisation of neoliberalism by positing old fashion greed against liberty and free-flowing markets. In true ‘trickle-down’ fashion, however, this quest for wealth and property also appeals to the middle-class and the poor. Subprime lending was the attempt to extend to ordinary consumers “through rising home prices [consumer debt, student loans, credit, etc.], a fictitious income long enjoyed by the financial classes. The scheme could hardly last” (Kunkel, 2012: 28). This is congruent with the claim by Angela Mitropolous and Melinda Cooper that the crisis was generated by “usury from below that extended beyond the limits which were tolerable to capital” (Noys, 2010: 46). This is to say that the growth of the bubble accelerated and inflated into what The Economist has called “the biggest bubble in history.” For Baudrillard, the crisis was an always already coming implosion impacted upon by the hyper-real economy and trans-economics of speculation. This is a flouting of the ‘law’ of value, of the market, production, surplus-value, and the’ very logic of capital’. The trans-economic develops into “a game with floating, arbitrary rules, a jeu de catastrophe” (Baudrillard, 2001: 1). Interestingly here, the crisis has come and traditional political economy has come to an end, “but not at all as we expected it to – it will have ended by becoming exacerbated to the point of parody” (Ibid.). **The financial crisis has emerged,** the bubble has burst**, and we witness one of the biggest threats to capitalism** and neoliberalism **thus far, through the exacerbation of simulation.** This has not come about through radical politics and not – as much as it would have been desirable to be agents of change – through critique, or dialectics, or rational discussion, or insurrection, or event, or act, or the deconstruction of political concepts, or long-term revolution, or instant revolt, and so on. Baudrillard’s argument is that we need to follow this process and exacerbate further the contradictions of the hyper-real economy to ensure its demise. **If capital is now floating capital, then let us let it float away.** This is the parodic, ironic, and ecstatic play of the processes often analysed under the rubric of postmodern. Regarding the crisis there is no transcendent critique at play but immanent implosion. This resonates with the theoretical manoeuvre that Benjamin Noys (2012) has identified as ‘accelerationism.’ Noys notes that there are those who argue for the need to ‘radicalise and deepen the tendencies’ that led to the current crisis: “The tendency now becomes the immanent radicalisation of capital’s own dynamic of deterritorialisation” (Noys, 2010: 51). For Baudrillard, this immanent implosion and exacerbation is “a way of putting an end to the economy that is the most singular in style, ultimately more original than our political utopias” (Baudrillard, 1998: 2). Ecstasy is the process in play rather than dialectics. The only revolution in things today is no longer in their dialectical transcendence (Aufhebung), but in “their potentialization, in their elevation to the second power, in their elevation to the Nth power, whether that of terrorism, irony, or simulation” (Baudrillard, 1990: 63). Baudrillard proposes that it is from the inside, by overreaching themselves, “that systems make bonfires of their own postulates, and fall into ruins” (Baudrillard, 2001: 6). This is the fate that arguably awaits the exacerbation of neoliberal capital. Rather than confront power, **one must use power against itself**. As Baudrillard cites as a preface in Forget Foucault, “As in judo, the best answer to an adversary manoeuvre is not to retreat, but to go along with it, turning it to one’s own advantage” (Baudrillard, 1987). In a methodological consideration Baudrillard writes that **the only justification for thinking and writing is that it accelerates these terminal processes. “Here, beyond the discourse of truth, resides the poetic and enigmatic value of thinking**” (Baudrillard, 2000: 83). Exacerbation is a radical form of Daoism, a going with the flow, not offering resistance but letting the power of the system destroy itself. This is certainly counter intuitive and a novel proposition but is perhaps better placed than the attempt to confront a vastly more powerful opponent head-on, or to attempt make an absurd system moral or regulated. Neoliberalism and its “democratic dictatorship is shaping up nicely,” Baudrillard claims(Baudrillard, 1997: 149). If this is the case then ultimately, for Baudrillard, we are to challenge this from the realm of the symbolic. The economic and semiotic system suppresses and is built upon the denial of the symbolic: one must “therefore displace everything into the sphere of the symbolic, where challenge, reversal and overbidding are the law “(Baudrillard, 1993: 136). Is this principle of exacerbation, which is witnessed in the escalation and overbidding of (‘primitive’) potlatch competition that Baudrillard frequently return to, going to be effective in the ruination of neoliberalism? It is at moments like the socio-economic present that we are most likely to find out.

#### Capitalism is the root of all impacts. It’s try or die for the alt to avoid global extinction

Foster 19 - John Bellamy Foster, Monthly Review, February 1st, 2019 “Capitalism Has Failed—What Next?” [https://monthlyreview.org/2019/02/01/capitalism-has-failed-what-next/] Accessed 11/19/19 SAO

Less than two decades into the twenty-first century, it is evident that capitalism has failed as a social system. The world is mired in economic stagnation, financialization, and the **most extreme inequality in human history**, accompanied by mass unemployment and underemployment, precariousness, poverty, hunger, wasted output and lives, and what at this point can only be called a **planetary ecological “death spiral**.”1 The digital revolution, the greatest technological advance of our time, has rapidly mutated from a promise of free communication and liberated production into new means of surveillance, control, and displacement of the working population. The institutions of liberal democracy are at the point of collapse, while fascism, the rear guard of the capitalist system, is again on the march, along with **patriarchy, racism, imperialism, and war**. To say that capitalism is a failed system is not, of course, to suggest that its breakdown and disintegration is imminent.2 It does, however, mean that it has passed from being a historically necessary and creative system at its inception to being a historically unnecessary and destructive one in the present century. Today, more than ever, the world is faced with the epochal choice between “the revolutionary reconstitution of society at large and the common ruin of the contending classes.”3 Indications of this failure of capitalism are everywhere. Stagnation of investment punctuated by bubbles of financial expansion, which then inevitably burst, now characterizes the so-called free market.4 Soaring inequality in income and wealth has its counterpart in the declining material circumstances of a majority of the population. Real wages for most workers in the United States have barely budged in forty years despite steadily rising productivity.5 Work intensity has increased, while work and safety protections on the job have been systematically jettisoned. Unemployment data has become more and more meaningless due to a new institutionalized underemployment in the form of contract labor in the gig economy.6 Unions have been reduced to mere shadows of their former glory as capitalism has asserted totalitarian control over workplaces. With the demise of Soviet-type societies, social democracy in Europe has perished in the new atmosphere of “liberated capitalism.”7 The capture of the surplus value produced by overexploited populations in the poorest regions of the world, via the global labor arbitrage instituted by multinational corporations, is leading to an unprecedented amassing of financial wealth at the center of the world economy and relative poverty in the periphery.8 Around $21 trillion of offshore funds are currently lodged in tax havens on islands mostly in the Caribbean, constituting “the fortified refuge of Big Finance.”9 Technologically driven monopolies resulting from the global-communications revolution, together with the rise to dominance of Wall Street-based financial capital geared to speculative asset creation, have further contributed to the riches of today’s “1 percent.” Forty-two billionaires now enjoy as much wealth as half the world’s population, while the three richest men in the United States—Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates, and Warren Buffett—have more wealth than half the U.S. population.10 In every region of the world, inequality has increased sharply in recent decades.11 The gap in per capita income and wealth between the richest and poorest nations, which has been the dominant trend for centuries, is rapidly widening once again.12 More than 60 percent of the world’s employed population, some two billion people, now work in the impoverished informal sector, forming a massive global proletariat. The global reserve army of labor is some 70 percent larger than the active labor army of formally employed workers.13 Adequate health care, housing, education, and clean water and air are increasingly out of reach for large sections of the population, even in wealthy countries in North America and Europe, while transportation is becoming more difficult in the United States and many other countries due to irrationally high levels of dependency on the automobile and disinvestment in public transportation. Urban structures are more and more characterized by gentrification and segregation, with cities becoming the playthings of the well-to-do while marginalized populations are shunted aside. About half a million people, most of them children, are homeless on any given night in the United States.14 New York City is experiencing a major rat infestation, attributed to warming temperatures, mirroring trends around the world.15 In the United States and other high-income countries, life expectancy is in decline, with a remarkable resurgence of Victorian illnesses related to poverty and exploitation. In Britain, gout, scarlet fever, whooping cough, and even scurvy are now resurgent, along with tuberculosis. With inadequate enforcement of work health and safety regulations, black lung disease has returned with a vengeance in U.S. coal country.16 Overuse of antibiotics, particularly by capitalist agribusiness, is leading to an antibiotic-resistance crisis, with the dangerous growth of superbugs generating increasing numbers of deaths, which by mid–century could surpass annual cancer deaths, prompting the World Health Organization to declare a “global health emergency.”17 These dire conditions, arising from the workings of the system, are consistent with what Frederick Engels, in the Condition of the Working Class in England, called “social murder.”18 At the instigation of giant corporations, philanthrocapitalist foundations, and neoliberal governments, public education has been restructured around corporate-designed testing based on the implementation of robotic common-core standards. This is generating massive databases on the student population, much of which are now being surreptitiously marketed and sold.19 The corporatization and privatization of education is feeding the progressive subordination of children’s needs to the cash nexus of the commodity market. We are thus seeing a dramatic return of Thomas Gradgrind’s and Mr. M’Choakumchild’s crass utilitarian philosophy dramatized in Charles Dickens’s Hard Times: “Facts are alone wanted in life” and “You are never to fancy.”20 Having been reduced to intellectual dungeons, many of the poorest, most racially segregated schools in the United States are mere pipelines for prisons or the military.21 More than two million people in the United States are behind bars, a higher rate of incarceration than any other country in the world, constituting a new Jim Crow. The total population in prison is nearly equal to the number of people in Houston, Texas, the fourth largest U.S. city. African Americans and Latinos make up 56 percent of those incarcerated, while constituting only about 32 percent of the U.S. population. Nearly 50 percent of American adults, and a much higher percentage among African Americans and Native Americans, have an immediate family member who has spent or is currently spending time behind bars. Both black men and Native American men in the United States are nearly three times, Hispanic men nearly two times, more likely to die of police shootings than white men.22 **Racial divides are now widening across the entire planet**. Violence against women and the expropriation of their unpaid labor, as well as the higher level of exploitation of their paid labor, are integral to the way in which power is organized in capitalist society—and how it seeks to divide rather than unify the population. More than a third of women worldwide have experienced physical/sexual violence. Women’s bodies, in particular, are objectified, reified, and commodified as part of the normal workings of monopoly-capitalist marketing.23 The mass media-propaganda system, part of the larger corporate matrix, is now merging into a social media-based propaganda system that is more porous and seemingly anarchic, but more universal and more than ever favoring money and power. Utilizing modern marketing and surveillance techniques, which now dominate all digital interactions, vested interests are able to tailor their messages, largely unchecked, to individuals and their social networks, creating concerns about “fake news” on all sides.24 Numerous business entities promising technological manipulation of voters in countries across the world have now surfaced, auctioning off their services to the highest bidders.25 The elimination of net neutrality in the United States means further concentration, centralization, and control over the entire Internet by monopolistic service providers. Elections are increasingly prey to unregulated “dark money” emanating from the coffers of corporations and the billionaire class. Although presenting itself as the world’s leading democracy, the United States, as Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy stated in Monopoly Capital in 1966, “is democratic in form and plutocratic in content.”26 In the Trump administration, following a long-established tradition, 72 percent of those appointed to the cabinet have come from the higher corporate echelons, while others have been drawn from the military.27 War, engineered by the United States and other major powers at the apex of the system, has become perpetual in strategic oil regions such as the Middle East, and threatens to escalate into a global thermonuclear exchange. During the Obama administration, the United States was engaged in wars/bombings in seven different countries—Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Somalia, and Pakistan.28 Torture and assassinations have been reinstituted by Washington as acceptable instruments of war against those now innumerable individuals, group networks, and whole societies that are branded as terrorist. A new Cold War and nuclear arms race is in the making between the United States and Russia, while Washington is seeking to place road blocks to the continued rise of China. The Trump administration has created a new space force as a separate branch of the military in an attempt to ensure U.S. dominance in the militarization of space. Sounding the alarm on the increasing dangers of a nuclear war and of climate destabilization, the distinguished Bulletin of Atomic Scientists moved its doomsday clock in 2018 to two minutes to midnight, the closest since 1953, when it marked the advent of thermonuclear weapons.29 Increasingly severe economic sanctions are being imposed by the United States on countries like Venezuela and Nicaragua, despite their democratic elections—or because of them. Trade and currency wars are being actively promoted by core states, while racist barriers against immigration continue to be erected in Europe and the United States as some 60 million refugees and internally displaced peoples flee devastated environments. Migrant populations worldwide have risen to 250 million, with those residing in high-income countries constituting more than 14 percent of the populations of those countries, up from less than 10 percent in 2000. Meanwhile, ruling circles and wealthy countries seek to wall off islands of power and privilege from the mass of humanity, who are to be left to their fate.30 More than three-quarters of a billion people, over 10 percent of the world population, are chronically malnourished.31 Food stress in the United States keeps climbing, leading to the rapid growth of cheap dollar stores selling poor quality and toxic food. Around forty million Americans, representing one out of eight households, including nearly thirteen million children, are food insecure.32 Subsistence farmers are being pushed off their lands by agribusiness, private capital, and sovereign wealth funds in a global depeasantization process that constitutes the greatest movement of people in history.33 Urban overcrowding and poverty across much of the globe is so severe that one can now reasonably refer to a “planet of slums.”34 Meanwhile, the world housing market is estimated to be worth up to $163 trillion (as compared to the value of gold mined over all recorded history, estimated at $7.5 trillion).35 The Anthropocene epoch, first ushered in by the Great Acceleration of the world economy immediately after the Second World War, has generated enormous rifts in planetary boundaries, extending from climate change to ocean acidification, to the sixth extinction, to disruption of the global nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, to the loss of freshwater, to the disappearance of forests, to widespread toxic-chemical and radioactive pollution.36 It is now estimated that **60 percent of the world’s wildlife** vertebrate population (including mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and fish) have been wiped out since 1970, while the worldwide abundance of invertebrates has declined by 45 percent in recent decades.37 What climatologist James Hansen calls the “species exterminations” resulting from accelerating climate change and rapidly shifting climate zones are only compounding this general process of biodiversity loss. Biologists expect that half of all species will be facing extinction by the end of the century.38 If present climate-change trends continue, the “global carbon budget” associated with a 2°C increase in average global temperature will be broken in sixteen years (while a 1.5°C increase in global average temperature—staying beneath which is the key to long-term stabilization of the climate—will be reached in a decade). Earth System scientists warn that the world is now perilously close to a Hothouse Earth, in which catastrophic climate change will be locked in and irreversible.39 The ecological, social, and economic costs to humanity of continuing to increase carbon emissions by 2.0 percent a year as in recent decades (rising in 2018 by 2.7 percent—3.4 percent in the United States), and failing to meet the minimal 3.0 percent annual reductions in emissions currently needed to avoid a catastrophic destabilization of the earth’s energy balance, are simply incalculable.40 Nevertheless, major energy corporations continue to lie about climate change, promoting and bankrolling climate denialism—while admitting the truth in their internal documents. These corporations are working to accelerate the extraction and production of fossil fuels, including the dirtiest, most greenhouse gas-generating varieties, reaping enormous profits in the process. The melting of the Arctic ice from global warming is seen by capital as a new El Dorado, opening up massive additional oil and gas reserves to be exploited without regard to the consequences for the earth’s climate. In response to scientific reports on climate change, Exxon Mobil declared that it intends to extract and sell all of the fossil-fuel reserves at its disposal.41 Energy corporations continue to intervene in climate negotiations to ensure that any agreements to limit carbon emissions are defanged. Capitalist countries across the board are putting the accumulation of wealth for a few above combatting climate destabilization, **threatening the very future of humanity**. Capitalism is best understood as a competitive class-based mode of production and exchange geared to the accumulation of capital through the exploitation of workers’ labor power and the private appropriation of surplus value (value generated beyond the costs of the workers’ own reproduction). The mode of economic accounting intrinsic to capitalism designates as a value-generating good or service anything that passes through the market and therefore produces income. It follows that the greater part of the social and environmental costs of production outside the market are excluded in this form of valuation and are treated as mere negative “externalities,” unrelated to the capitalist economy itself—whether in terms of the shortening and degradation of human life or the destruction of the natural environment. As environmental economist K. William Kapp stated, “capitalism must be regarded as an economy of unpaid costs.”42 We have now reached a point in the twenty-first century in which the externalities of this irrational system, such as the costs of war, the depletion of natural resources, the waste of human lives, and the disruption of the planetary environment, now far exceed any future economic benefits that capitalism offers to society as a whole. The accumulation of capital and the amassing of wealth are increasingly occurring at the expense of an irrevocable rift in the social and environmental conditions governing human life on earth.43

#### Capitalist literature production is strongly incentivized, and politically agenda based

Morley 15 - Louise Morley, Center for Higher Education and Equity Research @ University of Sussex, in Journal of Education Policy (2016), Published online: 13 Jul 2015 ["Troubling intra-actions: gender, neo-liberalism and research in the global academy", http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02680939.2015.1062919, 10-4-2017] AR Recut SAO 9/29/21

I have argued that research and researcher identities are being constructed and reinforced via the optics and apparatus of neo-liberalism. Research capital is a key performance indicator and co-constitutes reputation, power, status, rewards, and continued employment. Individual academic identities materialise through intraactions between research policy discourses, performance and productivity within the confines of key performance indicators. Insecurity, inequality and individualisation are fostered as part of ensuring the conditions for power to exercise a hold over conduct (Lazzarato 2009). In the neo-liberalised research economy, risk is redistributed, as academics are made to feel indebted to their organisations and responsibilised for generating income in financial systems over which they have little or no control. What is valued in research and scholarship is increasingly being shaped by market demands. Income generation, enterprise, impact, innovation for the market and the exchange value in the global prestige economy are dominant indicators of the value of research. Productivity and quality are connected and classified according to financial returns and the predictability of research utility. Knowledge production, custody and dissemination processes purport to be neutral and objective, but overlap with social and policy hierarchies. The knowledge economy is invested, situated, exclusionary and embodied, and as such, infused with power and control. The empty signifier of excellence is frequently invoked, yet value indicators can be unstable, transitory, contingent, contextualised and highly gendered. The knowledge economy is driven by the materialities of financialisation, but also by a powerful psychic and affective economy of shame, pride, humiliation, anger, disappointment, despair and anxiety. This represents a type of emotional geography (Kenway and Youdell 2011), with academic identities formed and evaluated in relation to mutable and constructed differences and boundaries. Affect, as Barad might say, is a phenomenon. It is not a stand-alone thing in the world as such things do not exist. It is a term called forth through a relationship with an apparatus (Rutherford 2013). The evaluative gaze of the neo-liberal research economy is the apparatus that can provoke such a powerful affective range. Research makes the world intelligible in specific ways and contributes to the foreclosure of other patterns of intelligibility (Rouse 2004). Additionally, the logic of relationality suggests that for every winner there are many losers. From the evidence presented in my study and from larger studies (European Commission 2008, 2011; European Science Foundation 2009; UNESCO 2010), it seems that, globally, women are the losers and are participating unequally in the research economy through which social meanings and knowledge are generated. This raises questions about whose research is having impact on policy, society and the economy. It is also highly precarious as to if and when women receive sponsorship from the neo-liberal winners. However, many women in my study maintain a rational and humanistic attachment to notions of mentoring and altruistic re-distributions of research knowledge in a competitive economy that rewards differentiation. A question is how to materialise women’s academic identities in a global research economy that urgently needs to renew itself. Research has been too readily ceded to neo-liberal forces and practices. There are questions about what the future holds for critical scholarship and whether there is an alternative to the neo-liberal corporate logic that fosters competition, convergence and compliance (Leathwood and Read 2013). A role of the social scientist is to render the world problematic by formulating and elaborating questions. To offer simplistic and reductive solutions of ‘what works’ formulae is not enough (Thrift 2007). Academic creativity should incorporate transgression and re-signification, and not just compliance and mechanistic productivity. This necessitates a troubling of the neo-liberal realisms and a re-invigoration of knowledge production as a site of transformation and change. Colley (2013) entreats counter-hegemonic scholars to act as Socratic ‘gadflies’. This includes defending the autonomy of the field of the production of research against heteronomy and control practices that masquerade as democratisation. One task for social research could be to resist co-option by narrow research policy agendas. This involves the prerequisite to identify new optics for viewing the social world, and to re-work tired, stale categories and vocabularies that produce tedious social reproductions. Enterprise cannot be used alone to solve social problems (Ball and Olmedo 2012). Most importantly, there is a need to imagine and research desired futures. Barad (2010, 257) suggests that ‘We inherit the future, not just the past’. What foundations are current practices, exclusions and disqualifications laying for future knowledge?

#### Originality is impossible under a system of signs. Everything was always already a copy of a copy.

Burk 16 - Dan L. Burk, University of California, Irvine School of Law, posted: 30 May 2015, last revised: 24 Jun 2016 “Copyright and the new materialism” [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\_id=2611166] Accessed 8/26/21 SAO

If, as I have argued above, the divergence of the material and the ideal has become both incoherent and untenable, how might new materialism repair such a gap, or advise us to reorient copyright law? First and most obviously, new materialism likely counsels us to jettison the idealised doctrine of “the work” and its reciprocal material counterpart “the copy”. The new materialist approach would likely be to instead traverse ideal/ material dualism, treating the instantiation of creative goods as a unified whole rather than a conceptual division. This doctrinal move would in turn allow courts to avoid the mental and legal gymnastics necessary to accommodate the definitions of “copies” and “fixation” to the functional realities of digital media. Under current copyright theory, two individuals who possess reproductions of a copyrighted work such as music or graphics are said to possess the same “work” embedded in separate copies. A new materialist approach might instead recognise that each of the individuals in question possesses not the same intangible item, but rather that each possesses a material object having qualities or affordances similar to that which is possessed by the other. Perhaps each object is configured to play back similar music when placed into a particular technical environment, and perhaps the law grants a particular author exclusive rights over objects that are so configured. But we need not worry whether the objects entail the same “work”, or how many copies of the “work” are circulating, recognising that they are unique objects with certain similarities. Along these same lines, Kevin Collins has cannily suggested that we should perhaps refer to our legal regime of exclusivity as “type rights” rather than intellectual property: the law grants rights over objects of a certain class or type, that is, having similar material affordances. Adopting this stance frees us from having to trace the trajectory of the statutory work, or its originality, or the means or circumstances of its fixation. We need not worry whether an object was translated through space in order to trigger the exclusive right of distribution, or whether that movement may be subject to the first-sale doctrine. Instead we can focus on the disposition of the objects according to the rights granted over that particular class of objects. Second, new materialism invites us to push past critiques of copyright a step further. Historical baggage and doctrinal peculiarities of the copyright regime have not gone unnoticed. A number of critics have noted that copyright, from its roots to its present formulation, assumes a solitary genius who generates creative works ex nihilo, and thus assumes sole and despotic entitlement of such creations.34 This postmodern critique denounces the fictional impracticality of this romantic formulation of creativity, emphasising that in fact **authors exist within particular social discourses,** that the work of an author is never wholly original, drawing from myriad cultural sources, and that the meaning and value of a copyrighted work are at least in part interpretive acts of the reader.35 That being the case, many of the rights and doctrinal structures based upon authorship come into question. I have observed elsewhere that this type of copyright doctrine is fundamentally dependent on a form of mind/body dualism.36 A similar, related, and familiar dualism built into the doctrine is one of nature and culture. Original expression, which is to say copyrightable expression, is that which purportedly originates with the author, and is not derived from outside sources. Factual statements, for example, are said not to be copyrightable because they originate in the causal order of the universe, not from the genius of the autonomous author, who is assumed to stand outside the causal order of the universe. The critique of the “romantic author” has been a useful and important insight in unpacking such assumptions embedded in the notion of copyright. It disrupts one pole of the nature/culture dualism in copyright originality by interrogating whether expression can ever arise as the product of independent authorial genius. However, the critique does so by subsuming authorial doctrines within the cultural pole of the dualism; the critique rests upon the social turn in the humanities, by which the significance of artefacts is largely or wholly attributed to their regard within human society. The concept of the romantic author stems from a certain cultural and historical construction of the individual’s social role, but so for that matter does the postmodern patchwork author. Both views position the creative artefact as a product of one or the other social construct. As a reaction to an over-emphasis on social construction, new materialism counsels us to look further, taking into account not only the social significance of artefacts, but their physical attributes, which are not the product of human regard, and which ultimately arise out of the intersection of human and non-human attribution. Thus, under a new materialist approach, the notion of authorship might become further distributed beyond the network of social inputs recognised by the critique of the romantic author. New materialism has tended to emphasise the agential nature of material objects, to de-emphasise the prominence and distinction of human agents, and to explore the assemblage or collectivity of human and non-human interaction. Following this lead, authorship, and ultimately copyright, might then be defined by particularised collaborations between various agents, some of them human and some of them non-human. If matter matters, then the qualities and effects of the medium and materials engaged in the development of a creative work are as meaningful as the contributions of human agency. This recognition of material differences could play out in different ways, depending upon their interaction with other existing copyright doctrines. Copyright has traditionally excluded from its ambit material characteristics of a copyrighted work that are dictated by non-human agency, because these did not “originate” with the human author. Thus, for example, in the famous L Baitlin & Son v Snyder37 decision, the features of a metal or plastic novelty toy that are dictated by the nature of the materials employed were held not to be taken into account in considering what features of the toy constitute copyrightable expression. Material qualities are of course always present in the background, but in effect this rule excludes from consideration features of a creative artefact whenever material qualities rise to the level of noticeable qualities, intruding into the copyright expression analysis. New Materialism counsels regularly acknowledging the material qualities of an item as pervasive. Thus, following the human origination rule while implementing a new materialist approach that routinely takes material agency into account would exclude greater numbers of creative artefacts from copyright. By systematically recognising in creative artefacts the qualities and characteristics originating from non-human actors, but maintaining the exclusion of non-human attributes, more creations would be pushed outside the canon of authorship.

#### Thus, the plan: I preemptively own all intellectual work of the negative. I am patenting the AC and the NC. I did it first so it’s mine. There is a doublebind – Either you think intellectual ownership is good and we own the entirety of the NC so you vote aff, or you think preemptive ownership of the commons is bad and you vote aff because the resolution is true.

Froomkin 13 - David Froomkin, The Morningside Review, Published in Partnership with Columbia University Libraries, Columbia Undergrad Student, May 1st, 2013 “Plagiarism as Revolution, Concept as Content: Apotheosizing the Author under the Aegis of Appropriation” [https://journals.library.columbia.edu/index.php/TMR/article/view/5441] Accessed 9/29/21 SAO

“Art is either plagiarism or revolution.” —attributed to Paul Gauguin In “It’s Not Plagiarism. In the Digital Age, It’s ‘Repurposing.,’” Professor Kenneth Goldsmith writes about his course “Uncreative Writing,” which explores the concept of authorship. His students study the Internet’s impact on the proliferation of plagiarism. Goldsmith observes that “the sheer penetration and saturation of broadband . . . makes the harvesting of masses of language easy and tempting,” going on to discuss new artistic methods facilitated by the Internet that rely on appropriating previous artistic works (“It’s Not Plagiarism”). In his course, Goldsmith encourages—and even requires—his students to plagiarize. Worried about the conventional and clichéd way in which creative writing is often taught, with students told that their job as authors is to produce works of originality, Goldsmith established his course as an alternative: We retype documents and transcribe audio clips. We make small changes to Wikipedia pages (changing an “a” to “an” or inserting an extra space between words). We hold classes in chat rooms, and entire semesters are spent exclusively in Second Life. Each semester, for their final paper, I have them purchase a term paper from an online paper mill and sign their name to it . . . Students then must get up and present the paper to the class as if they wrote it themselves, defending it from attacks by the other students. What paper did they choose? Is it possible to defend something you didn’t write? Something, perhaps, you don’t agree with? Convince us. (“It’s Not Plagiarism”) By making his students express themselves in words not of their own choosing, Goldsmith forces them to confront what constitutes authorial intent. Though they copy, they engage in the significant job of arranging. Even in choosing which paper to plagiarize, his students necessarily express themselves. Moreover, as they are appropriating others’ ideas, the aesthetic value of their products must derive entirely from the method of composition. “Uncreative Writing” proposes a radical redefinition of authorship for the digital age, which would make context the new content. Indeed, it suggests that even if it is impossible to create substantively original works, art may still derive its aesthetic value from its conceptual basis. To justify his project, Goldsmith invokes the example of novelist Jonathan Lethem, whose February 2007 article in Harper’s Magazine, “The Ecstasy of Influence: A plagiarism,” epitomizes the kind of patch-written project Goldsmith extols. There is not a single new idea in Lethem’s essay; instead, it synthesizes the ideas of a great number of authors—and indeed does so without obvious attribution. As Lethem’s title points out, his entire essay is a plagiarism. Goldsmith writes, In academia, patchwriting is considered an offense equal to that of plagiarism. If Lethem had submitted this as a senior thesis or dissertation chapter, he’d be shown the door. Yet few would argue that he didn’t construct a brilliant work of art—as well as writing a pointed essay—entirely in the words of others. It’s the way in which he conceptualized and executed his writing machine—surgically choosing what to borrow, arranging those words in a skillful way—that wins us over. Lethem’s piece is a self-reflexive, demonstrative work of unoriginal genius. (“It’s Not Plagiarism”) That Lethem’s finished product succeeds stylistically is unquestionable. Despite his almost complete reliance on appropriation, Lethem manages paradoxically to create a brilliant work of art by synthesizing his influences so beautifully. As Goldsmith points out, it is the conceptually elegant method by which Lethem crafts his essay that gives it its appeal. Goldsmith characterizes copyright criticism as the centerpiece of Lethem’s argument. “Echoing the cries of free-culture advocates such as Lawrence Lessig and Cory Doctorow, [Lethem] eloquently rails against copyright law as a threat to the lifeblood of creativity,” he writes (“It’s Not Plagiarism”). Yet, Lethem does much more than simply criticize copyright. Lethem’s observation that all works of art embody their antecedents leads him to argue that copying is not only inevitable, but desirable. Many masterpieces owe their creation to artists’ inspiration by predecessors. Thus, Lethem questions the traditional conception of authorship, which rests on the assumption that creators produce works of unique inspiration (63). This assumption underpins Jane Ginsburg’s 2009 article “The Author’s Place in the Future of Copyright,” in which Ginsburg, a Columbia law professor, defends the traditional view of authorship. In stark opposition to Lethem’s critique, she views copyright as vital in protecting this tradition. “Vesting copyright in authors,” she writes, “made authorship the functional and moral center of the system” (148). Ginsburg believes that authorship is the basis of a social system of value. Lethem’s argument for copying, she suggests, is an affront to authorship. To allow anyone to plagiarize an author’s work would be to reduce its value and thus be an attack on the author. Ginsburg worries that “the advent of new technologies of creation and dissemination of works of authorship not only challenges traditional revenue models, but also calls into question whatever artistic control the author may retain over her work” (148–9). The prospect of authors losing their creative control scares her, because she equates authorship with originality and fears the demise of originality. Ginsburg criticizes advocates of a free culture who claim that copyright “somehow degrades the noble calling of disinterested creativity” (152), labeling them “techno-postmodernists.” She writes: “If the author is dead, or must be dethroned, then the reader not only lives, but reigns supreme. Readers give meaning to the texts they peruse; reading itself becomes a creative act” (151). The postmodern theory supposes that readers rather than authors give meaning to texts today in the act of reading them. This would undermine the traditional concept of authorship by devaluing the role of the author. Ginsburg views techno-postmodernism as nihilistic because it challenges her value system. Ginsburg argues that “the Internet gives concrete effect to the postmodernist theory of reader as creator, for all readers can remanipulate the text, and none can impose unilateral significance” (151). As Goldsmith points out in his article, the Internet makes appropriation easy, which Ginsburg would argue facilitates the dethroning of the author. It would be easy to label Goldsmith a techno-postmodernist and to interpret his course as an attack on authorship, yet the opposite is true. By reimagining what the author can be in the 21st century, Goldsmith defends authorship against those who would devalue it. Ginsburg might see the goal of the course as manipulating text to expose a lack of “unilateral significance,” fitting with her thesis about readers’ replacement of the author (Ginsburg 151). However, Goldsmith’s course is concerned not with the role of the reader, but of the writer. It is not a course in techno-postmodernism. The “new writing has an electronic gleam in its eye,” but “its results are distinctly analog, taking inspiration from radical modernist ideas and juicing them with 21st-century technology” (“It’s Not Plagiarism”). Indeed, Goldsmith rightly rejects the nihilistic notion that authorship is dead. He agrees with Ginsburg that this is a theory under which “individual creativity is discredited” (Ginsburg 152). Rather, Goldsmith argues that the new literature is “a writing imbued with celebration, ablaze with enthusiasm for the future, embracing this moment as one pregnant with possibility” (“It’s Not Plagiarism”). Ginsburg’s account of the techno-postmodernists does not reflect Goldsmith’s argument: he suggests that by copying, writers can create works of aesthetic value—and that this is perhaps the only source of creativity left to artists today. Goldsmith is trying not to dethrone, but to inaugurate, the author. Lethem represents better the idea behind Goldsmith’s course; indeed, his theory defends postmodernism from charges of nihilism, reinterpreting what postmodernism means in the context of authorship. Lethem examines T.S. Eliot’s preoccupation with attribution, implying that it reflects a broader social paradigm. Lethem argues that this obsession with citation “can be read as a symptom of modernism’s contamination anxiety. Taken from this angle, what exactly is postmodernism, except modernism without the anxiety?” he asks (62). Lethem suggests there is nothing nihilistic about this postmodern approach to creation. Rather, he reconciles postmodernism with a concept of authorship, suggesting that authors may still create original works of art using techniques of appropriation. Copying, Lethem says, allows authors to “make the world larger” (65). This strongly implies that he has not abandoned the possibility of creating works of originality. In light of Lethem’s claim that **appropriation reinforces authorship**, it is possible to consider Goldsmith’s course a reaction to the supposed nihilistic reductionism of Ginsburg’s techno-postmodernists. Goldsmith’s seeming willingness to concede the death of originality proves chimeric, as he ultimately suggests that copying allows his students to produce work of incredible creativity. Goldsmith observes that his students will at first invariably react with horror to his instruction that they copy. Yet, ultimately, they reconsider their objections. Goldsmith describes how “after a semester of my forcibly suppressing a student’s ‘creativity’ by making her plagiarize and transcribe, she will tell me how disappointed she was,” not because her creativity had been stifled, but “because, in fact, what we had accomplished was not uncreative at all; by not being ‘creative,’ she had produced the most creative body of work in her life” (“It’s Not Plagiarism”). Goldsmith’s seeming **dismissal of authorship is an attempt to reclaim it** in an age in which, to many, it seems impossible to create a substantively original work. Indeed, Goldsmith’s article can be interpreted as an articulation of a fundamental principle of authorship: that creation is as much about methodology as about material—and, moreover, that through plagiarism his students elevate method to material. For Goldsmith, the “trend among younger writers who take [Lethem’s] exercise one step further by boldly appropriating the work of others without citation, disposing of the artful and seamless integration of Lethem’s patchwriting,” reveals that “context is the new content” (Goldsmith 3). Modern technology has created an aesthetic sensibility that considers appropriation an essential aspect of authorship. **What matters is no longer what one says, but the mode of her saying it**. Still to Goldsmith, the postmodern writer gains authorship by creating a work of aesthetic merit. Thus, in a world in which “long-cherished notions of creativity are under attack, eroded by file-sharing, media culture, widespread sampling, and digital replication,” Goldsmith’s course “rise[s] to that challenge by employing strategies of appropriation, replication, plagiarism, piracy, sampling, plundering, as compositional methods” (“Uncreative Writing” 1). “Along the way,” he writes in his syllabus, “we’ll trace the rich history of forgery, frauds, hoaxes, avatars, and impersonations spanning the arts, with a particular emphasis on how they employ language” (1). Goldsmith’s course thus focuses on employing language to express old ideas in new ways, which he believes permits new authorship. Yet there is an ambiguity at the heart of Goldsmith’s idea. Writing of the beauty of plagiarists’ products, Goldsmith concludes that “far from being coercive or persuasive, this writing delivers emotion obliquely and unpredictably, with sentiments expressed as a result of the writing process rather than by authorial intention” (“It’s Not Plagiarism”). Goldsmith seems to distinguish between compositional method and creation, the latter alone associated with traditional views of authorship. In this, he channels postmodernist French philosopher Michel Foucault, who argues that authorship is a modern concept, sure to wither away. Foucault claims in his 1969 essay “What Is an Author?” that “the author does not precede the works; he is a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction” (Foucault 119). Thus, he argues authorship is a characteristic of, rather than requisite for, a work. Authorship matters to Foucault only because it affects the perception of a work. Foucault anticipates presciently the controversy over the disappearance of authorship. Moreover, he argues that “the author function will disappear . . . in such a manner that fiction and its polysemous texts will once again function according to another mode, but still with a system of constraint—one which will no longer be the author, but which will have to be determined or, perhaps, experienced” (119). Foucault expresses the postmodern theory that claims that authorship will be replaced by a different lens through which to interpret text. Foucault does not address Ginsburg’s concern, shared by Lethem and Goldsmith, about the demise of originality, but another idea from the same essay may better reflect the postmodern development in authorship. Foucault advances the concept of “discursivity,” a specific—and heightened—form of authorship in which creators establish not only an idea but an avenue for ensuing ideas. “Founders of discursivity,” Foucault writes, “are unique in that they are not just the authors of their own works. They have produced something else: the possibilities and the rules for the formation of other texts” (Foucault 114). He gives as his examples Freud and Marx, who pioneered fields of thought. Perhaps the new aesthetic sensibility of the digital age extends the realm of Foucauldian discursivity to include all works that are plagiarized by the “techno-postmodernists.” These works spawn methodological progeny in a parallel fashion to Marx’s and Freud’s inspiring their heirs. If Goldsmith’s methods of appropriation can indeed be considered an extension of the realm of discursivity, then the very plagiarism that Ginsburg decries as defacing an original work instead uplifts it, giving the original creator’s authorship a discursive character. Viewed this way, Goldsmith’s process could heighten authorship itself. Lethem provides perhaps the best extension of Foucault’s theory of authorship. Asking whether “our appetite for creative vitality require[s] the violence and exasperation of another avant-garde, with its wearisome killing-the-father imperatives,” Lethem suggests “we [might] be better off ratifying the ecstasy of influence—and deepening our willingness to understand the commonality and timelessness of the methods and motifs available to artists” (67). Lethem proposes to end discussions of modernism and postmodernism, and instead to embrace methods of reuse as a definitive aspect of authorship. **To do so would be to embrace the collaborative character of authorship in contemporary times.** This is exactly what Goldsmith does in “Uncreative Writing.” By employing plagiarism, Goldsmith revolutionizes the concept of authorship, which he says derives not only from the substance of a work but also from its very composition. Like Ginsburg, he maintains that authorship still lives, but he differs from her in his rejection of the limited view of authorship which she defends. Instead, sharing Lethem’s view that plagiarism allows contemporary artists to create works of originality, Goldsmith expands authorship twice: once by recognizing the significance of appropriation and again by extending Foucault’s discursivity.

#### The affirmative rejects the imperative for productivity in the academy and instead takes a detour through the strategy of the worst scenario. The upsetting force of such a fatal attitude reveals the university as the marvelously absurd outgrowth of the enlightenment that it is. The content of our strategy will never change the equation, but the reversibility of the forms of the system can accelerate them to the point of their vacuity and collapse.

Hoofd 17 - Ingrid Hoofd, Utrecht University, 2017 “Higher Education and Technological Acceleration” [https://link.springer.com/book/10.1057/978-1-137-51409-7] Accessed 8/24/19 SAO

The fundamental instability of the university via its ‘self-deconstruction’ therefore also opens up new forms of thought and imaginative opportunities, if only for now appearing as disastrous yet perhaps fortuitous ‘accidents.’ Derrida in fact hints at this, but also at the university’s elusiveness, in “Mochlos, or: the Confl ict of the Faculties,” when he claims that he “would almost call [the university] the child of an inseparable couple, metaphysics and technology” (1993, 5; emphasis mine). Almost, but never quite—here then emerges the possibility of truly subversive change—in the paradoxical gap prised open between the machinery of transparency and its exceedingly stealthy theoretical, administrative, and methodological operations. This **change** however **will** then **not be brought about by the** mere **content of the critique, but by the way it disastrously pushes acceleration to the point of systemic disintegration or implosion**. In Fatal Strategies, Baudrillard calls this the “fatal strategy” that contemporary theory must adopt: a sort of conceptual suicide attack which aims at pulling the rug out under the speed-elitist mobilisation of a host of problematic semiotic oppositions, which also will illustrate the fundamental paradox behind any attempt at structural predictions. In another one of his ‘fatal’ book-chapters titled “The Final Solution,” Baudrillard relates this intensification of the humanist obsession with dialectics, mastery, and transparency—the quest for immortality that is at the basis of technoscientific research—to destruction and the death drive through the metaphor of and actual research around cloning, which strangely resonates well with Derrida’s investigation of the tele-technological archive in Archive Fever. I read Baudrillard’s “Final Solution” at this stage also as a metaphor for the duplication (cloning) of thought into virtual spaces outside the university walls proper, without such a cloning ever succeeding to force its compulsory optimism on everyone and everything. If contemporary research seeks to make possible human cloning, argues Baudrillard, then this endeavour is equivalent to cancer: after all, cancer is simply automatic cloning, a deadly form of multiplication. It is of interest here to note that the possibility of creating an army of clones has likewise garnered much military interest, just as academia today more and more serves military ends. As the logic of cloning as automatic multiplication is typical of all current technological and humanist advancements, the exacerbation of this logic can only mean more promise and death, or perhaps even promise through death. Techno-scientific progress entails a regress into immortality, epitomised by a nostalgia typical of the current sociotechnical situation, for when we were “undivided” (2000, 6). At this point such an argument in fact problematically mirrors the apocalyptic tone of, for instance, the activist-research projects as well as of Heidegger’s arguments. But I contend that Baudrillard refers not only to the lifeless stage before humans became sexed life forms, but also makes an allusion to psychoanalytic readings of the ‘subject divided in language’ and its nostalgia for wholeness and transparent communication. The desire for immortality, like archive fever, is therefore the same as the Freudian death drive, and we ourselves ultimately become the object of our technologies of scrutiny and nostalgia. The humanist quest for total transparency of oneself and of the world to oneself that grounds the idea of the modern techno-scientific university is therefore ultimately an attempt at (self-)destruction, or in any case an attempted destruction of (one’s) radical difference that needs to run its course. The urgent political question which Bernard Stiegler, for instance, as I showed in a previous chapter, problematically avoided in Disorientation, then becomes: which selves are and will become caught up in the delusion of total self-transparency and self-justification, and which selves will be destroyed? And how may we conceive of an “ethic of intellectual inquiry or aesthetic contemplation” that “resists the imperatives of speed,” as Jon Cook likewise wonders in “The Techno-University and the Future of Knowledge” (1999, 323)? It is of particular importance to note here that the very inception of this question and its possible analysis, like the conception of the speed-elite mounted by this book, is itself again a performative repetition of the grounding myth of the university of independent truth, justice, and reason. Therefore, in carrying forward the humanist promise, this analysis is itself bound up in the intensification of the logic of acceleration and destruction, but is then also equally tenuous. This complicity of thought in the violence of acceleration itself in turn quickens the machine of the humanist promise, and can only manifest itself in the prediction of a coming apocalypse—whether it concerns a narrative of the death of thought and the university, or of a technological acceleration engendering the Freudian death drive. We academics are then simply the next target in the technological realisation of complete γνωθι σαυτον (‘know thyself’)—or so it seems. Because after all, a clone is never an exact copy, as Baudrillard very well knows; and therefore, the extent to which all the teaching and research projects discussed in this book hopefully invite alterity can thankfully not yet be thought. The work of Virilio is therefore helpful because it abandons the ‘compulsory optimism’ of standard academic rhetoric for a more fragile optimism that seeks to affirm the fundamental unknowability or sacredness that makes knowledge possible in the first place. In this sense, Virilio and Baudrillard urge us, as Derrida described it, to ‘take a more originary responsibility’ in light of the current negative fallout of the aporetic ideals of the academic institution. And as I hinted at in Chap. 1 , every form of idealism indeed eventually will be or needs to be subjected to its own critique, and perhaps eventually even needs to succumb to it. As much as the practices of these theories, centres, organisations, and left-wing academics are the outflow of a logic of increased visibility and transparency, they also render into visible form the perverse logic of ‘incorporating’ and ‘connecting’ everything and everyone, which, for instance, some of the theorists that argue for ‘bottom-up learning’ outlined as a virtue, in an exceedingly staged visual profusion of relative otherness. Since academic productivity and activism fi nd themselves wholly aligned with the perverse ideals of the university, raising its stakes would therefore not lie in the familiar recanting of ‘freedom,’ ‘empowerment,’ or ‘democracy,’ but in the reinsertion of the (inter-)subjective and ‘noisy’ element in all its teaching and research practices. This would entail an emphasis on the necessary respect for that ‘unknown quantity’ that is inherent in all meaningful learning and interaction, a newfound acknowledgement of the magical aspects of the universe as foundational for all appreciation of it. As Virilio stresses in his second chapter of The Vision Machine, “the presupposition of not-knowing and especially not-seeing … restores to every research project its fundamental context of prime ignorance” so that we “need to admit that for the human eye the essential is invisible” (1994, 23). Baudrillard echoes Virilio’s insight in “The Theorem of the Accursed Share” by emphasising that indeed “Anything that purges the accursed share signs its own death warrant” (1990, 121). Perhaps the biggest mistake in the modern founding of the university then was the denial and attempted erasure of the religious or spiritual aspect of the university, so that, instead of being a vision machine, a ‘more originary responsibility’ would consist of letting it become a ‘humility machine’ in the spirit of its pre-Enlightenment ethics? In any case, the acknowledgement of the profound tension at the basis of the university and the ways it has intensified itself to such an extent today that more and more academics are starting to become disillusioned or confused about their calling, perhaps provides us usefully with the return of that “fatalism” and “magic worldview” that especially Freire so eagerly sought to eradicate. We may therefore want to **welcome the upsetting force of such a fatal attitude** towards the ideal of ‘communication as community’ **as the true antidote**, or perhaps even the quintessential shadow, which has always secretly accompanied the university’s quest for total communication and transparency. The possibility of radicality via communication and its functionalist theories may then finally and surprisingly lie in its unexpected outcomes, both positive and negative. I will be ‘keeping the faith’ together with all these projects and academics then, since also owing to all these theories and projects, the future may be more radically open than ever before, as long as we seriously entertain the possibility that in moving beyond the attempted erasure of fatality and unknowability by the compulsorily optimistic academic performance lies the potential of that ‘more originary’ responsibility. One of the consequences of bringing back fatality and fatalism means to acknowledge that the representational ideal of scientific and philosophical theory—the fantasy that it not only must ‘describe’ reality as closely as possible, but also that such a description is possible or desirable at all— must be abandoned in favour of a speculative poetics. Likewise critical theory, which tradition this book has productively mobilised, after all falls, according to Baudrillard, in The Perfect Crime victim to the thwarted ideals of omniscience and transparent communication. As I noted in Chap. 3 , it is for this reason that Genosko in “The Drama of Theory” rightly parallels the problem of theory with the problem of political theatre, suggesting that what Baudrillard proposes is not replicating the impotent attempts of a theatre seeking to convince by way of documentary realism, but of a ‘reversed’ theatre in which “the object will have its revenge on Western metaphysics” (1994, 295). Genosko in turn helpfully refers to Baudrillard’s usage of the metaphor of the ‘crystal,’ which I concur can be read as an idealisation of the perfectly transparent object and the ideal crystalline universe seemingly represented in scientific description, but just as much as a ‘crystal ball’ into which one “gazes in order to arouse a myriad of sensations”—not the least that sensation of uncertainty as well as an ambivalence concerning the fact that one is being seduced by that object (1994, 296). William Bogard usefully points out in “Baudrillard, Time, and the End,” that seduction indeed precisely consists of “the overcoming of defences (of ‘immunity’)” (1994, 333). Baudrillard also follows this logic of a ‘revenge of the crystal’ when he stresses in an interview with Nicholas Zurbrugg in Baudrillard Live on the possibilities of a renewed theoretical radicalism, that Perhaps the only thing one can do is to destabilize and provoke the world around us**. We shouldn’t presume to produce positive solutions … one needs to make a kind of detour through the strategy of the worst scenario**. It’s not a question of ideas—there are already too many ideas! (1993, 170–171; italics in original) To conclude then, to let the auto-immune disease run its course therefore would entail firstly seeing the university, from its very inception, for the ridiculous scam that it is: a marvellously absurd outgrowth of the delusional ideals of Enlightenment humanism. However, this also means that any representational theoretical critique like this one is just as much a scam of the authority of theoretical analysis, in which possibly, as Lyotard suggested, truth and technique have collapsed into one another. So this book, by partaking in the same ideals of visibility while exposing the problem of the contemporary university to scrutiny and visibility, suggests that we **follow a strategy of ‘fatal’ consciousness-raising in order to hopefully plant the seeds of future radical events regarding academia**. An example here might be a staff and student exodus from the university’s current imperative, which would signify a notable collapse of its prime beliefs towards a more mystical thinking in the hard sciences and in the humanities. Perhaps we should simply let the university bleed to death for now. Only such an apparent ‘solution’ that seeks not solve anything at all or make any predictions, while seemingly absurd, may mean the hopedfor death of the contemporary university and its revival as a radically different entity. This book must therefore finally remain speculative and opaque, and mount this final chapter as a polemical provocation that does not seek to pre-programme what the next stage of the university should look like or which ideals need to be chanted, as doing so would itself fall prey to the problematic and ultimately managerialist claim of transparent (fore)knowledge and true emancipation. This book, in all its philosophical and analytical exposition, after all cannot even with certainty claim that it has represented the reality of the contemporary university in any kind of self-assured manner, or that it does not sneakily mix up the ‘observed pattern’ and the ‘pattern of observation.’ So is this book itself not simply just as much partaking in the delusion that the university always has been? To paraphrase Derrida once again: the university, truly, what an idea! Time perhaps to lay that cursed institution to rest for now and put down that alluring crystal ball, so that we all may rest too.

#### Productivism has hidden colonialist imperatives reversibility undermines oppression

Holliday-Karre 15 - Dr. Erin Amann Holliday-Karre, Assistant Professor of Literature at Qatar University, in the Journal Feminist Theory, March 24th, 2015 “The seduction of feminist Theory” [https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1464700114562530] Accessed 1/29/20 SAO

Jean Baudrillard has long been dismissed by feminists, particularly in the 1980s and 1990s, not only as anti-feminist but also, by implication as sexist, racist, and misogynist. Many feminists accuse Baudrillard of denying women access to the masculine realm of production by arguing that the feminine power of seduction can trump masculine ideology. Rebecca Schneider, for example argues that the timing of Baudrillard’s theory of seduction is significant because it occurred just as women and people of colour were beginning to gain access to the spheres of production: ‘Baudrillard might be read as representative of an anxiety born of women’s entry into the realms of production’ (1997: 191). This suspicion might be turned around to ask why feminists reject new theories that challenge them to rethink assumptions about ‘the realms of production’. The production model as the sole means of empowerment is at the heart of Baudrillard’s critique, not women per se.1 And while the twenty-first century ushered in a feminist revaluation of Baudrillard’s work, many still argue that the work of feminism and Baudrillard’s theory of seduction are incompatible. The claim of incongruity between feminist theory and a theory of seduction stems from a belief that feminists must rely on productive strategies, using terms such as equality and difference, to empower women. To conceptualise all feminist theory in this way misses the fact that many canonical feminist texts challenge the use of productive terminologies in discussions of their work. In her analysis of contemporary feminist theory and Baudrillard, Baudrillard’s Challenge: A Feminist Reading (2000), Victoria Grace challenges the feminist use of terms such as desire, power, identity, equality, and difference arguing that these terms perpetuate structures used to oppress and exclude women. For Grace, as for Baudrillard, **feminists should not jockey for inclusion in an inherently unjust system**, but rather challenge and work to subvert its foundations. Both Grace and Baudrillard maintain that arguing for a feminine difference, as Luce Irigaray does, perpetuates a notion calculated to keep women in a subservient position. Grace claims that: These concerns and foci of analysis and deconstruction are undeniably driven by an assumption of the inevitability of the economic (needs, production, value), the inevitability of the law (the bar that structures identity/difference, subject/object), even taking into account the attempts at deconstruction and re-writing from a position of a different ‘difference,’ and of the inevitability of power. There is no seduction here. (2000: 188) According to Grace, many feminists, including Rosi Braidotti, Donna Haraway, and Judith Butler, do not theorise the political foundations for productive ideologies thereby perpetuating their inherent binaries. For Grace, Baudrillard becomes critical for feminism to the extent that his theory of seduction provides tools to challenge and overturn the logic and supremacy of productive ideology. While **feminists** see a positive focus for their work in the logic of the **production model,** in Baudrillard’s estimation all ideology **is Eurocentric and** thus **contains hidden colonialist imperatives**.2 Grace agrees with Baudrillard that unless feminists challenge productive ideology, we risk preserving its hierarchical foundations. While Grace presents an important and timely analysis of Baudrillard and contemporary feminism, I challenge her claim that ‘there is no seduction here’. I agree that Baudrillard’s theory of seduction is crucial for feminism in that it presents a challenge to the value-laden productivist discourse that Grace finds perpetuated in contemporary feminist theory. However, I argue that the next step in assessing the possibilities of Baudrillard’s work for feminist theory is to recognise those feminists who do employ a strategy of seduction in Baudrillard’s sense of the term. Where Grace (2000: 5) finds no feminist whose standpoint comes close to that of Baudrillard, I highlight several feminists who can be read as taking precisely the position called for by both Grace and Baudrillard. By limiting her analysis to contemporary feminists, Grace obscures Baudrillard’s mention of British feminist Joan Rivie`re’s essay, ‘Womanliness as Masquerade’ (1929). Taking Baudrillard’s reference to Rivie`re into account allows for the elucidation of an historical strain of seduction in feminism that I argue can be traced from early feminists, such as Virginia Woolf, to more contemporary feminists, such as He´le`ne Cixous. Explicit references to Baudrillard’s theory are unnecessary to the recognition of seduction in feminist writing – what is required is a close attention to language. Naming Baudrillard’s theory of seduction as a new concept for feminism allows us to see its contours in feminist writing, and to reveal it as a strategy used to overturn the logic of production. Grace suggests that most feminists reject Baudrillard’s theory on the basis of the traditional definition of seduction: ‘The word ‘‘seduction’’ in the Anglo-American context, is resolutely associated with a kind of predatory male behavior bent on conquest [...] or alternatively a female sexual behavior designed to turn the male on his path toward evil and his downfall’ (2000: 140).3 However, it seems precipitous to assume with Grace that Baudrillard’s use of the term is ‘precisely in opposition to, and a process of critique of, these accepted readings’ (2000: 142). Although I agree that Baudrillard critiques its traditional literary definition, the fact that he chooses to use the term seduction situates him in the context of both literary and psychoanalytic discourses on ‘seduction’. Placing Baudrillard in conversation with Shoshana Felman can show that contemporary feminist readings of, for example, Don Juan are not so different from Baudrillard’s theory. Felman divorces seduction from terms like ‘sexual manipulation’ and ‘predatory male behavior’, situating it within a performative theory of language. For Felman, ‘Don Juan is a myth of scandal precisely to the extent that it is the myth of violation; the violation not of women but of promises to them’ (1983: 11). Locating Don Juan’s transgression not in his behaviour but in the structure of language, Felman argues that the words ‘I promise’ serve to violate the meaning attached to language. Baudrillard and Felman both argue that a cognitive (Baudrillard uses ‘productive’) view defines language as ‘an instrument of knowledge, a means of knowing reality’ (Felman, 1983: 27). But Don Juan’s seduction, says Felman, depends on the point that ‘saying for him, is in no case tantamount to knowing, but rather doing’ (1983: 27). That is, the words ‘I promise’ constitute a certain truth for the person who hears them, and also function as a performative act. When women seduced by Don Juan attribute meaning to his performative act, they err. By dismissing Baudrillard as merely critical of literary notions of seduction, Grace misses the opportunity to read Baudrillard’s definition of seduction in relation to contemporaneous feminists like Felman. Baudrillard writes, ‘To be seduced is to be turned from one’s truth. To seduce is to lead the other from his/her truth’ (1990: 81), precisely what Don Juan does. Significantly for my argument, Grace concedes that literary engagement is in some ways necessary for understanding seduction, but acknowledges that, as a sociologist, she is limited in that regard. In her notes from the chapter subheading ‘The Enjoyment of Poetics’, she writes, ‘I do not claim expertise in analyzing poetry [...] My intention is to present Baudrillard’s reflections [...] to show how language might be traversed by seduction, by the symbolic’ (2000: 200). This is a significant concession given that seduction travels over and through language. She can, however, easily identify a productive reading: A psychoanalytic ‘reading’ will lend itself [ ... ] to the articulation or manifestation of the hidden meaning, silenced through each utterance. The assertion of meaning also has the function of silencing, within this framework, of repressing the unsaid, establishing a disjuncture through what is said and what is meant. (Grace, 2000: 179) Grace’s assertion that ‘there is no seduction here’ is, I argue, the result of a productive, analytic, and interpretive reading for meaning that functions (unintentionally) to repress feminism’s seductive potential. Thus both Grace and Baudrillard employ the same practice of productive reading, with regard to feminist writing, that they accuse feminism of perpetuating. Reading feminist writing as literary writing, and thereby paying close attention to language, enables us to better understand the seductive potential of feminism. In order to recognise feminist writing as seductive, we must emphasise where and when seduction occurs in feminist discourse. I do not aspire to set up a hierarchy in which seductive discourse is good and productive discourse bad; rather, I want to show the ways in which seduction appears in and through productive discourse so that feminists can understand seduction as a tool used to challenge the truth claims of productive discourse. While we cannot codify seduction as a practice – to do so would be to relegate it to the productive realm – we can expose the ways in which systems of production contain their own foil in and through seduction. Awareness of how productive ideologies structure social systems and recycle oppressive value systems can decrease blind advocacy of productive language. Although Baudrillard does not describe what a seductive reading practice would look like, in his analysis language is seductive (and revolutionary) to the extent that it employs ‘reversible speech’ (speech without the proclamation of truth), is not annexed by linguistic structures (language distributed as value through meaning and signification), and cannot be reduced to a unified argument. Seductive discourse is aware of the ideological laws regarding the signification of language, how words come to have meaning, and works to expose the artifice behind such signification, by using non-sense signifiers – words, images, and concepts emptied of significance and value. When describing the ways in which seduction functions in culture, Baudrillard turns to literary texts: in one example, he provides a reading of a fairy tale in which a boy finds a fairy and asks her to grant him wishes. The fairy agrees on the condition that the boy ‘must never think of the color red in the fox’s tail’ (Baudrillard, 1990: 74). The boy replies, ‘is that all?’ (Baudrillard, 1990: 74). What happens next is what is, perhaps, most expected. The boy begins to see the colour red in the fox’s tail everywhere he goes. Baudrillard writes that ‘[h]e becomes obsessed with this absurd, insignificant, but tenacious image, augmented by the spite that comes from not being able to rid himself of it. Not only do the fairy’s promises not come true, but he loses his taste for life’ (1990: 74). For Baudrillard, this story demonstrates the power of any signifier that is insignificant. The fairy is aware of the fact that the boy’s mind will be attracted to a place devoid of significant meaning. But, being unaware of the insignificance of the colour red in the fox’s tail, the child is not on his guard. Had the fairy asked the boy not to engage in something serious or of significance, the boy would be more likely to succeed. According to the theory of seduction, it is meaningless signs that consume us much like the door marked ‘this door leads to nowhere’ (Baudrillard, 1990: 74). You feel compelled to open it just to see. What is crucial here is Baudrillard’s analysis. For one could argue that the colour red in the fox’s tail does have meaning in that the colour red contains both a signifier, red, and a signified, the colour that comes to mind. The colour red becomes emptied of meaning only in relation to the way Baudrillard reads the story. He urges the reader to recognise that absurd and artificial signs rule the world to a greater degree than logical ones because of social and political imperatives to create significant meaning. To understand feminist writing as seductive would involve a reading strategy in which feminist theory is recognised as breaking down the coded system of production through the dissemination of meaning and value. A seductive reading practice highlights the presence of signs without referents, eclipsed signs, absurd and nonsensical signs in feminist writing, not to provide meaning for these signs but to explore the ways in which empty signs function in the text to reverse ‘irreversible’, or fixed, ideologies. I argue that where feminism empties words and gestures of meaning, as I show Woolf does with the mulberry tree in Three Guineas (1938), the reader is seduced. I further argue that when feminism employs neither productive value nor opposition to that value, as Rivie`re does with the masquerade, seduction comes into play. Seduction is not an either/or proposition but spaces in-between. For Baudrillard, seduction ‘takes from discourse its sense and turns it from its truth’ (1990: 55). I would argue that much **feminist thought is dedicated to this very task** and here I expose the textual politics whereby feminism works as seduction, what Grace defines as ‘that movement that removes from the realm of the visible, that vaporizes identity, and is marked by ambivalence’ (2000: 141). I believe that feminists have posed a radical challenge to productive ideology. Baudrillard provides a discourse that helps recognise seduction in feminist writing. I argue that, in order to discover similarities between Baudrillard’s theory of seduction and the work of feminism, productive reading practices must be abandoned.

#### The role of the ballot is to vote for the debater with the best strategy to rupture the intellectual property simulation in medicine.

#### Prefer

#### [1] Revolutionary Skills: The debate should be evaluated through the flow but every argument must stop bolstering the reserve labor force of corporate society

Hoofd 07 - Ingrid M. Hoofd, National University of Singapore, December 2007 “The Neoliberal Consolidation of Play and Speed: Ethical Issues in Serious Gaming” in “CRITICAL LITERACY: Theories and Practices Volume 1: 2” p. 6-14, 2007 [http://www.criticalliteracyjournal.org/cljournalissue2volume1.pdf] KZaidi Recut 9/27/21 SAO

Serious games are a fascinating next stage in the continuous exploitation of digital media technologies over the last decades for training, learning, and education. As formal education and training always involves the transmission and repetition of certain culturally and socially specific sets of skills and moral values, it would be of paramount importance to ensure that developments within the serious gaming industry are in step with the effects of the good intentions of nurturing people within a social framework that emphasises a fair, culturally diverse, and blooming society. In this light, it is interesting that from the very advent of the information society, digital technologies have been depicted as central to the development of a more just and equal society by harbouring the promise of bridging gaps between classes, races, and genders locally as well as globally. Driven by the vision of this utopian potential of new technologies, the education industry and larger policy organisations have been exploring the pedagogical possibilities of these technologies both in- and outside the traditional classroom for the last twenty-five years. Indeed, the implementation of increasingly more sophisticated and technologically mediated methods and tools for learning and education, takes as its starting point the techno-utopian assumption that (new) interactive technologies themselves are the primary harbingers of a fair and blooming society through facilitating (student) empowerment. This paper takes issue with this widespread techno-utopian perspective by seeking to shed light on the larger ethical implications of serious gaming. It will do so through foregrounding the relationship between global injustices, and the aesthetic properties and discourses of serious gaming. So while reframing serious games themselves in a new ethical perspective constitutes the main objective of this paper, it is equally important to situate serious games within a larger political discourse on the teaching of new skills. Firstly then, policy papers and academic studies on serious games all display an assumption of the inherent neutrality of gaming technologies, as if these technologies were mere tools equally suitable for all. What also becomes apparent in the language used in these studies and proposals, is how this instrumentalist vision of gaming technologies for learning goes hand in hand with a particular neo-liberal assumption of what constitutes a fit individual, and by extension of what the hallmarks of a ‘healthy’ society may be. For instance, in the European Union study “Serious Gaming – a fundamental building block to drive the knowledge work society” by Manuel Oliveira on the merits of serious games for education, justification runs along the lines of gaming ‘encouraging risk-taking and a winning attitude’ and creating a ‘performance-oriented individual.’ Similarly, Michael Guerena from the US Orange County Department of Education proposes in one of the Department’s web-casts that serious games instil “twenty-first century skills” like risk-taking, adaptability, self-direction, interactive communication, and ‘planning and managing for results’ in the students through the “channelling of fun.” Likewise, the UK-based Entertainment and Leisure Software Publishers Association last year published their white paper Unlimited learning - Computer and video games in the learning landscape, in which they argue that serious games will “create an engaged, knowledgeable, critical and enthusiastic citizenry” whose “work practices will be geared towards networked communication and distributed collaboration” (49). Concerns around the ethical implications of serious games regarding their entanglements with larger social (gendered, classed, and raced) inequalities have until now largely been coined in terms of game content or representation. In a recent case in Singapore, the government’s proposition of using the RPG Granado Espada in secondary school history classes was followed by an outcry from various local academics condemning the stereotypical characters and simplistic representation of medieval Europe in the game. Likewise, various authors have critiqued current serious games not only because of simplistic representation of characters and surroundings, but especially because simulations generally tend to oversimplify complex social problems and situations. Gibson, Aldrich, and Prensky’s Games and Simulations in Online Learning (vi - xiv) for instance discuss these demerits of serious games. While such a critical analysis of how game content contributes to the reproduction of dominant discourses is definitely helpful, I would argue that the aesthetics of serious games involve much more than mere content. Instead, this paper will argue that the formal quest for instantaneity that research around digital media has displayed through the development of interactive technologies for education is already itself by no means a neutral affair. This is because the discourses that inform this quest and that accompany this search for instantaneity arguably enforce the hegemony of a militaristic, masculinist, humanist, and of what I will call a ‘speed-elitist’ individual. Moreover, I suggest that the propensity of current games to have sexist or racist content, is merely symptomatic of gaming technology’s larger problematic in terms of the aesthetic of instantaneity. In short, (serious) computer games have become archives of the discursive and actual violence carried out in the name of the utopia of technological progress and instantaneity under neo-liberal globalisation. This archival function is possible exactly because cybernetic technologies promise the containment and control of such supposedly accidental violence, while in fact exacerbating these forms of violence. This leads me to conclude that such violence is in fact structural to new serious gaming technologies, rather than accidental. I will elaborate this hypothesis by looking at various theorists who seek to understand this structural imperative of new technologies, and their relationship to the neo-liberalisation of learning and education. In turn, I will look at how this problematic structural logic informs the two popular serious games Real Lives and Global Warming Interactive. Secondly, the advent of serious gaming interestingly runs parallel with the contemporary dissemination and virtualisation of traditional learning institutions into cyberspace. While the existence of learning tools in other areas of society besides actual learning institutions has been a fact since the advent of schools, the shift of methods of learning into online and digital tools is symptomatic of the decentralisation of power from ‘old’ educational institutions and its usurpation into instantaneous neo-liberal modes of production. I am summarising the work of Bill Readings on the university here, because it sheds light on the shift in education tout court towards virtualisation, and its relationship to the ‘new hegemony of instantaneity.’ In The University in Ruins, Readings argues that the shift from the state-run university of reason and culture to the present-day global knowledge enterprise must mean that the centre of power in effect has shifted elsewhere. More important, says Readings, is that the function of the new ‘university of excellence,’ one that successfully transforms it into yet another trans-national corporation, relies on the fantasy that the university is still that transcendental university of culture in service of the state and its citizens. So the invocation of the fantasy of an ‘originary’ university of reason and progress, that produces unbiased knowledge for the good of all, facilitates the doubling of the production of information into other spaces outside the university walls proper. While Readings surely discusses only higher education institutions in The University in Ruins, I would argue that the logic of a shifting centre of power from the state into the technocratic networks and nodes of speed operates quite similarly in the case of primary, secondary, and other types of formal education. Indeed, the current virtualisation of learning and the emphasis on lifelong learning marks a dispersal of traditional learning institutions into online spaces. This dispersal works increasingly in service of the ‘speed-elite’ rather than simply in service of the nation-state. The heralding of serious games for education can therefore be read as a symptom of the intensified reach of the imperatives of neo-liberal globalisation, in which consumption enters the lives of locally bound as well as more mobile cosmopolitan citizens of all ages through harping on the technological possibility of the confusion of production and play. Through the imperative of play then, production increasingly and diffusely colonises all niche times and -spaces of neo-liberal society. In other words, (the emphasis on) play allows not only a potential increase in production and consumption through the citizen-consumer after her or his formal education of ‘skills’, but starkly intensifies flows of production and consumption already at the very moment of learning. While such an integration of play and production is generally understood within the framework of the neo-liberal demand for the circulation of pleasure, it is useful here to widen the scope from understanding the learner as a mere consumer of pleasure into the larger set of problematic interpellations that marks subjugation in contemporary society. Intriguingly, a host of research has emerged over the past years pointing towards the intricate relationship between subjugation, military research objectives, and videogame development. Such research suggests an intimate connection between the C3I logic and humanist militaristic utopias of transcendence, which incriminates interactive technologies as inherently favouring culturally particular notions of personhood. In the case of computer- and video-games for entertainment, researchers have argued that the aesthetic properties of gaming technologies give rise to so-called ‘militarised masculinity.’ In “Designing Militarized Masculinity,” Stephen Kline, Nick DyerWitheford, and Greig de Peuter argue for instance that interactive games open up very specific subject positions that “mobilize fantasies of instrumental domination” (255). This specific mobilisation that video-games invoke, is not only due to the remediation of violent television- and film- content, but also due to the intimate connection between gaming- and military industries which grant these technologies their particular cybernetic aesthetic properties (see also Herz 1997). This element of militarisation partly informs my concept of ‘speed-elitism.’ I extrapolate the idea of ‘speed-elitism’ largely from the works of John Armitage on the discursive and technocratic machinery underlying current neo-liberal capitalism. In “Dromoeconomics: Towards a Political Economy of Speed,” Armitage and Phil Graham suggest that due to the capitalist need for the production of excess, there is a strong relationship between the forces of exchange and production, and the logic of speed. In line with Virilio’s argument in Speed and Politics, they argue that various formerly the less connected social areas of war, communication, entertainment, and trade, are now intimately though obliquely connected. This is because all these forces mutually enforce one another through the technological usurpation and control of space (and territory), and through the compression and regulation of time. Eventually, Armitage and Graham suggest that “circulation has become an essential process of capitalism, an end in itself” (118) and therefore any form of cultural production increasingly finds itself tied-up in this logic. So neo-liberal capitalism is a system within which the most intimate and fundamental aspects of human social life – in particular, forms of communication and play – get to be formally subsumed under capital. In “Resisting the Neoliberal Discourse of Technology,” Armitage elaborates on this theme of circulation by pointing out that the current mode of late-capitalism relies on the continuous extension and validation of the infrastructure and the neutral or optimistic discourses of the new information technologies. Discourses that typically get repeated – like in the policy papers – in favour of the emerging speed-elite are those of connection, empowerment and progress, which often go hand in hand with the celebration of highly mediated spaces for action and communication. Such discourses however suppress the violent colonial and patriarchal history of those technological spaces and the subsequent unevenness brought about by and occurring within these spaces. I would claim that Armitage’s assessment of accelerated circulation, and the way new technologies make play complicit in the techno-utopian endeavour of speed, is crucial for understanding the larger ethical issues surrounding serious games. It is helpful at this point to look at Paul Virilio’s and Jacques Derrida’s work because this helps us understand the complicity of the aesthetics of interactive and visually oriented gaming technologies in speed-elitism. In “Cyberwar, God, and Television,” Paul Virilio talks about the simulation industry’s function of “exposing [one] to the accident in order not to be exposed to it” (322). What is according to him ‘accidented’ through the virtualisation of accidents and violence, for instance in video-games, is reality itself. This ‘accident of reality’ that virtuality brings about, argues Virilio, is due to the fact that simulation technologies fragment space through their property of instantaneous connection with previously far-away places. The hallmark of this fragmentation is therefore that it brings about an intensification of forms of in- and exclusion through actual disconnection. Eventually, there will be “two realities: the actual and the virtual” (323), and I would claim that consequently the privileged speed-elite will be able to live in the illusion of engaging with social reality that the virtual grants, at the cost of the (s)lower classes who will suffer the social and ecological effects of the accidents of virtualisation. The illusion of mastery for Virilio consists in the sense of the “incorporation of the world within oneself” that “real time technologies permit” (328) due to their militaristic compulsion that seeks to “reduce the world to the point where one could possess it” (329). I maintain that these statements spell out exactly the function and logic of serious gaming.

#### [2] Cede the Political: Intellectual property is an abstraction. Only Interdisciplinary analysis can explain medicinal patent structures

McGillivray 17 - James McGillivray, Osgoode Hall Law School of York University PhD Dissertations, January 17th, 2017 “'Pyrates' of the Lyceum: Big Pharma, Patents, and Academic Freedom in Neoliberal Times” [https://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1030&context=phd] Accessed 9/29/21 SAO

Intellectual property is an abstraction (as are all rights) and it is intangible by definition.239 Yet, it begs the question what is intellectual property? As a concept and in a post-industrial and post-modern world, intellectual property and its symbolic constituents240 appear to slip the gravitational pull of the material world – of so-called “real” property – and exists as a reflection in a mirror241 or, put differently, as a simulacrum. 242 Hence, from the outset, it would appear that a historical materialist and a critical political economy approach to analysing intellectual property is doomed to failure. Fortunately, for our purposes, the story is far more interesting. Intellectual property is a commodity and an interdisciplinary approach to political economy possesses the possibility to thoroughly interrogate contemporary intellectual property regimes; and, subsequently, their relationship to higher education. Thus, through political economy we can achieve a better understanding of the structure and system that governs the production of knowledge in the discourse(s) and causerie(s) of intellectual property in late-capitalist society and their impact on the university and academic freedom. Following Michel Foucault’s use of the term discourse, 243 Edward Saïd held that “discourse” was a useful concept to analyse and unpack the questionable “science” of “orientalism.”244 For Saïd, by examining the discourse of colonialism is to note the inherit ideological process that was used to justify, legitimate, spread, and violently impose European colonialism and “a history of ‘governmentality’”245 on “backward” countries – or impose a trustworthiness for or upon the “uncivilised” world.246 These are countries that are currently referred to in ‘politically correct’ “newspeak” 247 as developing countries. According to the United Nation’s Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use, “The designations ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgement about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process.”248 Yet, whether it wants to or not, it does express a judgement. Moreover, similar to the discourse on colonialism, the discourse on intellectual property is situated in the overall ‘development language’ and a teleologically driven European modernising process. ‘Development’ theorist, Eduardo Galeano, reminds us to be cautious in the use of terms like ‘progress’ and ‘development.’ As Galeano wryly observed, the purported ethically neutral language of development models fail to realise that “[u]nderdevelopment isn’t a stage of development, but its consequence….”249 For economist Ha-Joon Chang, neoliberal development advocates laconically fail to understand that “developing” countries that show reluctance to modernise under neoliberal economic recipes and solutions to underdevelopment are exercising democratic freedom. Underdeveloped countries are not merely demonstrating “stupidity in… not accepting such… tried and tested recipe[s] for development”250 but are clearly demonstrating worldly intelligence and resistance to such folly. 251 Put differently, both “right” and “left” neoliberalists modernisers see the market model as the only solution to achieve economic progress and modernisation. Indeed, the suggestion is that economic progress and modernisation can only be integrated through a western development model and economic system: one that incorporates not only the West’s technology but incorporates and embodies its central ideas and principles surrounding progress, the rule of law, and ownership. According to Chang, both “right” and “left” neoliberalists provide different sides of the same coin never noticing that it is possible that the coin being offered in the exchange that is flawed. 252 That is, that the currency and debt of the modernising promises offered by the West to the world from colonialism, neo-colonialism, industrialisation, private property to intellectual property may be counterfeit; but, as long as it is believed in, it has social credit. 253 3.1.4 Intellectual Property as a Discourse Foucault’s use of the term “discourse” would not be out of place to use in our discussion of intellectual property and as a strategy to understand the ‘propertisation,’ commodification, ownership and protection of ideas.254 Similar to the discourse of colonialism, intellectual property as a ‘discourse’ is used to construct, justify and legitimate further expansion of intellectual property’s commodity form and its application. The discourse of colonialism can be a useful comparator in trying to understand and discuss the ever-expansive growth of intellectual property. In general, the discourse of colonisation helps to frame, conceptualise and understand the propertising and commodifying discourses of “progress” and “innovation” inherent in intellectual property claims. As an analogy and to paraphrase Saïd: “Without examining… [intellectual property] as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce – [intellectual property]” 255 and the power required to construct intellectual property as a commodity and system and impose it on the world. 3.1.5 Corporate Influence, Property Interests and Academic Freedom The freedom to seek truth is always tenuous.256 At the beginning of the 21st century, Canadian higher education has been periodically punctuated by complaints and allegations as to how corporate influence has set the terms and conditions as to the conduct of academic inquiry and academic freedom. 257 As much as this may appear novel to some observers, it is part of a larger and older debate as to the status of education in Anglo-American institutions of higher learning.258 Perhaps one of the most notable American educational critics, Thorstein Veblen, in Higher Learning in America, 259 asked the prescient question as to whether higher education should serve private gain or, in the first and last instance, the public good? Veblen found that the threat to the academy was that “the ideals of scholarship are yielding ground, in an uncertain and varying degree before the pressure of business-like exigencies.” 260 At the tail end of the First World War, Veblen’s concerns as to intellectual autonomy, academic freedom and corporate influence on universities fell mostly on deaf ears – or perhaps only on those afflicted with selective hearing. Business interests have historically dogged the operation of the modern university (in Canada it was, initially, the business of religion). Stanley Aronowitz suggests that in America: Veblen went so far as to argue that since the Morrell Act in 1863 by which Congress for the first time committed the Federal government to support public higher education, primarily with land grants, the business of the university was to provide knowledge and a trained cadre for private industry, especially science and technology of agricultural production. The burden of his claim is that the concept of an autonomous university, revered since the Enlightenment, remained an ideal that was far from the existing situation.261 To merely begin and confine the limits of this study to the popular theoretical justifications as to intellectual property and the university would be disingenuous. Intellectual property law is a process. Indeed, labouring on and over issues as to jurisdiction, refining statutory definitions and developing **critiques of intellectual property** and its impact on higher education, **are abundant, but provide little systemic analysis of the underlying culture of capitalism promoting it**. In order to theorise intellectual property, and, ultimately, the patent system’s impact on higher education, one needs to avoid the extremes that attach to liberal conceptions of ownership, property, and the ownership of knowledge. 3.1.6 Intellectual Property as a Social Relationship Intellectual property must be understood in its historic sense: its disparate and uneven historical presence and development is the raw material of what comprises human relationships in – and not outside – history. This notion of intellectual property entails historical relationships and communities. As such, it evades the scientific classification of “category” or “structure” that is analytically clear as “self-evident” in law. What is more, it radically questions the objective “facts” that black-letter law actively promotes and (self)reflexively deploys to hermetically seal itself off from self-critical positions: and, thus, from serious scrutiny. Our relationship with intellectual property ought to be a lingua franca whose fluency tends or attempts to evade black-letter legal analysis – who owns what in a capitalist economy – and be democratic in the broadest public policy sense. In terms of definitions or ownership, it ought to be clear that black-letter historical analysis resolves little and when “we attempt to stop it dead at any given moment… [we] anatomise its structure”: 262 put differently, we fail to keep in mind that the concept of property is very much the product of living beings and their relationships. To paraphrase the British historian E.P. Thompson, “[i]f we remember that… [intellectual property] is a relationship, and not a thing, we can not think in this way.”263 **Understanding property and intellectual property as relational** and as a human relationship **allows us to approach the conundrum of pharmaceutical patents in** university research **in a novel way and**/or at least test its theoretical weakness in a constructive and **critical manner**. 3.2 Constitutive Discourse, Liberalism(s) and Intellectual Property 3.2.1 Liberalism, Ideology and Discourse Liberalism(s),264 as in other various forms of political discourse and ideology, bring(s) powerful assumptions and concretises sets of social relations that operate to define the scope of property and the operation of ownership. Hence, most general discussions as to the economic dimensions of how late-capitalism structures the growth of intellectual property, and its accompanying scientific and technological revolutions, fail to thoroughly question is the deterministic and one-sided optics being constructed in universities – what some critics perhaps un-ironically refer to as “academic myopia.” 265 Commodification has a price. Commodifying academic research has transformed and continues to transform our culture and, of course, academic culture. It appears or attempts to appear as a natural outgrowth of a market society; but, as we know, appearances can be deceiving. This naturalisation of intellectual property by capital marks much of the popular and some or much of the informed academic literature on intellectual property.266 However, this view represents a failure and marginalisation of a critical perspective on modernity and fails to question our current system of intellectual ownership. It almost effortlessly and implicitly incorporates the ever-expanding propertisation of the world as inevitable and natural. Arguments around “liberalism” and neoliberalism generally ignore – or appear ambivalent to – intellectual property’s importance in the development of the political economy in the “West.” Critical intellectual property concerns are generally marginalised in much mainstream ‘globalisation literature.’ Yet, intellectual property frequently appears in global discussions surrounding international trade agreements in neutral or positive terms. The consequences of the constitutive technologies that flow from intellectual property seldom question the domination exerted by the constitutive framing of intellectual property regimes.

#### {optional} [3] Policymaking Skills: Policy making knowledge doesn’t change policy

Gilens and Page 14 - Martin Gilens, Professor of Politics at Princeton University, and Benjamin Page, Gordon S. Fulcher Professor of Decision Making at Northwestern University, Perspectives on Politics, Volume 12, Issue 3 , pp. 564 – 581, September 2014 “Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens” [https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/testing-theories-of-american-politics-elites-interest-groups-and-average-citizens/62327F513959D0A304D4893B382B992B] Accessed 9/30/21 SAO

Each of our four theoretical traditions (Majoritarian Electoral Democracy, Economic-Elite Domination, Majoritarian Interest-Group Pluralism, and Biased Pluralism) emphasizes different sets of actors as critical in determining U.S. policy outcomes, and each tradition has engendered a large empirical literature that seems to show a particular set of actors to be highly influential. Yet nearly all the empirical evidence has been essentially bivariate. Until very recently it has not been possible to test these theories against each other in a systematic, quantitative fashion. By directly pitting the predictions of ideal-type theories against each other within a single statistical model (using a unique data set that includes imperfect but useful measures of the key independent variables for nearly two thousand policy issues), we have been able to produce some striking findings. One is the nearly total failure of “median voter” and other Majoritarian Electoral Democracy theories. When the preferences of economic elites and the stands of organized interest groups are controlled for, **the preferences of the average American appear to have only a minuscule, near-zero, statistically non-significant impact upon public policy.** The failure of theories of Majoritarian Electoral Democracy is all the more striking because it goes against the likely effects of the limitations of our data. The preferences of ordinary citizens were measured more directly than our other independent variables, yet they are estimated to have the least effect. Nor do organized interest groups substitute for direct citizen influence, by embodying citizens’ will and ensuring that their wishes prevail in the fashion postulated by theories of Majoritarian Pluralism. Interest groups do have substantial independent impacts on policy, and a few groups (particularly labor unions) represent average citizens’ views reasonably well. But the interest-group system as a whole does not. Overall, net interest-group alignments are not significantly related to the preferences of average citizens. The net alignments of the most influential, business-oriented groups are negatively related to the average citizen’s wishes. So existing interest groups do not serve effectively as transmission belts for the wishes of the populace as a whole. “Potential groups” do not take up the slack, either, since average citizens’ preferences have little or no independent impact on policy after existing groups’ stands are controlled for. Furthermore, the preferences of economic elites (as measured by our proxy, the preferences of “affluent” citizens) have far more independent impact upon policy change than the preferences of average citizens do. To be sure, this does not mean that ordinary citizens always lose out; they fairly often get the policies they favor, but only because those policies happen also to be preferred by the economically-elite citizens who wield the actual influence. Of course our findings speak most directly to the “first face” of power: the ability of actors to shape policy outcomes on contested issues. But they also reflect—to some degree, at least—the “second face” of power: the ability to shape the agenda of issues that policy makers consider. The set of policy alternatives that we analyze is considerably broader than the set discussed seriously by policy makers or brought to a vote in Congress, and our alternatives are (on average) more popular among the general public than among interest groups. Thus the fate of these policies can reflect policy makers’ refusing to consider them rather than considering but rejecting them. (From our data we cannot distinguish between the two.) Our results speak less clearly to the “third face” of power: the ability of elites to shape the public’s preferences. 49 We know that interest groups and policy makers themselves often devote considerable effort to shaping opinion. If they are successful, this might help explain the high correlation we find between elite and mass preferences. But it cannot have greatly inflated our estimate of average citizens’ influence on policy making, which is near zero. What do our findings say about democracy in America? They certainly constitute troubling news for advocates of “populistic” democracy, who want governments to respond primarily or exclusively to the policy preferences of their citizens. In the United States, our findings indicate, the majority does not rule—at least not in the causal sense of actually determining policy outcomes. When a majority of citizens disagrees with economic elites or with organized interests, they generally lose. Moreover, **because of the strong status quo bias built into the U.S. political system, even when fairly large majorities of Americans favor policy change, they generally do not get it**. A possible objection to populistic democracy is that average citizens are inattentive to politics and ignorant about public policy; why should we worry if their poorly-informed preferences do not influence policy making? Perhaps economic elites and interest-group leaders enjoy greater policy expertise than the average citizen does. Perhaps they know better which policies will benefit everyone, and perhaps they seek the common good, rather than selfish ends, when deciding which policies to support. But we tend to doubt it. We believe instead that—collectively—ordinary citizens generally know their own values and interests pretty well, and that their expressed policy preferences are worthy of respect. 50 Moreover, we are not so sure about the informational advantages of elites. Yes, detailed policy knowledge tends to rise with income and status. Surely wealthy Americans and corporate executives tend to know a lot about tax and regulatory policies that directly affect them. But how much do they know about the human impact of Social Security, Medicare, food stamps, or unemployment insurance, none of which is likely to be crucial to their own well-being? Most important, **we see no reason to think that informational expertise is always accompanied by an inclination to transcend one's own interests** or a determination to work for the common good. All in all, we believe that the public is likely to be a more certain guardian of its own interests than any feasible alternative. Leaving aside the difficult issue of divergent interests and motives, we would urge that the superior wisdom of economic elites or organized interest groups should not simply be assumed. It should be put to empirical test. New empirical research will be needed to pin down precisely who knows how much, and what, about which public policies. Our findings also point toward the need to learn more about exactly which economic elites (the “merely affluent”? the top 1 percent? the top one-tenth of 1 percent?) have how much impact upon public policy, and to what ends they wield their influence. Similar questions arise about the precise extent of influence of particular sets of organized interest groups. And we need to know more about the policy preferences and the political influence of various actors not considered here, including political party activists, government officials, and other non-economic elites. We hope that our work will encourage further exploration of these issues. Despite the seemingly strong empirical support in previous studies for theories of majoritarian democracy, our analyses suggest that majorities of the American public actually have little influence over the policies our government adopts. Americans do enjoy many features central to democratic governance, such as regular elections, freedom of speech and association, and a widespread (if still contested) franchise. But we believe that if policymaking is dominated by powerful business organizations and a small number of affluent Americans, then America’s claims to being a democratic society are seriously threatened.

#### And: Theory is violent and should be rejected.

#### [1] Notions of fairness in agonistic games are hopelessly vague and ideologically reinforce conquest

Lee 17 - Jonathan Rey Lee, Analog Game Studies, March 20th, 2017 “CAPITALISM AND UNFAIRNESS IN CATAN: OIL SPRINGS” [http://analoggamestudies.org/2017/03/capitalism-and-unfairness-in-catan-oil-springs/] Accessed 9/14/20 SAO

Before the first turn was over, I knew I had won—a circumstance typically only achievable through overwhelming skill, prognostication, or cheating. In this case, however, the game itself gave me an insurmountable advantage via my starting position. It’s tempting to label this as poor game design1 since it certainly violates the principle of fairness almost universally assumed in competitive gaming. Yet in a world where the myth of a ‘level playing field’ obscures and authorizes ongoing social inequalities, problematizing the notion of ‘fairness’ in gameplay may provide unique insight into the ‘fairness’ of capitalist culture. This insight is possible because contemporary games are cultural phenomena that have also become media phenomena. Games, that is, need not merely reflect culture, but have critical potential for reflecting on culture. The following reflections work toward developing such a critical paradigm by showing how the Oil Springs scenario for The Settlers of Catan plays out ethical dilemmas raised by the emergent and systemic inequalities generated by capitalist systems. In order to analyze these inequalities, this paper first explores game balance as the interplay between emergent inequality (how games determine winners and losers through the inputs of skill and chance) and systemic inequality (how an asymmetrical game state may privilege certain players).2 This paper then analyzes how the Oil Springs scenario for Catan links resource generation to land ownership, the runaway leader problem to the tendency of capital to accrue capital, and industrialization to market destabilization and ecological catastrophe. Finally, I reflect on the experience of enacting inequality within an unbalanced game system. Throughout, I suggest that while competitive games are typically designed to produce emergent inequality from within a level playing field (systemic equality), the rules that govern such emergent inequality are systemic in ways that allow for critically engaging systemic inequality. Fair and Balanced While not all games are competitive,3 the history of games is thoroughly intertwined with agon (or ‘**contestation’) as an organizing principle of Western culture**. According to French sociologist Roger Caillois, agonistic games play out agonistic culture “like a combat in which equality of chances is artificially created, in order that adversaries should confront each other under ideal conditions, susceptible of giving precise and incontestable value to the winner’s triumph.”4 With mathematical precision, agonistic games create balanced contests that reflect the ideal of agonistic culture: a perfectly level playing field that produces a genuine meritocracy. Yet, even while reflecting this agonistic ideal, the complicated balancing act performed by actual games demonstrates the limits of this ideal. Recognizing that fairness is problematic even within the carefully-controlled medium of games should also call into question the very possibility of a level playing field in arenas as complex as global capitalism. Fairness, like beauty, is left to the eye of the beholder. What standards determine which is most fair: that everyone gets the same amount of pie (equality), that everyone gets pie according to their need for pie (equity),5 or that everyone gets pie in proportion to how much money or labor they invested in the pie (meritocracy)? There are similarly divergent ways of considering fairness in games. Caillois is adamant about the fundamentality of fairness, arguing that games of both skill and chance (agon and alea) “require absolute equity, an equality of mathematical chances of most absolute precision. Admirably precise rules, meticulous measures, and scientific calculations are evident.”6 Taken together, however, skill and chance presuppose contradictory paradigms of equality, making it difficult to determine what counts as fair for games that incorporate both (as most contemporary tabletop games do). Similarly, although Caillois argues that “The search for equality is so obviously essential to the rivalry that it is re-established by a handicap for players of different classes,”7 notion of fairness behind the handicap does not reinforce but rather undermines the agonistic ideal. Such contradictory messages suggest that fairness is a highly subjective notion. That is: standards of fairness vary not only according to individual preferences, but also by context (casual gaming vs. tournaments), game genre (wargames vs. party games), and even circumstance (games are generally only ‘unfair’ when one is losing). Unsurprisingly, this variability amongst subjective standards yields a spectrum of paradigms for promoting balance, a somewhat vague negative term that presents fairness as ‘not unbalanced.’ Most commonly, games that tend towards symmetry tolerate emergent inequality but very little systemic inequality: symmetrical games allow skill and chance to separate players as the game progresses, but provide roughly parallel pathways to victory. In such games, the inevitable asymmetries are typically either minimized (playing first often confers an advantage, but usually a minimal one) or counterbalanced by other asymmetries of relatively equal value (the komi in Go compensates black’s advantage in going first with a point bonus given to the white player). Asymmetrical games extend this latter technique by counterbalancing different ways of playing (via differing pieces, abilities, rules, goals, etc.) to create a more or less equal game balance. Thus, asymmetrical game design provides two possibilities for exploring systemic inequalities. Balanced asymmetrical games can explore themes of inequity while maintaining an environment of fair play that adopts a perspective of critical distance—the player observes the interplay of differences that contribute to inequity without being immersed in the experience of inequity itself. By contrast, deliberately unbalanced asymmetrical games can explore inequity both thematically and procedurally, immersing players in a fundamentally inequitable world. To advocate critical play with and against capitalist systems, there are good reasons to challenge any standard of competitive balance that supports the myth of capitalism as a level playing field. **Insisting on perfectly balanced games is not just an impossible ideal; it** is a problematic one. Balanced games imagine idealized worlds that **may reinforce the deep cultural assumption that contestation is a** practical and **ethical way of organizing society**. Yet, there is a substantial disconnect between the fair and balanced worlds of gameplay and the many systemic inequalities that emerge in everyday societies. In practice, major genres of competitive game design—such as wargames, race games, betting games, and economic strategy games—often uncritically invoke and thereby reinforce broader forms of cultural contestation. Strategic wargames, for example, may intellectualize war tactics while glossing over the cost of violence. Similarly, economic strategy games may glamorize profiteering while failing to represent exploitation. For instance, Monopoly depicts rents as an arena for capitalist competition but ignores the consequences for tenants, worker placement games often reinforce the dehumanizing representation of laborers as human resources,8 and Catan fails to represent the violence of settler colonialism.9 And even as these games ignore disenfranchised populations, they ask players to become complicit in the systems that produce such disenfranchisement: the participatory medium of games often entangles player agency with the logic of capitalism by promoting a particularly capitalist model of agency—a self-interested agonistic impulse that plays out within a quantifiable, rule-governed system of exchange. Monopoly board There is perhaps no clearer example of the intersection of games and capitalism than Monopoly, of which Caillois writes, “The game of Monopoly does not follow but rather reproduces the function of Capitalism.”[ref]Caillois, p. 61.[/ref] Ironically, the game industry appropriated Monopoly from a game explicitly designed to demonstrate social inequality—The Landlord’s Game (patented 1904; this image from 1906) by Elizabeth Magie. Originally designed to demonstrate Henry George’s notion that the infrastructure of renting properties consolidated wealth in the hands of landowners at the expense of their tenants, The Landlord’s Game has resonances with the issue of land ownership discussed in the next section. (CC Wikimedia Commons) Although the way that games are more generally implicated in capitalism10 (and vice versa)11 deserves more critique, this parallelism may also provide games like Catan with a special critical potential to expose systemic inequality. For instance, in The First Nations of Catan, game designer and scholar Greg Loring-Albright describes how he developed “a balanced, asymmetrical strategy game” that “creates a narrative for Catan wherein indigenous peoples exist, interact with settlers, and have a fair chance of surviving the encounter by winning the game.”12 As discussed above, this type of game represents a critical intervention into historical inequalities while minimizing systemic gameplay inequalities, such as ones that might give the indigenous peoples a less than “fair chance.” By contrast, Catan and its Oil Springs scenario are mostly symmetrical and, if not actually unbalanced, certainly balanced unstably. With respect to Catan, Oil Springs makes more explicit the thematic connection to capitalism and, in a related move, makes the game balance even less stable “to draw attention to important challenges humanity faces, in relation to the resources that modern society depends on.”13 It accomplishes this by adding to the five original pastoral resources in Catan the modern resource of Oil, which is simultaneously more powerful (it counts as two standard resources), more flexible (it can be used as two of any resource), and more dangerous (its use triggers ecological catastrophes). By raising the stakes in these ways, Oil Springs further unbalances Catan to make a point about emergent social inequality tied to the unequal distribution of resources. Playing Capitalism Capitalism is far too multifaceted for any game—even one with as many variants and expansions as Catan—to model fully. Yet, games can indeed critically play with capitalism by condensing capitalist principles into their game systems through the systemic constraints and affordances that structure game interactions. Rather than describing capitalism, many agonistic games are themselves simple capitalist systems in which self-interested players engage in more or less free market competition with each other. Certain game designs, therefore, are not only tied to the agonistic logic behind capitalism, but are unique microcosmic economies that can represent specific facets of capitalism. The abstraction of Catan, for instance, obscures the history of settler colonialism and the exploitation of labor to focus instead on portraying land ownership as a lynchpin of modern capitalism, both in relation to resource generation and the tendency of capital to accrue capital. Similarly, the mechanics in Oil Springs focus on the role of the natural resource of oil as fuel for industrial capitalism by showing how industrialization accelerates resource production and exploits the environment. For Karl Marx, ownership of private property14 precludes fair compensation of workers by granting the capitalist (the holder of capital[refMarx defines capital thusly: “Capital consists of raw materials, instruments of labor and means of subsistence of all kinds, which are utilized in order to produce new raw materials, new instruments of labor and new means of subsistence. All these component parts of capital are creation of labor, products of labor, accumulated labor. Accumulated labor which serves as a means of new production is capital.” See Robert C. Tucker, ed. The Marx-Engels Reader. 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978, p. 207.[/ref]]) legal ‘rights’ the value generated by production without requiring that they contribute any labor towards generating that value. Land in Catan reflects this model by automatically generating resources which are given directly to the player/landowner, completely bypassing the question of labor. Instead, the emergent inequality is between rival capitalists played by the game participants. Although class differences are not represented, these emergent inequalities are structurally linked with class differentiation. Indeed, private property is problematic for Marx primarily because it forms the conditions for emergent inequalities to become systemic inequalities through wealth consolidation. Thus, private property parallels an emergent asymmetry known in game design as the runaway leader problem, in which it becomes increasingly difficult to catch the lead player as the game progresses. This occurs in any game design—such as Catan—that links point accumulation and resource generation, creating a feedback loop such that the further one is towards achieving victory the more resources one gains to reinvest in that progress. In contrast to a game like Dominion, in which accumulating victory points can actually reduce the effectiveness of one’s resource-generating engine, in Catan the closer one is to victory the faster one should move toward victory.15 The idiom it takes money to make money captures this fact about capitalism, which Marx describes as “the necessary result of competition” being “the accumulation of capital in a few hands, and thus the restoration of monopoly in a more terrible form” (70). In fact, emergent and systemic inequalities often do synergize in this way as the material consequences of emergent inequalities become concretized as systemic as they are passed down from generation to generation, maintaining fairly resilient wealth disparities between different social and ethnic groups. Catan For Marx, these problems with land ownership are only intensified in industrial capitalism, in which ownership over the machinery of production further disenfranchises the industrial worker. This is precisely the shift in emphasis behind Oil Springs, which introduces Oil not just as one more roughly equivalent commodity, but one which radically unbalances Catan’s market economy. Representing the increasing pace of production from pre-industrial to industrial societies, one unit of Oil is worth two resources. In fact, it is worth two of any resource, which means that the strategic value of a single Oil resource ranges from two to eight resources (since it can take up to 4 resources to trade for a resource of one’s choice), making Oil so much more valuable than other resources that it seriously unbalances the game. In addition, Oil is required for building a Metropolis, the most powerful building in the game. Depicting how new industrial processes destabilize existing economic relationships, Oil Springs shows how the problems of capitalist land ownership are compounded when such land contains scarce resource reserves that are essential to industry. Such resources encourage relationships of dependence not only over renters and laborers (who are nowhere represented in Catan), but also over other industrialists who require these resources. Thus, the game makes the inequality between different starting positions more dramatic to depict a shift in modern geopolitics away from territory being valued primarily for it land, population, and location to being valued primarily for its strategic resources. While Oil Springs does have mechanisms that restore some balance, such as keeping Oil off the highest-probability hexes and capping the amount of Oil a player may hold at one time,16 its primary mechanisms for balancing Oil ironically further unbalance the game. By making Oil use precipitate ecological disasters, Oil Springs highlights the costs of industrial capitalism and makes an implicit ecocritical statement about how environmental consequences affect us all. They affect us, that is, randomly but not equally. Demonstrating that even negative consequences can be exploited by the industrial capitalist, the game’s two forms of environmental disaster turned out to be less damaging to me than to other players. The first environmental disaster, in which rising water levels destroy coastal settlements, played in my favor because I planned to exploit Oil and therefore avoided building coastal settlements.17 The second disaster, representing ‘industrial pollution,’ randomly strikes individual hexes, causing them to permanently cease to produce resources. More precisely, it does this to the ‘natural’ resources—affecting all hexes except for Oil Springs, which continue to produce after a reduction in the shared Oil reserves. Thus, because I was disproportionally less accountable for the consequences of my actions, I was able to safely initiate risky behavior that the risk-averse players suffered from. As risk and accountability can become unhinged in a free-market society that pushes for deregulation, Oil Springs speaks to the fact that those most responsible for climate change—be they individuals, corporations, or nations—do not generally bear the brunt of the consequences.18 Oil Springs The Disaster Track from the Oil Springs Scenario. Every time an Oil resources is used, it moves a marker along this track, triggering an ecological disaster if it reaches the final space (this takes 5 Oil in the 3-4 player game and 8 Oil in the 5-6 player game). If this occurs 5 times in total, the game immediately ends and no one wins. Image used for purposes of critique. In all the aforementioned ways, the game systems of Catan and Oil Springs use emergent inequalities to reflect on various systemic inequalities. This conflation, however, raises another question of fairness, namely how systemic inequalities emerge. In the case of Catan, this question becomes how to distribute land that has such intrinsically unequal value that it is sometimes possible to accurately predict the winner based on the starting positions (as in my case). The game attempts to solve this by using a snake draft to organize how players select their starting positions. Fairness is achieved not by creating equal spaces, but by assigning fundamentally unequal spaces using the mechanisms of emergent inequality: skill and chance (agon and alea). There is a fundamental difference, however, in the role these two forms of emergent inequality play in the deep interpenetration of games and culture. For Caillois, whereas agonistic games reflect the meritocratic ideal of cultural contestation, aleatory games play with the fundamental uncertainty of life—they are ludic, even carnivalesque experiments in fatalism. Unlike the triumphalism of agon, therefore, the aleatory elements of games explore consequentiality beyond the limits of human agency. This explains, for Caillois, how aleatory social institutions such as gambling and lotteries counterbalance the fundamentally agonistic structure of society by providing a faint hope that any individual may leap out of a condition of systemic inequality through an emergent (but rare) inequality. This demonstrates how capitalism balances itself by using the possibility of upward mobility to obscure its systemic conditions for economic immobility. This also reveals a way in which game design struggles to represent systemic social inequality: games often achieve balance by using aleatory elements to subsume systemic inequality within emergent inequality, sacrificing the critical experience of systemic inequality in order to maintain the ideal of balance. Thus, the emergent inequalities in Catan fail to represent how historical inequalities are invariably systemic as race, gender, class, and nationality play prominent roles—how in America, for example, the original occupants were dispossessed by force of arms and land was redistributed according to explicitly discriminatory laws.19 It also fails to represent how even after more recent legislation has eroded many of these practices, their legacy20 necessarily lingers within a capitalist system where ownership is passed down from generation to generation. There are limitations, therefore, to representing social inequality exclusively through emergent mechanisms—when games create a genuinely level playing field, they become incompatible with capitalism, which perpetuates the myth of a level playing field while in fact perpetuating systemic inequalities. Playing with Privilege It was only upon further reflection that I began to tie my play experiences to the preceding forms of social inequality. In the moment, however, my focus was more narrowly focused on executing my strategy—or, to put it bluntly, on winning. At the same time, this was tinged with a growing sense of discomfort that can only be described by an even more uncomfortable word: privilege. Certainly, my ability to win the way I did was due to a privileged starting position, which tilted the balance of power in my favor. Yet, privilege is an attitude as well as a condition: **being able to focus exclusively on strategy and winning is itself** a form of **privilege**. Games (even so-called serious games) are not theories of social inequality—as embodied, performative spaces, games express a procedural rhetoric21 in which players develop perspectives by exploring the consequences of their decisions and actions as they play out within the game system. To play certain games in certain ways, therefore, is to play as capitalists and play out capitalism. Games like Acquire encourage us to play as capitalists. As mentioned above, the procedural rhetoric of Oil Springs is paradoxically predicated on privileging the very strategies of industrial capitalism that this ecocritical game otherwise censures. This presents players with a dilemma, in which **playing to win may require performing actions that are** thematically represented as **ethically problematic**. Thus, the primary reason I received such advantageous placement in my case study is that I ruthlessly pursued Oil from the start, whereas several of my opponents hesitated to do so (possibly due to their ecological consciousness). Sometimes gamers attempt to justify a win-at-all-costs mentality by claiming they are merely following the dictates of the game (indirectly valorizing the cultural ideology of agon), or that they are merely solving an abstract puzzle without regard to thematic considerations. While these are valid ways to play a game, **they** nonetheless **represent an active choice** on the part of the player **rather than some** ‘objective’ or **‘default’ position.** Indeed, the phrase “win at all costs” itself admits that such play necessitates a cost. While I can understand why some players would choose to play in this way, **this position is not viable for game scholarship**. To properly study a game, one must account for the interplay of its many facets. Theme, which can evoke representational content and complex psychological and affective22 responses, is an essential facet of a game as text. When players respond to a game’s theme, they are performing a genuine textual engagement worthy of analysis. Thus, this section draws on my own play experience to reflect on possible consequences of systemically privileging certain positions. If I had to sum up my experience, I would say that playing and subsequently winning this particular game was no fun at all. And, although I cannot speak for the other players, I imagine it was not much fun them either. Working from an advantaged position altered the game experience in ways that counteracted much of the enjoyment I typically derive from gameplay. I say ‘working from’ rather than ‘playing from’ because rather than playfully exploring new strategies, I found myself merely implementing the most obviously advantageous strategy. My narrow focus on winning imposed an inappropriately results-driven framework on play, something I typically value more for the experience than the results. This focus was driven, moreover, less by the rewards of victory than by the fear of failure23—even while my privileged position robbed winning of much of its merit, losing would have been still worse. Although the game was unbalanced in my favor, an increased probability of winning did not, in my case, lead to an enriched game experience. This is because **the value of a game experience cannot be reduced to winning,** which is why games—even agonistic ones—are distinct from non-playful tests or contests. This is surprisingly analogous to Marx’s argument that capitalism not only inequitably distributes resources, but also reduces human experience to something instrumental and transactional. Indeed, Marx suggests that even while the capitalist is materially advantaged over the laborer, both are equally alienated by being reduced to their respective roles within the capitalist system. Systemic inequality, that is, is dehumanizing for all its participants—whether privileged or marginalized. Systemic inequality in games is, of course, less consequential and more voluntary than social inequalities,24 but it can alienate players in similar ways. In fact, most games eschew systemic inequality because it tends to be unpleasant for everyone involved. Players in privileged positions may find their roles overdetermined by the game structure, resulting in a narrowing of strategic, exploratory, or playful possibilities (for example, I had no reason to trade with other players when I could acquire all the resources I needed on my own). Similarly, players in less privileged positions may find their choices narrowed by their limited resources as the runaway leader problem renders their choices increasingly inconsequential. Systemically unequal game design, that is, looks like a lose-lose situation. Yet, it is not that inequality deprives play of choice, but rather that it overdetermines the consequences or relative viability of various choices. In the right conditions, therefore, such unbalanced play may add a unique dimension to the play experience. Rather than playing as an industrial capitalist, for instance, I could have chosen to play as an environmentalist. Instead of using Oil, I could have chosen to ‘Sequester’ Oil by permanently removing one of my Oil resources from the game each turn, gaining 1 Victory Point (VP) for every three Sequestered Oil, and an additional VP for sequestering the most Oil. Simple mathematics suggests that this is a terrible strategy: 1 VP is a paltry reward for the relative value of three Oil.25 This discrepancy underlies a model in which industrial capitalism is systematically more viable than environmentalism. Yet, what counts ‘viable’ can be called into question. Precisely because sequestering is ‘bad’ strategy, it offers an interesting thematic possibility: role-playing as an environmentalist knowing that one is not likely to win. From a thematic perspective, this strategy could be quite rewarding. Whereas my privileged play would lead either to failure or a victory deprived of merit, pursuing sequestering could offer either an impressive victory or a loss offset by the satisfaction of maintaining a moral position. These benefits, however, are psychological rather than ethical. While environmentalism is certainly much needed, playing environmentalism in a game is no more intrinsically beneficial than playing industrial capitalism. Critical gameplay requires more than importing real-world values into games; it requires interrogating the assumptions players bring to the game and the positions they adopt within the game. To sequester Oil solely for the sake of feeling morally superior is not a critical position (although it could certainly be an attractive one). Precisely because environmentalism matters, it deserves critical attention and critical gameplay. After all, activism can be problematic in, for example, replicating colonial attitudes towards the developing world or performing a kind of ‘conscience laundering.’26 Critical play,27 that is, is not an outcome but a method. Or, as Marx puts it, “I am therefore not in favor of setting up any dogmatic flag. On the contrary, we must try to help the dogmatics to clarify themselves the meaning of their own positions” (13). The potential consequences of such reflection are not just two, but many. Beyond simply stating that one way of playing (environmentalism) is superior to another (industrial capitalism), critical play provides an opportunity for players to self-reflectively engage the decisions and feelings of occupying different subject positions within inequitable systems. Critical play encourages reflection. Coda Games have not historically been on the forefront of discussions on social inequality.28 This is partially because the fundamentality of agon in games reinforces certain cultural logics, partially because the carnivalesque nature of play tends not to revolutionize prevailing systems,29 and partially because social inequality presents a special challenge for game design. To reverse this trend will require a critical perspective that pushes the limits of the game medium, such as the imperative toward balance at the heart of competitive game design—especially in a world where ‘fairness’ alternatively means ‘light-skinned,’ and the myth of a level playing field is used to justify a clearly uneven one. As Oil Springs demonstrates, experimenting with the interplay between emergent and systemic inequality is one way games can explore capitalism as similarly rule-governed, self-interested systems. In deconstructing the myth of the level playing field, it becomes clear that emergent inequalities in capitalism are develop systemic qualities. As a rule-governed agonistic system, capitalism legally positions the capitalist to leverage the rights of ownership to exploit the worker’s labor. Similarly, capitalism promotes the runaway leader problem by passing down capital via inheritance rather than need or merit. Furthermore, despite all claims to neutrality, economic hierarchies in capitalism are historically intertwined with other social hierarchies, such as race and gender. The problems of social inequality, therefore, are necessarily multiple and intersectional. Games have historically also lacked nuance with respect to intersectional analysis.30 If they represent categories like race and gender at all, most games do so either via problematic stereotypes or via visual and narrative means that bypass the procedural rhetoric that makes games so distinctive. I suspect that most game design avoids systemic unfairness at the level of identity politics to avoid alienating players who identify in diverse ways. At least on the surface, class—an extrinsic marker of social identity—seems easier to dissociate from sensitive identity politics and, thereby, more implementable in games like Catan.31 However, critical play must resist the ways that games by their nature simplify and abstract what they represent. Instead, critical play draws upon but moves beyond such simplification and abstraction to respond to complex social realities. And the reality of capitalism, as discussed above, is that class is intertwined with race and gender. Indeed, an intersectional perspective on critical play may provide a way of exploring the paradoxical unity and disunity of player and role that complicates the gameplay experience. After all, despite the common association between criticism and distance, critical play is still an experience—an embodied calling into question of certain social systems. –

#### [2] We can cross apply the aff to theory. Solves ideological dogmatism and turns every standard

Koh 13 - Ben Koh, NSD Update, October 1st, 2013 “Breaking Down Borders: Rethinking the Interaction Between Theory and Ethics” [http://nsdupdate.com/2013/breaking-down-borders-rethinking-the-interaction-between-theory-and-ethics/] Accessed 8/14/20 SAO

First: **Fairness is** at its basis is **an ethical concept**. For instance at its basis, fairness as Rawls explains is, “a number of persons engage in a mutually advantageous cooperative venture according to certain rules and thus voluntarily restrict their liberty, those who have submitted to these restrictions have a right to a similar acquiescence on the part of those who have benefited from their submission.” That is to say, the basis of fairness rises from benefiting from cooperation. In the debate context, the “benefit” as Rawls refers to could be the actual ability to debate, or speaking without interference etc. In the same way that it’s considered immoral under most ethical systems to take without recompense, fairness is relevant due to it being the “recompense.” Additionally, equality’s importance is as a moral concept. The utterance that we ought to both start with the same amount of speaking time is morally relevant for it guides or at least constrains our actions, or the rightness and wrongness thereof (i.e. if I go a minute longer in the NR, I would usually be dropped or at least penalized due to its wrongness). Second, Fairness is normative: A) The idea that there is a consequence to a certain unfair act implies its relevance to our action. Debaters generally don’t read theory just because they wanted to point out something interesting or amusing, they do so to win or to rid the round of the problematic argument. B) The voluntary concession of the basic rules for the round renders fairness as being “obligatory.” Loland explains, “the obligation of fairness does not arise unconditionally. One basic premise is that the parties are voluntarily engaged. They have chosen participation in favor of nonparticipation and have thus more or less tacitly agreed to follow the commonly accepted rules and norms of the practice play the game. Loland further explains that “in sporting games, the predominant distributive norm is meritocratic. The norm on equal tratemnt, then, becomes a necessary condition for a game to take place. To be able to evaluate the relevant inequalities satisfactorily, participants have to compete on the same terms. All competitors ought to be given equal opportunity to perform.” The implication is that an argument that questions ethical assumptions (or even more basically assumptions at all) needs to be open to criticism. In the same way debaters now take into account the theoretical implications of their frameworks (i.e. the line of arguments centered around whether or not “ought is defined as maximizing well-being” is a fair interpretation), **debaters should take into account the ethical implications of their theory arguments**. Analyzing the way we debate theory further exposes these assumptions. Theory is debated typically in a very **utilitarian** **fashion**. Debaters tend to weigh between theory standards under assumed criterions of “what would a policy maker do,” how easy the calculation is, etc. They answer the question of drop the debater vs. drop the argument commonly in terms of solvency, whether or not there is a deterrent effect, etc. It’s no surprise in my mind that most “LARPers” are generally as proficient on the LARP as they are on the theory debate due to the reproduction of skill. To keep theory argumentation at a standstill in its variation is to deny the basic value in LD in the first place. There’s no reason why we should not question the assumption of how we debate or think about theory in the same way we question the assumptions of right and wrong in LD. A question that follows then is what occurs if we debate theory in a more Kantian sense? Or a more Nietzschean one? Etc. I’m not persuaded by the idea that ethical arguments cannot apply to the context of theory debate. Examples: 1) If the argument against consequentalism is true that there are infinite consequences, is norm setting ever possible? 2) If an intention based framework is true, and the violation was not made intentionally, should the one violating still be held culpable for the violation 3) A polls framework would outline why community consensus is most ethically relevant. If a certain practice is common, would that implicate its moral permission? Beyond the voter, concepts like competing interpretations, which in some variations claims that only one interpretation is objectively/ absolutely true, could easily be criticized with postmodern arguments. Massumi (a Deleuzian contemporary) would probably argue that the attempt to instill a certain worldview of the round is indicative of state philosophy, where “The end product would be ‘a fully legitimated subject of knowledge and society’ – each mind an analogously organized mini-State morally unified in the supermind of the State. Prussian mind-meld.” Security K type arguments that criticize the idea of deterrence claiming that mindset is the root cause of the threats it attempts to be prevented can easily apply to drop the debater justifications about norm setting. Apprehension to introduce this type of argumentation into the debate sphere can be tracked most likely to the tendency of judges to either a) paradigmatically assume fairness is important to avoid annoying and assumptive debates about whether or not fairness is a voter or b) judges not voting on these arguments frequently in the past. However, this line of thought I present does not attempt to claim that fairness is absolutely not a voter. This type of argument generally does not contest if theory itself is unfair or resolvable in a theoretical way, i.e. in the fashion most “fairness not a voter” arguments are made. The goal rather is to reframe the lens of which we analyze theory debates, or analyze “fairness not a voter arguments.” The application fosters discussion about what fairness ethically should imply, not in attempt to create more “frivolous theory debates” or figure out ways to make theory irresolvable. In fact, this mindset would produce **better philosophical discussion**. By examining the full implication of an ethical argument, debaters could more fully understand what it means to argue X or Y is the correct moral framework beyond just the resolution at hand. Whereas debate about animal rights or compulsory voting does allow for that form of philosophical analysis, this viewpoint allows for full education of ethics to even more frequent, real world concerns of fairness and education. Additionally, most of the historical unwillingness is probably rooted in tendency for debaters to use this avenue of argumentation in a **blippy fashion**. However in the same way that arguments that are more fleshed out or have definitive warrants are given priority over others, debaters ought to argue this similarly. Rather than treating ethical arguments against theory as a “back up strategy,” this should become a more full, centralized approach. The purpose of this article is that fairness as an ethical idea, with the same ethical discussion, etc., should not be absent from questioning. The implementation, function, correctness of a conception of fairness, etc., should all be open for debate in the same way that we try to figure out if death is really morally bad after all. The even broader implication is that LD debate should continue to foster questioning**. To take a firm stance on basic assumptions is to deny the role of philosophical questioning in the first place**. To quote Rebar Niemi, “the notion that any one of us could set some determinate standard for what debate should be is preposterous, uneducational, sanctimonious, and arrogant. I think that the notion that we should teach the already privileged population of debate to be inflexible, dogmatic, and exclusive in their belief sets **creates** worse citizens, **worse people,** and ultimately a worse world.”